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Latter-day Saint  
Journal

BYU

STUDIES



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*Front cover:* *Good Samaritan*, by Wilson Jay Ong. Oil on canvas, 36" x 24", 1986.  
Courtesy Wilson Jay Ong.

*Back cover:* The Samaritan taking the wounded man to the inn, a scene from the  
Good Samaritan window of the Bourges Cathedral.

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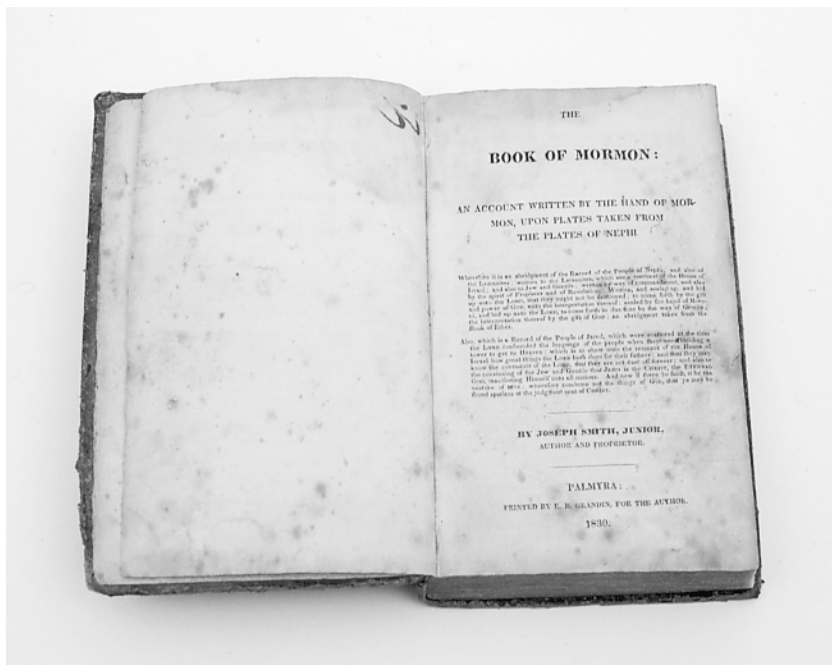
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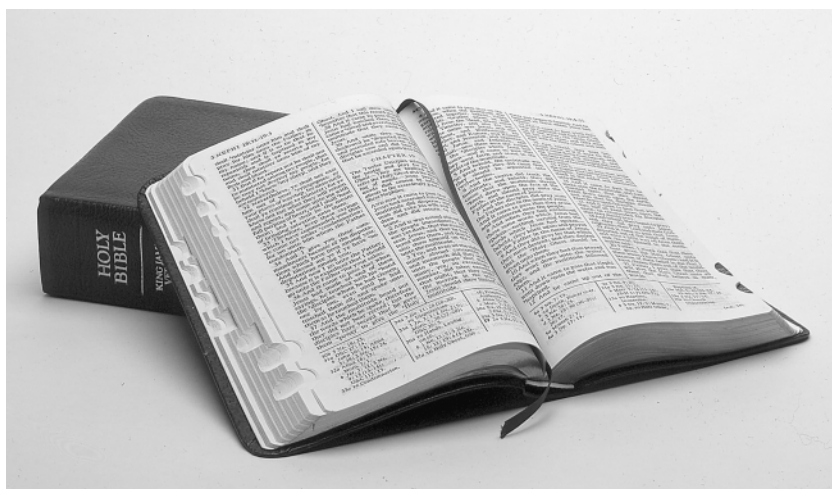
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Courtesy Museum of Church History and Art



Courtesy Visual Resources Library

1830 and 1981 editions of the Book of Mormon. *Top*: Book of Mormon, 1830 edition. Presented to Emer Harris by his brother Martin Harris, spring 1830. *Bottom*: The 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price, and the 1979 Latter-day Saint edition of the Holy Bible.

# The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century

Noel B. Reynolds

*The Book of Mormon was underutilized by most Latter-day Saints until interest in it surged during the second half of the twentieth century.*

And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon. (D&C 84:54–57)

As the twentieth century draws to a close, the Book of Mormon clearly holds center stage in Latter-day Saint scriptural study and appreciation. Congregations, the Church Educational System, individuals, and families are focusing on the Book of Mormon with unprecedented enthusiasm, largely because of the leadership of President Ezra Taft Benson. In his landmark conference addresses in 1986, President Benson repeatedly cited the passage from the Doctrine and Covenants quoted above and reiterated his long-standing belief that the Church was under condemnation for taking the Book of Mormon too lightly. He also announced that “the Lord has revealed the need to reemphasize the Book of Mormon.”<sup>1</sup> Latter-day Saints responded with an enormous and passionate effort to fully utilize the Nephite record.

Such fervor did not always exist. Early LDS converts were students of the Bible, and with no traditions concerning the Book of Mormon, they did not readily incorporate the new scripture into their devotions.<sup>2</sup> The early Saints valued the Book of Mormon as evidence of the Restoration, but by the Nauvoo period, focus on the book had already decreased.<sup>3</sup> As recently as the mid-1930s, BYU and the LDS Institutes of Religion only occasionally featured the Book of Mormon in their curricula.

This paper surveys the history of LDS interest in the Book of Mormon. While it only scratches the surface of the total information that might be discoverable, I hope it will provide a sound first step toward understanding the phenomenal increase in appreciation and study that has occurred in the last three to four decades in mainstream LDS circles. At the same time, interspersed throughout this paper are a few observations about certain

manifestations of “cultural Mormonism”<sup>4</sup> and its discomfiture over the Book of Mormon.

### Early Neglect and Expressions of Concern

Although the Book of Mormon was used by early missionaries as a conversion tool, writings in the early years of the Church contain remarkably few references to the Book of Mormon. An analysis conducted by historian Grant Underwood indicates that early LDS literature cited the Book of Mormon infrequently compared with Bible references.<sup>5</sup> From 1832–38, in publications such as the *Evening and the Morning Star* and the *Messenger and Advocate*, the ratio of Bible references to Book of Mormon references averaged nineteen to one. In some publications, such as the *Elders’ Journal*, the ratio was as high as forty to one.<sup>6</sup> Why the disparity? Because, explains Underwood, many early Mormon converts were steeped in the study of the Bible but had no “opportunity for formal instruction or catechization in the Book of Mormon.”<sup>7</sup> Although the existence and truthfulness of the Book of Mormon was a crucial point of faith and touchstone of conversion for the early Saints, it would take time and effort for the contents of that distinctive volume to come into widespread use. Underwood found that in the early years the Saints used the Book of Mormon predominantly to supplement Bible prophecies about the last days. W. W. Phelps also links early “neglect” of the Book of Mormon to the Saints’ penchant for “hunting mysteries in the prophecies.”<sup>8</sup>

A 1940 study by Alton D. Merrill analyzed the content of speeches and writings on the Book of Mormon from the earliest (1830–55) and latest (1915–40) twenty-five-year periods of the Church’s history.<sup>9</sup> While Merrill’s statistical approach seems primitive by modern standards, it did reach conclusions that roughly corroborate Underwood’s. Both of these studies found that a very low percentage of early LDS speeches and writings overtly encouraged the study or distribution of the book. Any small gains that may have been made in Book of Mormon usage during the late pioneer period in Utah were probably set aside during the early years of the twentieth century, when the Church was working politically, socially, and educationally to become more a part of American life than it had been in its earlier period of geographical isolation from and political conflict with mainstream American culture.

Though the Book of Mormon was largely overlooked throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a few leaders emphasized the importance of this newly revealed scripture. In 1834, William E. McLellin, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, used the Book of Mormon extensively and voiced his displeasure should any Church sermon fail to draw on this book.<sup>10</sup> In 1881, John Nicholson, recently returned from his second British mission, asked a general conference audience: “Why, my brethren

and sisters, are we not more familiar with the contents of this book?" He went on to assert that "no Latter-day Saint can intelligently comprehend the signs of the times unless he is informed in regard to the teachings of this record." He then referred indirectly to Doctrine and Covenants section 84:

In the early rise of this Church the Lord manifested his displeasure with the Saints because they did not pay sufficient attention to the revelations contained in the Book of Mormon, and that book itself promises [that] . . . when the people are sufficiently advanced to receive them, other records of momentous importance shall be brought forth for the consideration of the Saints; but I do not think we will receive anything additional to what we have already obtained in this form until we have manifested a suitable appreciation of that which has already been given to us.<sup>11</sup>

German E. Ellsworth came to a similar conviction during his long service as president of the Northern States Mission. He recounted in a 1919 general conference address that he "received an impression of the Lord" that the Saints must remember the Book of Mormon to escape the condemnation spoken of in the Doctrine and Covenants. "It came to me as strong as if someone . . . had told it to me," he said. Later, "while standing on the Hill Cumorah," he heard these words: "Push the distribution of the record that was taken from this hill, for it will help bring the world to Christ." He immediately sent picture postcards of the Hill Cumorah to all his missionaries.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, these three early, emphatic statements each emerged in a missionary setting.

Earlier, in an April 1908 general conference talk, President Ellsworth had become probably the first person to directly invoke Doctrine and Covenants 84:54–57 in urging people to remember the Book of Mormon. Following this lead, other Church leaders have similarly invoked this scriptural warning.<sup>13</sup> In 1949, Marion G. Romney used it to encourage daily Book of Mormon reading and, in 1960 and 1980, he used it to show how the evils of the world can be overcome by studying the Book of Mormon.<sup>14</sup> Elder Benson used Doctrine and Covenants 84:54–57 as early as 1975 and, as President of the Church, used this scripture at least a dozen times between 1984 and 1988.<sup>15</sup>

However, the Church as a whole did not respond in a dramatic way to any of these urgent messages until after President Benson's emphatic messages in 1986. As the following data shows, that response can be quantified by measuring the references to the Book of Mormon in general conference, the use of the Book of Mormon in Church missionary efforts, and the volume of publications about the Book of Mormon.

### **General Conference References to the Book of Mormon**

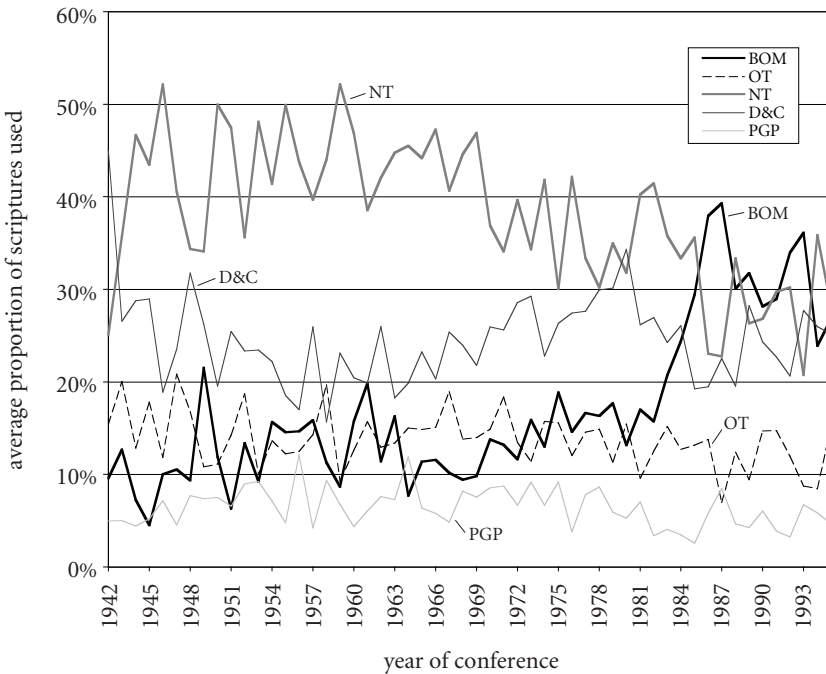
One way to measure increased use of the Book of Mormon is to count and analyze the number of times the book is cited or discussed in general

conference. The frequency of such citations reflects the extent to which Book of Mormon passages have entered the common discourse of Latter-day Saints, as well as indicating the current emphasis placed on the Book of Mormon by Church authorities.

#### **Citation Analysis of General Conference Addresses (1942–1993).**

Richard C. Galbraith's exhaustive study of scriptural references in general conference shows Book of Mormon citations hovering around 12 percent of total scripture citations until President Benson's 1986 challenge to the Church (see chart 1).<sup>16</sup> Book of Mormon citations jumped to 40 percent over the next year, then leveled off at about the 25 percent mark—almost twice the earlier rate. When the Book of Mormon rate rose, the percentage of citations of the New Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants dropped, with the New Testament rate showing the sharpest decline. It appears that conference speakers found Book of Mormon texts to support teachings they had traditionally supported with New Testament or Doctrine and Covenants references.

**CHART 1. Scripture Usage at General Conference**



SOURCE: Data based on Richard C. Galbraith, *Data on General Conference Reports, 1942–1995*, unpublished manuscript, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

**Depth Analysis of General Conference Addresses (1950–1994).** A further study of general conference talks classifies references to the Book of Mormon according to the significance or intensity of the reference.<sup>17</sup> In this examination, my assistants and I measured four levels of intensity: (1) a brief reference (mere mention); (2) a brief discussion of one to two paragraphs (minimal); (3) one of several major components of the talk (secondary); and (4) the main topic of the talk (primary). Our results suggest that minimal references (level 2) have been consistently higher and have increased over the years far more than substantial ones (secondary and primary levels of intensity). However, substantial references (levels 3 and 4) increased and reached their peak during 1985–89, most likely influenced by President Benson’s 1986 address.

This kind of data must be used cautiously. Some of the individuals who have made the most substantial statements on the Book of Mormon are not necessarily the same ones who have cited the Book of Mormon most. The data does not prove anything about individual speakers and may not prove much about the group as a whole. The following Church leaders have made important contributions to our understanding and appreciation of the Book of Mormon but have very low citation rates in the Galbraith index: Gordon B. Hinckley (.11—meaning that only 11 percent of his scripture citations were from the Book of Mormon), LeGrand Richards (.10), Spencer W. Kimball (.16), Bruce R. McConkie (.15), Joseph Fielding Smith (.14), and Levi Edgar Young (.05). Some of the most vocal Book of Mormon promoters also tended to cite other scriptures at higher rates. Milton R. Hunter had rates of .29 for the Doctrine and Covenants, .26 for the New Testament, and .22 for the Book of Mormon. Marion G. Romney had rates of .40 for the Doctrine and Covenants and .22 each for the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. John A. Widtsoe wrote an important book on Book of Mormon evidences<sup>18</sup> yet never cited the Book of Mormon in conference talks after 1942. Nevertheless, the overall statistic may well reflect a general trend.

### **Missionary Work and the Book of Mormon**

Missionary instructional materials offer a unique view of the Church’s perception of itself and presentation of its core beliefs to those outside the faith. The Church did not publish a missionary handbook until 1936, leaving mission presidents to develop their own approaches to proselytizing. Some emphasized the Book of Mormon but many did not.

Two general approaches appear to have dominated. The first was developed by Ben E. Rich, president of both the Southern States and Eastern States Missions. His method promoted a Mormon slant on standard religious questions while only briefly mentioning the Book of Mormon. The Bible was the primary resource against standard Protestant views.<sup>19</sup>



The second approach was taken by German E. Ellsworth, president of the North Central States Mission through much of the early 1900s. As already reported, Ellsworth was a great Book of Mormon advocate and used the book endlessly as a primary tool in missionary work. To satisfy the need for large numbers of books, Ellsworth enlisted other mission presidents and founded Zion's Press in Independence, Missouri, to print the Book of Mormon and missionary tracts in large quantities.<sup>20</sup> Ellsworth's influence remained strong in the Northern States Mission under President John Taylor. One missionary, who served from 1927 to 1929, notes that her mission leaders instructed missionaries "to tell the news of the Restoration of the Gospel and place Books of Mormon in homes." Accordingly she "gave or sold hundreds of Books of Mormon."<sup>21</sup>

This emphasis may have been specific to certain missions. The decades of the twenties and thirties show little evidence of Churchwide emphasis on the Book of Mormon in missionary work. Missionary plans and tracts written by mission presidents B. H. Roberts (Eastern States Mission), John A. Widtsoe (European Mission), and LeGrand Richards (Southern States Mission) always included discussion of the Book of Mormon but did not feature it. Elder Roberts assigned a missionary companionship to operate a traveling street display about the Book of Mormon, and Elder Widtsoe encouraged placement of the Book of Mormon via tracting. The official Church handbook for missionaries used from 1937 to 1946 did little to promote the Book of Mormon.<sup>22</sup>

In the 1940s, some missions renewed an emphasis on use of the Book of Mormon in proselytizing.<sup>23</sup> Glenn Pearson and Reid Bankhead, who served together in the North Central States Mission in the early 40s, developed new approaches to using the Book of Mormon in missionary work.<sup>24</sup> Bankhead passed many of these ideas on to Richard L. Anderson while the two were serving in the military in the mid-40s.<sup>25</sup> Later, Anderson wrote a "Plan for Effective Missionary Work," which was first published by the Northwestern States Mission in 1949. Instead of beginning with the apostasy as most approaches had, the Anderson Plan focused primarily on the Book of Mormon. This plan was used widely.<sup>26</sup>

Other missions began creating their own plans modeled to some degree after Anderson's, but with varying approaches toward the Book of Mormon.<sup>27</sup> Truman Madsen reports that in the late 1940s, New England Mission President S. Dilworth Young used "Push the Book of Mormon" as the mission motto.<sup>28</sup> The more common experience is probably represented by Robert J. Matthews's observation that the Book of Mormon was not widely used in the mission field: "It isn't such a matter of opposition as it was just neglect. . . . We didn't know we were neglecting it. . . . We were trying to impress the world, we'd go to them with the Bible. . . . We thought that's how it had to be."<sup>29</sup>

The first Churchwide approach to missionary work was published in 1952.<sup>30</sup> It established seven discussions, compared with twelve in the Anderson plan and even more in previous plans.<sup>31</sup> The 1952 plan used some elements of the Anderson plan<sup>32</sup> but generally followed a plan from the Great Lakes Mission, introducing the Book of Mormon only after lessons on the Godhead, the Apostasy, and the Restoration, in effect placing “less emphasis” on the Book of Mormon.<sup>33</sup> Individual missions adapted and added to the Churchwide plan to serve their particular views and needs, and some, such as the British and New England Missions, introduced the Book of Mormon earlier in the discussions and used it more centrally. The first major revision of the plan, issued in 1961, moved the Book of Mormon up to the second discussion.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, in the mid-1960s, Cumorah Mission President Reid Bankhead developed a plan centered completely on the Book of Mormon. The method met with considerable success, raising the average rate from one baptism per missionary to four per missionary.<sup>35</sup>

The Book of Mormon’s use in missionary work continued to grow. Truman Madsen reports that when he was called as a mission president in the mid-60s, Elder Hinckley, then on the missionary committee, counseled him to read the Book of Mormon.<sup>36</sup> Hugh Nibley describes being present with the Presiding Brethren in the Salt Lake Temple in the late 1960s when it was revealed during prayer that the Book of Mormon had not been emphasized adequately as a missionary tool.<sup>37</sup>

The missionary plan was revised again in 1973, and the Book of Mormon was moved into the first discussion, where it remains today. Missionaries also often use the Book of Mormon in door approaches and street contacting.<sup>38</sup> As Church education has stressed the Book of Mormon more, missionaries are going into the field with a more solid understanding and testimony of the book, leading to greater incorporation of it into every facet of missionary work.<sup>39</sup>

Outside of full-time missionary work, a member-initiated project developed. In the early 1970s, Temple Square volunteers William Bradshaw and Eugene England Sr. began writing their personal testimonies of the Book of Mormon inside copies of the book that they gave away. The “family-to-family” distribution project soon spread to a Primary class and a few families, then became a grass roots movement. Individuals or families would paste their own photographs and personal testimonies inside the covers of any quantity of copies of the Book of Mormon, then send the books to a receptive mission for free distribution by missionaries. The program was implemented Churchwide in 1975 when Spencer W. Kimball became President of the Church. It received another significant boost in October 1988 when President Ezra Taft Benson encouraged the Church to flood the earth with the Book of Mormon.<sup>40</sup> By the end of the 1980s, printing of the Book of Mormon had soared to meet increasing demand. The extraordinary

success and popularity of the program provide clear evidence of a solid and enthusiastic base of support for the Book of Mormon among Latter-day Saints in recent decades. It is hard to imagine something like this project having succeeded in the 1930s or 1940s.

### **Book of Mormon Translations**

There have been four major periods of significant translation effort: the 1850s, the 1900s, the 1930s, and the period from 1960 onward, with a particular effort during the 1980s (see table 1). The 1850s translations included major European languages—French, Italian, German, and Welsh. The turn-of-the-century translations—into Samoan, Tahitian, Turkish, and Japanese—reflect missionary expansion in the South Seas, Middle East, and Far East. The translations completed in the 1930s included Czech, Armenian, Braille, and Portuguese.

Beginning in the 1970s, the Church has emphasized translating selections instead of complete texts. This enables the Church to provide at least some support to missionaries working with less common languages and signals the Church's view of the centrality of the Book of Mormon in missionary work.<sup>41</sup> By 1990 the complete Book of Mormon was available in 36 languages, with portions offered in 44 others.<sup>42</sup> Plans call for 100 languages early in the next millennium.

### **Books and Articles Published about the Book of Mormon**

Examining the number of publications of books and articles that discuss, criticize, or study the Book of Mormon is a viable way to measure general interest in the book. While it is impossible to establish that number definitively, looking at the increase in holdings of the main BYU library and at an exhaustive bibliographic study undertaken by FARMS can give a good picture.

**Brigham Young University Library Holdings.** Brigham Young University's Harold B. Lee Library purchases all books dealing with Mormonism, making the library's catalog a strong indicator of the rate of publication on Book of Mormon topics. This rate rose 50 percent in the late 1970s and another 230 percent in the early 1980s. The rate of increase slowed to about 30 percent in the 1990s (to date). These increases are a clear indication of major expansion of the demand for new titles on this topic.

**FARMS Book of Mormon Bibliography.** The comprehensive bibliography of the Book of Mormon released by the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies in 1996<sup>43</sup> gives a deeper look at publication on the Book of Mormon. While the Lee Library catalog only lists book-length publications, the FARMS bibliography includes separate listings for

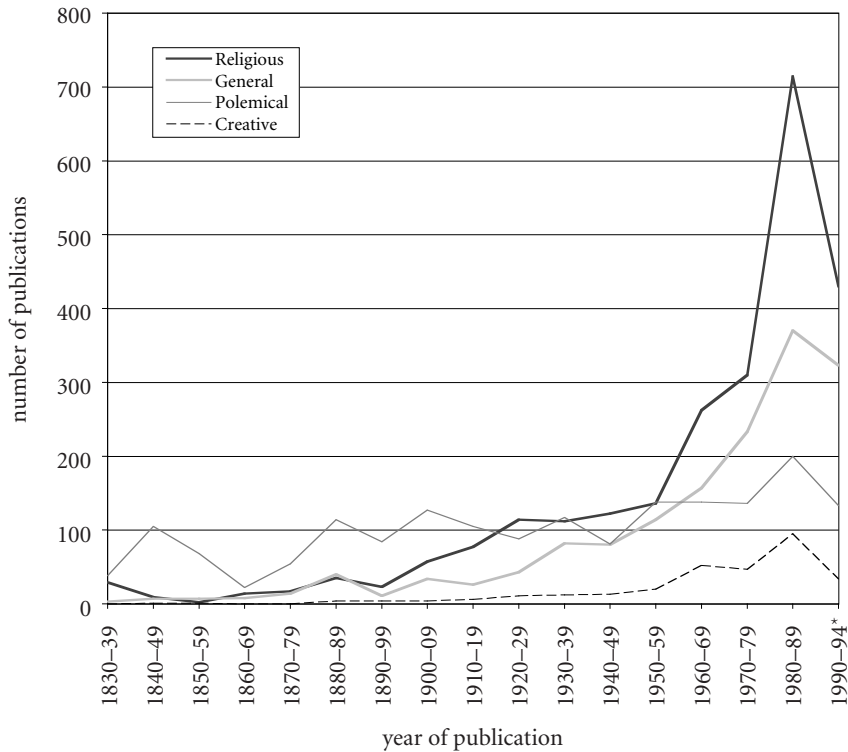
**TABLE 1. New Translations of the Book of Mormon  
(full, selections, and major revisions)**

Year	Number	Year	Number
1830–40	0	1950	1
1841	1	1951–53	0
1842–50	0	1954	1
1851	1	1955–64	0
1852	4	1965	2
1853–54	0	1966	0
1855	1	1967	1
1856–68	0	1968–71	0
1869	1	1972	1
1870–74	0	1973–75	0
1875	1	1976	1
1876–77	0	1977	2
1878	1	1978	1
1879–85	0	1979	6
1886	1	1980	7
1887–88	0	1981	8
1889	1	1982	8
1890	1	1983	13
1891–1902	0	1984	1
1903	1	1985	2
1904	1	1986	3
1905	0	1987	7
1906	1	1988	5
1907–8	0	1989	2
1909	1	1990	0
1910–32	0	1991	2
1933	1	1992	1
1934–36	0	1993	0
1937	1	1994	1
1938	0	1995	2
1939	2	1996	1
1940–45	0	1997	1
1946	1	1998	2
1947–49	0		

all articles, pamphlets, and separately authored chapters in books. For this article, each of the FARMS entries was sorted first as to whether its approach was general, religious, polemical, or creative (see chart 2). The first three categories were further analyzed as to whether each entry was scholarly (see chart 3). The polemical materials were also sorted according to whether they argued for or against the historicity of the Book of Mormon.

The most obvious result of this analysis is the rapid rise in all types of publications, especially since 1970. This dramatic market growth may

CHART 2. Publications about the Book of Mormon by Category



SOURCE: Data based on *A Comprehensive Annotated Book of Mormon Bibliography*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1996).

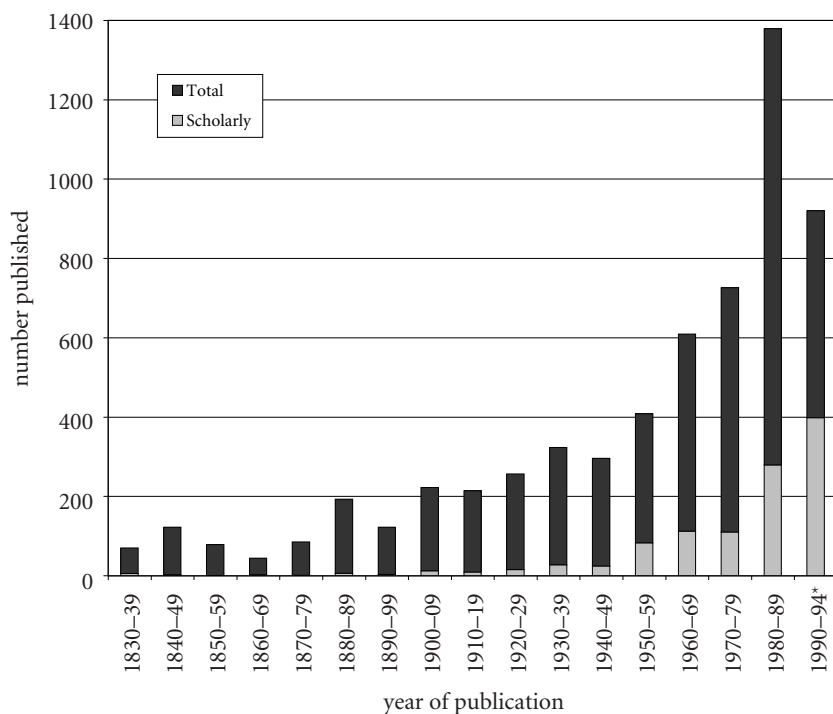
\*Please note that this measurement reflects only a five-year period.

constitute the strongest indicator of a significant increase in serious interest in the Book of Mormon. (The increases after 1970 should not obscure the fact that significant increases were already occurring after 1940.) The increases in publications listed in the FARMS bibliography are much greater than those measured in the Lee Library catalog.

Most of the increase in publication was in general and religious categories, reflecting more interest in the Book of Mormon itself than in arguments about historicity. The number of publications that defend the Book of Mormon was two to three times greater than the number of publications that opposed it.

Scholarly publications increased at the same rate as nonscholarly publications. The interests of scholars and the general public seem to be linked

**CHART 3. Scholarly Publications Relative to Total General, Religious, and Polemical Publications about the Book of Mormon**



SOURCE: Data based on *A Comprehensive Annotated Book of Mormon Bibliography*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1996).

\*Please note that this measurement reflects only a five-year period.

to the same motivations and fluctuate in tandem. Also, new scholarly publications may inspire a proliferation of nonscholarly projects dealing with the same topics and materials.

For most of the nineteenth century, answering critics was the dominant focus of publications by writers who believed in the divinity of the Book of Mormon. Since the early 1890s, however, the general and religious categories have steadily gained ground. In the mid-1970s, defensive apologetic writing dropped below 10 percent of all publications and has stayed in that range. Faithful exegetical approaches to the Book of Mormon appear to be increasing steadily.

Several spikes in apologetic writings of a scholarly character can be readily associated with single scholars or particular groups of scholars. The

surge around the turn of the century is due to numerous articles and books published by George Reynolds and B. H. Roberts. The bump in the 1930s is mostly explained by Sidney Sperry's publications. And the much larger peak in the 1950s reflects the parallel, but independent, writings of Hugh Nibley, Francis W. Kirkham, and a group of anthropologists and archaeologists at BYU, including John Sorenson, Wells Jakeman, and Ross Christensen.

The most dramatic and voluminous increase in apologetic writings by LDS scholars began in the early 1970s, and the critics reacted at the end of that decade with a similarly sharp increase in publications, some of which were better documented and more articulate than their previous publications. Until then, critical writings rarely met even minimal scholarly standards of evidence and logic but were more likely to be unthinking and inflammatory, relying principally on the Spaulding theory or other long disproved arguments against the antiquity of the Book of Mormon.<sup>44</sup> Once again, this data echoes the evidence of the previous sections witnessing to the dramatic increase in the quantifiable usage of the Book of Mormon in the late twentieth century.

### **The Book of Mormon in Sunday School**

There is no direct way to measure Book of Mormon usage in Church instruction during the twentieth century, so I have analyzed indirect indicators and interviewed a dozen people knowledgeable about significant developments in this regard. One of the most tangible collections of data is the library of Church manuals and course descriptions. These sources also show a decisive increase in Book of Mormon usage in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The Book of Mormon has always played some role in Sunday School instruction, but it was not a major element until the 1970s.<sup>45</sup> Over one hundred years ago, the Sunday School organization began distributing a series of resources for teachers. Of the thirty-one leaflets in this series, which were used in 1889 and 1890 to teach the life of Christ, only one featured the Book of Mormon. The thirty-one leaflets were available again in 1896, and twenty-five new leaflets were added, five of which featured the Book of Mormon. By 1898 the number of these leaflets had grown to 136, including ten on the Book of Mormon.<sup>46</sup> In 1903 preteens received one year of Book of Mormon biographical stories, and midteenagers took a two-year course on the book.<sup>47</sup> Adult courses were not a widespread part of Sunday School until after 1905.<sup>48</sup>

In general, from the late 1920s to the 1960s, adult Sunday School manuals tended to reflect developments in the larger culture of American Christianity, especially the advent of modernism and the social gospel. Beginning in 1933, the course entitled "Gospel Messages" focused on philosophical issues surrounding Church history, science and religion, applied religion,



social ethics, and comparative religions.<sup>49</sup> The New Testament came to play an increasingly significant role in Sunday School materials, as these ethical and social gospel approaches almost exclusively used that book of scripture.<sup>50</sup>

Accordingly, in the 1930s—and presumably earlier—the Book of Mormon text as such was not a main focus of study. Instead, the book was discussed in terms of its stories or its inception. Another definite, though less frequent, theme was the examination of evidence for the veracity of the Book of Mormon, reflecting the interests of B. H. Roberts, John A. Widtsoe, and others.<sup>51</sup>

Comprehensive Book of Mormon approaches gradually began to emerge by the 1920s and 1930s. In 1924 the Book of Mormon was a full-year topic for the midteens. From 1928 to 1932, lessons for this age group rotated through the scriptures, with three years spent on three Book of Mormon topics, one year each on teachings, history, and evidences for the book's divinity.<sup>52</sup> In 1934 a single Book of Mormon course for teens dealt with the chronological history and teachings of the book, and in 1935 the year was devoted to "treasure hunting" for evidence of the book's divinity.<sup>53</sup> Finally, in 1938 and 1939, a two-year gospel doctrine course for adults focused on the Book of Mormon, but the book dropped back out of the adult curriculum until 1948.<sup>54</sup>

One of the most important developments in the twentieth-century Sunday School curriculum was its accommodation to the correlation program. Under correlation, the old semi-autonomous Deseret Sunday School Union was restructured in April 1971. The next major step was the organization in October 1979 of a new Sunday School presidency composed of General Authorities and a board.<sup>55</sup> The drift toward ethical and social gospel approaches was stopped, and a clear directive was issued to use the four standard works as the Sunday School texts, increasing the amount of attention given to the Book of Mormon.<sup>56</sup>

A second crucial instructional development in the twentieth century was the 1972 innovation of an eight-year cycle that would take all adults through the standard works, using them as the course of study for Gospel Doctrine classes. Two-year blocks in the eight-year cycle were devoted in turn to the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, and Church history and the Doctrine and Covenants. In 1982 the eight-year cycle was condensed to four years.<sup>57</sup> According to BYU religion professor Richard Cowan, this change was made because "[Church] leaders didn't want the Saints to go [six] years between the time they studied the Book of Mormon. . . . It was specifically concern about the Book of Mormon that dictated that change."<sup>58</sup>

### **The Book of Mormon in Courses at BYU and throughout the CES**

The Church Educational System's curriculum development has been more visibly systematic and more complicated than the development of

Sunday School manuals. The CES program thus provides a helpful and interesting window on the social, intellectual, and spiritual dynamics that shaped all Church curricula in the twentieth century. Plentiful documents allow these developments to be traced in considerable detail. Study of BYU religion courses and the CES curriculum shows the same general trend as the Sunday School, though with more pronounced extremes.

Given the overwhelmingly supportive attitude that Book of Mormon instruction enjoys at BYU today, both in Religious Education and among the faculty generally, it may be hard to understand or appreciate the intellectual milieu of cultural Mormonism that prevailed in scholarly Mormon circles during the first half of this century. Our interviews with people who were students or faculty members during those years reveal a depth of skepticism and antipathy toward the Book of Mormon, even among the very individuals responsible for teaching it, that one rarely encounters among Latter-day Saints in the 1990s. The holder of such views today would likely be characterized as apostate or dissident.

Historically, Brigham Young University has always been under an obligation to teach the standard works, including the Book of Mormon. The 1875 Deed of Trust for Brigham Young Academy (which included elementary and secondary students) explicitly listed all four standard works and stipulated that they “shall be read and their doctrines inculcated in the Academy.”<sup>59</sup> But the early academy fulfilled this obligation with scripture classes only for the younger students, while the college students were offered philosophical and theological courses, according to Robert J. Matthews, former dean of Religious Education at BYU.<sup>60</sup> Richard Cowan concurs: “We started [in the early 1900s] with the nonspecialist people teaching general ethics and that kind of thing.” In the 1930s, new faculty with training from Protestant divinity schools began adding “the kinds of courses that they would have taken back there,” said Cowan. “Only later did the latter-day scriptures come into their own.”<sup>61</sup>

**Parting Ways with Secularism.** The role of the Book of Mormon in the BYU curriculum has repeatedly surfaced as a major issue. In a particularly formative confrontation around 1910, two sets of brothers, Ralph and William Chamberlin and Henry and Joseph Peterson, professors of biology, philosophy, education, and psychology, respectively, were major intellectual powerhouses at BYU. They invested great personal energy inside and outside the institution to promote their views, which discounted the historical reality of any scripture.<sup>62</sup> They promoted the humanistic thesis that a scientific mind could not accept the scriptures as literally true, and appealed to standard Protestant rationalizations for giving up on the miraculous and shifting religious focus to ethics and social concerns. Further, they argued that scientific and philosophical perspectives were optimal for intelligent Mormons.<sup>63</sup>

But BYU did not operate in a vacuum any more then than now. The more popular these views became, the more complaints came in from concerned parents and townspeople. Horace H. Cummings, superintendent of Church education, reacted vigorously. He visited the campus for nine days at the end of 1910 and submitted a report to the General Church Board of Education on January 21, 1911.<sup>64</sup> Cummings reported that in the two years or so since the problematic teachings had been introduced at the Provo campus, mainly by five faculty, most of the students and much of the faculty had been won over. Students were zealous in defending the new views, reported Cummings. Their inspiration came directly from higher criticism of the Bible as articulated in the writings of Lyman Abbot, who regarded the Bible as a collection of myths and folklore. Christ's temptation was regarded as allegory; John the Revelator was not literally translated. Sin was redefined as ignorance. All truth was seen as changing. Visions and revelations were mentally induced; the literal reality of Joseph Smith's visions was questioned. The application of the theory of evolution required new characterizations of the fall and Christ's atonement and was "damaging to the faith of the students," wrote Cummings.<sup>65</sup> Proponents argued that rather than downgrading the scriptures, this enlightened understanding made the "Scriptures and the gospel . . . more dear and more beautiful to them, on that account, being broader in their applications."<sup>66</sup> These avant garde professors also enjoyed the clear support of many LDS intellectuals, including Milton Bennion, professor of education at the University of Utah who later became the Church's Commissioner of Education.<sup>67</sup>

Cummings reported that the five faculty members most vigorously promoting these views had been asked to diminish their secularist zeal.

These teachers have been warned by the Presidency of the school and by myself, and even pleaded with, for the sake of the school, not to press their views with so much vigor. Even if they were right, conditions are not suitable; but their zeal overcomes all counsel and they seem even more determined, if not defiant, in pushing their beliefs upon the students.<sup>68</sup>

Superintendent Cummings eventually won over reluctant BYU President George H. Brimhall. Cummings recorded in his autobiography a dream of Brimhall's, which was pivotal in gaining Brimhall's enthusiastic support of Church leaders' desire to focus the university's academic mission more clearly along the lines of doctrinal orthodoxy. In this dream, several BYU professors were casting bait into the sky where "a flock of snow-white birds" were flying contentedly above. When a bird went for the bait, it was immediately brought down to earth.

On reaching the ground the bird proved to be a B.Y.U. student, clad in an ancient Greek costume, and was directed to join a group of other students who had been brought down in a similar manner. Bro. Brimhall walked over to them, and noticing that all of them looked very sad, discouraged and downcast, he asked them:

“Why, students, what on earth makes you so sad and down-hearted?”

“Alas, we can never fly again!” they replied with a sigh and a sad shake of the head.

Their Greek philosophy had tied them to the earth. They could believe only what they could demonstrate in the laboratory. Their prayers could go no higher than the ceiling. They could see no heaven—no hereafter.<sup>69</sup>

The effect of this dream on Brimhall can be seen in Brimhall’s ensuing letter to Church leaders:

I have been hoping for a year or two past that harmony could be secured by waiting, but the delays have been [fraught] with increased danger. . . . The school cannot go off and leave the church in any line of activity without *perishing in the desert*. . . . I recognize now that a more vigorous course of action on my part might have been better, but I was lenient, and patiently hopeful that men would change gradually as they have in other cases, but the storm, instead of dying out, increased in its fury. I feel now that nothing short of a public retraction should be accepted as a guarantee that these men will preserve an attitude of being in harmony with the spirit of the school and the doctrines of the church as preached by the living oracles.<sup>70</sup>

As a result of Brimhall’s letter, the Board of Trustees resolved that teachers employed by Church schools must be in accord with Church doctrine.<sup>71</sup> The Petersons and Ralph Chamberlin were dismissed for refusing to adjust to the directions, and several leading professors left as a result.<sup>72</sup>

President Brimhall himself was characterized by his granddaughter Fawn M. Brodie as “nominally devout.” This may not have been a fair inference of Brodie, the open heretic, and her “quiet heretic” mother, who in younger years had regarded her father’s bringing of prominent secular social scientists and philosophers to the BYU campus as evidence of an openness that somehow diminished his faith.<sup>73</sup> But it does reveal the mentality of those years in which listening to secular scholars and studying their works was taken as some kind of implicit commitment to the secular point of view. Several examples of eminent and faithful LDS scholars from the second half of the century have thoroughly undermined that naive linkage.

**Parting Company with Liberal Theology.** More widespread acceptance of evolutionary thinking tended to eliminate evolution as an issue at BYU. But divisions between liberal and conservative approaches to the interpretation of scripture and doctrine, and disagreement over the religion curriculum set the ground for another significant battle over the influence of outside theology on instruction at BYU and in LDS Institutes of Religion.

In 1922, BYU President Franklin S. Harris established the Alpine Summer School at Aspen Grove, featuring a six-week school for CES teachers. While in retrospect Church educators today might see this as a formula for disaster, especially given the decidedly liberal orientation of much of the personnel involved, the school enjoyed the enthusiastic support of Commis-

sioner Adam S. Bennion and even Elder Widtsoe, who taught some of the courses. Joseph Merrill, Bennion's successor, was very impressed with the school, especially with Sidney Sperry's 1929 course on the Old Testament. Sperry was completing graduate work at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and Merrill decided to invite four University of Chicago divinity professors to teach at the summer school in successive years.<sup>74</sup>

At the invitation of Merrill, a number of LDS graduate students were sent off to Chicago, with the offer of financial assistance from the Church and employment with CES, contingent upon their "faith and continued loyalty to the Church."<sup>75</sup> Throughout the 1930s, Merrill's successors, John A. Widtsoe and Franklin West, oversaw waves of students going to the University of Chicago and returning to teach at BYU and in the CES.<sup>76</sup> Nibley explains that in these decades the Church was "always very impressed by outsiders," hoping perhaps to change, through interaction with intelligent and liberally educated Mormons, the negative perceptions of Mormonism held by many of these outsiders.<sup>77</sup> Instead of realizing these benefits, however, the Chicago experiment resulted in many students returning as merely cultural Mormons.

The Chicago connection fell apart as Merrill and Widtsoe were called on missions and possibly changed their views on the value of the experiment. Widtsoe later cited this experiment as his basis for opposing a Ph.D. program in religion at BYU.<sup>78</sup> A strong reaction developed against the skeptical perspective of the Chicago brigades, culminating in the 1938 statement of J. Reuben Clark of the First Presidency to the religion teachers at the CES summer school. President Clark made clear to all concerned that the Church was committed to its historical origins in revelations, visions, and the inspired translation of the literally true Book of Mormon:

The Book of Mormon is just what it professes to be. . . . These facts . . . must stand unchanged, unmodified, without dilution, excuse, apology, or avoidance; they may not be explained away. . . . Any individual who does not accept the fulness of these doctrines . . . is not a Latter-day Saint. . . . Our Church schools cannot be staffed by unconverted, untestimonied teachers.<sup>79</sup>

Such statements were received gratefully by believing students and teachers, according to Chauncey Riddle.<sup>80</sup> Unbelieving CES personnel such as Sterling McMurrin saw Clark's statement as a watershed event where the Church "placed severe limitations on academic freedom in matters relating to religion and morals throughout the Church Educational System."<sup>81</sup>

**Turning to the Scriptures.** From 1930 to the present, the Book of Mormon's role gradually increased at BYU, despite strong opposition. Of twenty-eight religion courses in 1930–31, only one lower division course dealt with the Book of Mormon, and it was more of an appreciation course than a course using the book as a text. The first fully developed Book of Mormon class was offered in 1937 by Amos Merrill.<sup>82</sup> Introduction of this course

faced considerable resistance from some department administrators, remembers Hugh Nibley, and key faculty members wondered how the Book of Mormon could be taught for a whole quarter.<sup>83</sup>

Other First Presidency mandates came down in 1940 and 1942. J. Reuben Clark sent a letter in 1940 to Frank West, saying that false doctrines were continuing to be taught in CES. The letter directs that religion teachers must teach only from the standard works, which

are the ultimate authority on all matters of doctrine. . . .

Teachers will do well to give up indoctrinating themselves in the sectarianism of the modern “Divinity School Theology.” If they do not, they will probably bring themselves to a frame of mind where they will be no longer useful in our system. . . .

The teachers will not teach ethics or philosophy, ancient or modern, pagan or so-called Christian; they will as already stated teach the Gospel and that only, and the Gospel as revealed in these last days. . . .

The *Gospel* should be spoken of as *the Gospel*, God’s revealed truth; it is not and must never be spoken of or treated as a “history and evolution of *human* ideas.” . . . Cumulative evidence coming to us leaves us with no alternative but to believe that some teachers (too many of them) are doubt sowers.<sup>84</sup>

A 1942 statement, “Principles Controlling Church-Paid Service,” reiterated these same guidelines.<sup>85</sup>

**Lessening of Cultural Mormonism.** At BYU many faculty left or went underground with their no-longer-appreciated views. Brigham Madsen left BYU in 1954.<sup>86</sup> One of the better-known Chicago graduates, Russel Swensen, explained how he and other like-minded BYU faculty dealt with the changing atmosphere without leaving the university: “[Clark’s] method . . . caused a lot of bitter reaction. . . . When I taught in the school, I found that I [had to be] discreet. Something that I thought might be a problem to people who didn’t have the background, I discreetly omitted. I think many [adopted] that—a voluntary censorship.”<sup>87</sup>

Some CES personnel chose to leave the system rather than fight over the guidelines. Sterling M. McMurrin was one of the more visible of these Institute teachers, though he was less combative than many in the group. He simply found that CES was no longer the comfortable and nurturing environment he had once valued. He had never believed in the Book of Mormon—or even in God, for that matter—and would not agree to teach it, even if required to do so.<sup>88</sup> As he told one group at BYU, he had never even read the Book of Mormon.<sup>89</sup> This admission may seem surprising coming from a learned man who rejected the authenticity of the Book of Mormon on the grounds that he “know[s] of no real evidence in its support, and [that] there is a great deal of evidence against it.”<sup>90</sup> But like other leading spokesmen for this perspective widespread among these cultural Mormons, McMurrin had decided early on that because such a book

couldn't be true, it wasn't worth reading. In the same interview, McMurrin explained: "I came to the conclusion at a very early age, earlier than I can remember, that you don't get books from angels and translate them by miracles; it is just that simple. . . . all of the hassling over the authenticity of the Book of Mormon is just a waste of time."<sup>91</sup>

Sidney B. Sperry, on the other hand, is an example of how a believer can be fully educated in a secular scholarly tradition and yet remain comfortable in the faith. Sperry was the first Latter-day Saint to receive a Ph.D. in biblical languages and the first academically trained full-time religion teacher at BYU.<sup>92</sup> Over the thirty-nine years Sperry taught at BYU, he inspired a number of students in Book of Mormon studies and was influential in bringing to BYU several religion professors who were thoroughly committed to the Book of Mormon.<sup>93</sup> David H. Yarn relates how skeptics sometimes assumed Sperry was not a believer. "I remember being in Dr. Sperry's office when one who was considered a religious skeptic came in to visit with him; upon learning that Dr. Sperry was writing about the Book of Mormon, the visitor said cynically, 'Oh, Sid, you don't believe that stuff about the Book of Mormon, do you?' Dr. Sperry, in a courteous and respectful manner, but in firm and unmistakable terms, bore a resolute testimony concerning the Book of Mormon."<sup>94</sup>

Chauncey C. Riddle remembers, "When I was a student [in the 1940s], the Book of Mormon was scoffed at, sneered at, by a great many of my professors on campus."<sup>95</sup> David Yarn, also a student in the 1940s, reports that "in a lot of wards it was hardly realized that we had a Book of Mormon. . . . I think the general membership was woefully ignorant on the Book of Mormon. They were much skilled in the Bible. Even in missionary work, it was generally the Bible that was used."<sup>96</sup> Hugh Nibley observed, "Not long ago you would find stake presidents who had never read the Book of Mormon."<sup>97</sup>

Robert Matthews reports finding similar sentiments in a different context: "I remember when I came home from my mission, that would have been in 1948 . . . talking to an LDS audience in my hometown [Evanston, Wyoming], just a small group. And I remember I said to them, 'The Book of Mormon is the most important book in the whole world.' And I remember some of them saying, 'More important than the Bible?' And they struggled with the concept that the Book of Mormon should be that important."<sup>98</sup>

Hugh Nibley recalls that when he first arrived at BYU, he maintained an active connection with the so-called "swearing Mormons," or "swearing elders," a circle of LDS liberal academics at BYU and elsewhere who regularly met from 1949 to 1950 to freely discuss intellectual issues relating to Mormonism. Many of the "swearing elders" questioned fundamental



beliefs of the LDS faith, and some flatly rejected the Book of Mormon as a divine work. Nibley tells of being invited to Salt Lake City to talk with this group about the Book of Mormon:

And they'd say, "Well, now you're among friends; now you can say what you really feel about the Book of Mormon and about anything else." Well, then I bore my testimony, and oh, were they mad. They were just boiling. I never saw such anger. They just ripped me. And then, . . . O. C. Tanner laid it out about the Book of Mormon, "We have to get rid of it, it's driving the best minds out of the Church. You can't see it, but with my training, I can know it." He'd say to me, "Now Joseph Smith was a deceiver, but he was a sly deceiver. The Book of Mormon is not true." . . . they had a real active hatred of the Book of Mormon up there even though they were members of the Church.<sup>99</sup>

There was never a straightforward housecleaning or change of direction in CES or BYU as a result of the controversy during the 1940s, but leadership responsibility was shifted increasingly to administrators who were orthodox in their beliefs and cautious about secularized approaches.

**Teaching the Book of Mormon at BYU.** The first significant increase in the number of Book of Mormon class sections at BYU occurred in the 1948–49 academic year, when Sidney B. Sperry, a strong supporter of Book of Mormon studies, became director of the Division of Religion, a post he held until 1954. Courses in Book of Mormon archaeology proliferated in the 1950s after Wells Jakeman and Ross Christensen joined the archaeology faculty.

At this same time, in the early 1950s, Church leaders became concerned about some CES teachers out in the field who were more interested in liberating their students from traditional LDS teaching than in instilling faith. Young CES administrators A. Theodore Tuttle and Boyd K. Packer were given a special assignment to seminaries and institutes "for some reinforcement, some shaping up," according to Brother Packer.<sup>100</sup> They frequently found themselves "challenged by a spirit of intellectualism that had spread under former administrators who had promoted men of such leanings over more orthodox religion teachers."<sup>101</sup> During these years, Brothers Tuttle and Packer were mentored by Harold B. Lee, with whom they shared significant spiritual experiences that shaped their later careers as General Authorities.<sup>102</sup> A 1954 five-week summer seminar for all seminary and institute personnel chaired by Brother Packer featured daily instruction by Elder Lee, with supporting appearances from President J. Reuben Clark Jr., President Joseph Fielding Smith, and half the members of the Quorum of the Twelve.<sup>103</sup>

At BYU, the next big jump occurred in 1961, when the Book of Mormon became the required religion course for all freshmen.<sup>104</sup> Under the influence and efforts of Professor Daniel H. Ludlow and others, the curriculum in religious education was further focused to give greater attention to uniquely LDS scriptures and history. Finding enough teachers to cover



Courtesy BYU Religious Education

**Joseph Smith Memorial Building, Brigham Young University, April 19, 1990.** From 1941 to 1991, this building housed Religious Education and many BYU religion classes. Sharpe Photography.

all of these new sections was a challenge, which Ludlow met in part by developing a film version of the Book of Mormon that was shown to several large sections in the Joseph Smith Building auditorium.

This development in the BYU religion curriculum did not emerge overnight but followed a prolonged debate in the Division of Religion over whether to change the required freshman religion course from a general course on LDS theology to a course on the Book of Mormon. It was generally agreed that the initial course was critical because of high university dropout rates after the first year. Many students who left for marriage or missions did not return to BYU. Eldin Ricks, Reid Bankhead, and Glenn Pearson led the faction in favor of the change.<sup>105</sup> Many arguments were advanced in support of that position, in particular the value of immersing students directly in the text of the Book of Mormon. Pearson emphasized his view that the Book of Mormon text provided a built-in control on teachers who might have liberal theological inclinations.<sup>106</sup> The debate raged back and forth among the religion faculty, and the university finally agreed to pass the question along to the board of trustees.

David Yarn, then dean of the Division of Religion, supported continua-

tion of general LDS theology in the freshman course rather than the Book of Mormon. Nevertheless, he continued to pray regularly for guidance on this issue that had proved so divisive for his faculty. He reports that while praying one evening in the spring of 1961, he was answered by an audible voice contradicting his own position and telling him that the Book of Mormon should be the required first-year course. Later that week, BYU President Ernest L. Wilkinson called to inform him that the board of trustees had finally decided the Book of Mormon should replace theology as the required course. Brother Yarn was grateful the Lord allowed him to know his will in advance, especially in view of the extraordinary rancor and backdoor politicking that had occurred during the extended decision-making process.<sup>107</sup>

In the Church Educational System today, all Church college and institute students follow a course of study grounded directly in the scriptures. Since 1961, Church college curriculum has required a full-year Book of Mormon course at the beginning of college enrollment.

**Teaching the Book of Mormon in Institute.** The Institute of Religion curriculum developed parallel to that of the BYU religion department. In 1935–36 the Church's five institutes and the LDS Business College offered no Book of Mormon classes. By 1943 a rudimentary core curriculum included twelve basic courses to be offered each semester. Only one dealt with the Book of Mormon. Beyond these core courses, each individual institute offered its own electives, which often focused on philosophy, theology, comparative religion, ethics, and specialized LDS or biblical topics.

In 1963 a core curriculum was officially established to more closely control course offerings at institutes and BYU. Institutes no longer were permitted to teach courses of their own creation. Approved courses were based exclusively on LDS and biblical themes. Despite this effort to mandate the curriculum, a 1969 survey of the institute system revealed that, though only fifty-three courses were officially sanctioned, more than seventy were being offered. On average only 56 percent of students were enrolled in the recommended core classes. Of those, 34 percent were taking scripture courses, but only 15 percent were enrolled in Book of Mormon classes. In 1970 the Church dropped twenty-two nonscriptural institute courses in order to increase scripture study, particularly Book of Mormon study.<sup>108</sup>

As the Church developed its institute curriculum, a significant concern was whether its courses would qualify for college credit at state colleges and universities. State colleges readily gave credit for institute courses without distinctively LDS content, such as Bible or Christian history classes, which put pressure on institutes to provide such courses. Accordingly, students were less likely to enroll in distinctively LDS courses that gave no credit. Thus generic religion courses proliferated and LDS-specific course offer-

ings remained few.

In the early years, this arrangement satisfied the objectives of both state schools and the Church's educational program. But over time, both sides began to rethink the matter. The Church was not comfortable avoiding LDS content and increasingly moved LDS courses to the core of institute offerings. State colleges, under pressure from the ACLU and others concerned about the separation of church and state, began to back away from credit for any institute classes, regardless of content.<sup>109</sup>

**Using the Book of Mormon in Seminary.** In the early 1950s, young seminary teacher and administrator Boyd K. Packer piloted an early-morning Book of Mormon class for Brigham City high school seniors who had already graduated from seminary. Thirty attended the first year, almost fifty the second. This positive response got the attention of William E. Berrett, administrator of seminaries and institutes, and the Book of Mormon was soon incorporated into the standard seminary curriculum.<sup>110</sup> A. Theodore Tuttle, a close associate of Packer's in those years, believed that more seminary students were converted to the gospel of Christ when the Book of Mormon was taught than through teaching the Old and New Testaments.<sup>111</sup>

### **The Book of Mormon in Literature, Art, and Music**

My research in this area is only cursory. For present purposes, however, it suffices to note in passing that the developments that played themselves out in Church curricular circles have direct analogues in the arts and letters. The FARMS bibliography shows that creative writing based on the Book of Mormon, including fiction, began early but has increased only modestly. In the first half of this century, Mormon writers as a group have been described by literary analysts as a "lost generation" who were often ambivalent toward the religious tradition that seemed to many of them to have failed. BYU English professor Edward A. Geary has pointed out that their discouragement with the economic conditions in Utah often included a sense of decline in the Church itself.<sup>112</sup> More recent creative writing is generally supportive of the Church as a divine institution and the Book of Mormon as a record of an ancient people.<sup>113</sup>

I have made no systematic effort to count creative works in the visual arts or in music. Book of Mormon themes in the visual arts are difficult to quantify, but several artists stand out. Minerva Teichert (1888–1976) is still the undisputed queen of Book of Mormon painting, dedicating most of her life to this subject. She produced more than forty Book of Mormon paintings in the late 1940s and early 1950s, which were later donated to Brigham Young University.<sup>114</sup> Arnold Friberg (1913–), a popular LDS illustrator, accepted the invitation from General Primary President Adele Cannon Howells to paint twelve dramatic Book of Mormon scenes that were

serialized in the *Children's Friend* beginning in 1953.<sup>115</sup> Friberg explained his approach: "I try to bring into reality the stories so often taught in Sunday School. These stories are not mere allegory; they happened to real people who had names, jobs, and grandchildren. . . . Through my paintings I bear witness to the truth as I understand it."<sup>116</sup> James C. Christensen has produced several well-known paintings on Book of Mormon themes, and J. Leo Fairbanks has had a number of his Book of Mormon paintings published in Church magazines. The Church's Second International Arts Competition in 1991 inspired a number of Book of Mormon entries, possibly because of President Benson's emphasis. Pageants celebrating the Book of Mormon have proliferated in the second half of the twentieth century. The Hill Cumorah Pageant remains the largest, claiming attendance of well over one hundred thousand during its yearly seven-night run in upstate New York.

### **Reasons for the Emphasis on the Book of Mormon at the Close of the Twentieth Century**

Several factors account for the data presented above, which demonstrate the prominent role the Book of Mormon enjoys in the life of the Church at the present time. In addition to the general Church programs that have fostered the Book of Mormon in word and deed, four catalysts or conditions in particular have proved especially noteworthy.

**Ezra Taft Benson's Emphasis on the Book of Mormon.** President Benson's remarks at the April 1986 general conference, the first of his presidency, included several calls to the Church to emphasize Book of Mormon study. Probably more than any other single factor, his counsel stimulated an enthusiastic wave of Book of Mormon study and focus that continues to this day. Before becoming President, Elder Benson had consistently emphasized the Book of Mormon. Without the mantle of prophet, seer, and revelator, his urging did not carry quite the weight it later would.

As his son Reed describes, President Benson had an experience as a missionary that left a strong impression on him. He and his companion had been invited to speak to a group antagonistic to the Church. While he had "spent considerable time preparing his talk on the apostasy," when he stood up, he was prompted to speak of only the Book of Mormon.<sup>117</sup>

Elder Benson's April 1975 general conference address was entitled "The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God"<sup>118</sup> and was widely reprinted and used. In regional and stake conferences, he regularly emphasized his testimony of the Book of Mormon as a text for our times and urged the Saints to "make the study of the Book of Mormon a lifetime pursuit."<sup>119</sup> His biographer further reports that he was a constant advocate in the councils of the Church for focusing missionary efforts on the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon, he taught, was compiled by those who foresaw the latter days and who abridged centuries of records, selecting events, stories,

and speeches that would be most helpful to Saints of the latter days. It would bring men to Christ; it would expose the enemies of Christ; it would testify that Joseph Smith was a prophet. And in a troubled world filled with uncertainty, it bore another witness of the Savior and his mission.<sup>120</sup>

Elder Benson and other Church leaders, such as Gordon B. Hinckley and Marion G. Romney,<sup>121</sup> had been preaching this message for decades, and as head of the Church, President

Benson turned up the volume and increased the frequency. In a 1989 BYU Education Week lecture, Elder James M. Paramore gave a personal insight into these developments:

I'll never forget his first remarks to the General Authorities after he was called as prophet. He said to us: "Brethren, I've read many of your talks again, and they are wonderful, but you don't use the Book of Mormon enough. May I ask you to know it and use it more, to testify of it to the world, and to have it go into every corner of the world."<sup>122</sup>

During this same decade, President Benson's use of the Book of Mormon in conference addresses doubled.<sup>123</sup> These continued references to the Book of Mormon by Church leaders indicate that consistent emphasis on that book shows no sign of abating.<sup>124</sup>

**Correlated Curriculum.** A second very significant development that has promoted LDS interest in the Book of Mormon is a correlated curriculum, which places the scriptures at the center of all gospel study.<sup>125</sup> Richard Cowan recalls that the correlation movement was initiated by President David O. McKay, who called Elder Harold B. Lee to head the correlation effort.<sup>126</sup> The dictum of President Lee to "close down the mines and open the refineries"<sup>127</sup> underlines the fundamental mission of correlation—to focus greater attention on the scriptural texts. As a member of the Sunday School General Board in the early 1970s, Truman Madsen recalls that he and his associates caught Elder Lee's vision: "We were determined . . . to put



Courtesy Busath Photography

Ezra Taft Benson, 1990. President Benson led the Church to use and distribute the Book of Mormon more extensively.



the scriptures at the center of the Gospel Doctrine curriculum and to rewrite manuals so they enhanced rather than replaced the scriptures.”<sup>128</sup>

Confirmation of the effectiveness of this program comes ironically from its detractors. BYU history professor and former “swearing elder” Richard D. Poll pinpointed the advent of the correlation program under the guidance of Harold B. Lee as the critical moment when “intellectual inquiry” was eliminated from Church education. Without noticing the correlated curriculum’s dramatic new focus on scriptural texts, Poll complained that “the centerpiece of Correlation was to be a standardized and sanitized instructional curriculum.” He went on to claim that “Correlation is the primary contributor to the sense of isolation, even alienation, that many reflective Latter-day Saints feel in the Church today” and that “the official instructional programs in all Church organizations are designed to inhibit thoughtful discussion.”<sup>129</sup>

In fact, however, the powerful effect of the correlated curriculum was felt more strongly in other ways. In contrast to the practices in the first half of the century, both Sunday School classes for adults and CES classes for students became continually focused on the scriptures, and the Book of Mormon took center stage. As discussed above, the adult Gospel Doctrine classes in Sunday School since 1972 have had the four standard works as their curriculum. While this study does not measure in any direct way what the impact of this scriptural curriculum might have been, observers believe that those Latter-day Saints who follow this curriculum and their own family and individual scripture study, as encouraged by Church leaders, have become increasingly literate in their thoughtful reflection on scriptural matters, especially concerning the Book of Mormon, which in the 1980s took a leading role.

**New Editions of the Standard Works and Reference Apparatus.** Third, in 1979 the Church published an updated edition of the Bible and the Bible Dictionary, followed two years later by an updated triple combination with index. These landmark editions featured new chapter headings written by Elder Bruce R. McConkie and an elaborate system of footnotes, maps, and other study aids. The goal of the project was to make the scriptural texts more accessible.<sup>130</sup> Members were encouraged anew to study the scriptures regularly and to carry their scriptures to all meetings so that they could follow along with talks that quoted or analyzed scriptural passages. These publications make readers of all four standard works continually aware of passages in the Book of Mormon. While I offer no empirical measure of the effect of these new editions, many observers see a clear increase in personal scripture ownership and use.

**Computerized Access to Scriptural Texts.** The availability of computers to assist in complex scriptural searches is also having a notable impact on speaking in Church and publications on scriptural topics. In April 1988,



the Church released the four standard works on disk with the powerful WordCruncher software to manage searches. In an *Ensign* interview, Elders Packer and Nelson explained the history behind this software development. Beginning in 1958, Professor Eldin Ricks of the BYU Ancient Scripture Department supervised the entering of the scriptures into campus computers through punch cards. His project provided the basis for the “comprehensive cross-references and topical guide” released with the new scripture editions.<sup>131</sup> In 1983, James Rosenvall and Monte Shelley of BYU’s Instructional Services Department began programming WordCruncher as a powerful personal computer software program that could index and display large texts. By 1985, Elders Nelson and Packer had begun meeting with the BYU programmers and testing their application with the standard works. The low-cost program has enjoyed wide use throughout the Church under the title *The Computerized Scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.

The release of the scriptures on disk stimulated private ventures that produced, most notably, the *Infobase* CD-ROM version of the LDS Scriptures, first released in 1991. The effect of these powerful computer tools is evident in a growing number of computer-aided scriptural research projects and in Church discourses at all levels. All of these resources make it easier to study and use the Book of Mormon.

### Scholarly Studies of the Book of Mormon through the Century

A final indicator of the strong maturation of knowledge about the Book of Mormon over the course of the twentieth century is the growing number of academic disciplines seriously engaged in rigorous study of the Book of Mormon and related fields beyond the official programs of the Church. Of these many disciplines, only a few will be discussed here.

**Book of Mormon Archaeology and Geography Studies.** Interest in the Book of Mormon has at various times been fueled by efforts to determine the geographical location of the events the book records and to document archaeological artifacts from the ancient American civilizations that might derive from the Nephites or Lamanites.<sup>132</sup> In 1890, George Q. Cannon, First Counselor in the First Presidency, affirmed that there had been no revelation on the issue and the First Presidency has never stated differently, a position that was reiterated by President Anton H. Lund in 1928.<sup>133</sup>

In 1938, Joseph Fielding Smith spoke out against those who argued for a Book of Mormon geography that limited its people to small regions in the New World, and open discussion on such matters became more difficult.<sup>134</sup> The efforts of Jakeman, Ferguson, and Franklin S. Harris Jr. to open the question of locating the Nephite Hill Cumorah outside of New York were greeted with suspicion and hostility. Various organizational

efforts among the serious students of these questions led eventually to the establishment of two organizations, the New World Archaeological Foundation and the Society for Early Historical Archaeology. These sometimes competing groups pushed the discussion forward with their research, conferences, and publications, though the Church rarely included their theories or findings in its manuals or magazines.<sup>135</sup>

In 1984 a noteworthy event reopened and expanded discussion on the subject. The *Ensign* published a cautious, two-part precis of John L. Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*, published in full in 1985.<sup>136</sup> To the present day, the Church maintains a hands-off policy on the scientific or scholarly elements of these unofficial studies and publications. While Sorenson's limited Book of Mormon geography has attracted broad support among students of these questions, including many General Authorities, no official view of Book of Mormon geography has been adopted by the Church. Geographical questions are pursued by most in a spirit of simply seeking for a better understanding of the book itself, rather than in a polemical mode. The success of these efforts, however, was indicated in part when the Smithsonian Institution recently stopped circulating a long-standing statement that flatly denied the possibility of the Book of Mormon being consistent with the findings of Mesoamerican archaeology.<sup>137</sup>

**A Foundation for Faithful Book of Mormon Scholarship.** Prior to the 1970s, scholarly work on the Book of Mormon by such key authors as George Reynolds, B. H. Roberts, John A. Widtsoe, Francis W. Kirkham, Sidney B. Sperry, and Hugh W. Nibley focused heavily on external evidence for the veracity of the book.<sup>138</sup> These men, all highly educated, provided the only serious writing on the Book of Mormon, but their approaches were often considered too literal and faithful to be compatible with those of a liberal academic orientation.

George Reynolds was perhaps the first to do serious and thorough analytic work focused on the text of the Book of Mormon. He produced a concordance, a dictionary, and numerous substantive analyses of the book and its contents during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>139</sup>

Roberts's writings on the Book of Mormon in the first third of the twentieth century were extensive and widely circulated. Despite recent efforts to suggest that Roberts had serious doubts about the historicity of the Book of Mormon,<sup>140</sup> arguments by Truman Madsen and John W. Welch are persuasive that Roberts held fast to his testimony of it. Well aware of the fashionable arguments of biblical higher criticism, which cast doubts on the historicity of the Bible and indirectly did the same to the Book of Mormon, Roberts believed that the conclusions of the biblical scholars were faulty.<sup>141</sup> He stressed that the scriptural texts must stand preeminent and

that their claims should be accepted by faith sustained by reason.<sup>142</sup>

Widtsoe wrote serialized publications that addressed the reconciliation of faith with scientific and other modern questions, often including responses to questions about the Book of Mormon. His Church magazine articles were later collected and printed as *Evidences and Reconciliations*.<sup>143</sup> Widtsoe also wrote with Franklin S. Harris a defense of the historical claims of the Book of Mormon in *Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon: A Collection of Evidences*.<sup>144</sup>

Francis Kirkham was similarly concerned with evidences for the Book of Mormon. In 1937 he published *Source Material Concerning the Origin of the Book of Mormon*, which was later expanded into the two-volume work *A New Witness for Christ in America: The Book of Mormon*.<sup>145</sup> Widtsoe acknowledged Kirkham as “the foremost scholar in this field” due to his vast research and reading on the Book of Mormon and its coming forth.<sup>146</sup>

**Polemics and Defensive Apologetics.** Polemical efforts to refute the historicity of the Book of Mormon have in some cases spurred great interest in Book of Mormon studies and paradoxically furthered the cause of belief. A case in point is the work of Fawn Brodie, niece of Church President David O. McKay. In the late 1930s, Brodie began a short essay on the nineteenth-century sources of the Book of Mormon. Her work evolved into a biography of Joseph Smith that explained his visions as delusions.<sup>147</sup> The book was praised in the literary world, and a perception developed in the LDS community that the academic world also endorsed it. A recent survey of scholarly reviews, however, shows that the book was not entirely well received by historians.<sup>148</sup> The weakness of Brodie’s approach was further exposed by academic historians after she used the same questionable psycho-historical techniques to write an exposé of Thomas Jefferson.<sup>149</sup>

Brodie may have been correct in thinking that she was only making explicit what a lot of Mormon intellectuals already believed. But if Brodie’s effort was intended to put an end to the persistent orthodoxy represented in President Clark’s 1938 statement to the CES faculty, it may have had just the opposite effect. She provoked the young Hugh Nibley, who had recently completed his Ph.D. in ancient history at Berkeley, to carefully examine her sources and logic. Nibley himself had gone through a brief skeptical phase during his graduate years, but a series of dramatic personal religious experiences had left him without any doubts about the reality of the spiritual world and the truth of the Restoration through Joseph Smith. Nibley responded to Brodie’s *No Man Knows My History*<sup>150</sup> with a series of devastating attacks on the reliability of her work that he labeled collectively *No Ma’am, That’s Not History*.<sup>151</sup>

A crucial issue for Nibley was Brodie’s claim that the Book of Mormon was written in the 1820s and was not, therefore, an ancient book as Joseph

Smith claimed. Bringing to bear his formidable background in ancient languages and history, Nibley undertook what was to become a lifelong inquiry into the ancient origins of the Book of Mormon. He found a flood of parallels between the ancient world and the Book of Mormon. The large majority of the parallels were drawn from texts and historical facts that have been uncovered since the Book of Mormon was first published. Nibley asks time after time, how is it that Joseph Smith in 1829 could throw some passing detail into the Book of Mormon text that squared with scholarly knowledge that would not be available for years or even decades? How did he always hit the bull's-eye, issue after issue? Joseph Smith and his contemporaries in upstate New York were uneducated, and the whole scholarly world in 1829 was relatively ignorant on many of these issues. Nibley concluded that Joseph Smith could not have written the Book of Mormon himself and must have translated an ancient document, as he claimed.

Nibley's studies were frequently serialized in Church magazines and collected in volumes. His *Lehi in the Desert* (1950) and *The World of the Jaredites* (1951)<sup>152</sup> broke new ground for LDS audiences and "kept the Book of Mormon very visible in front of the Church."<sup>153</sup> These scholarly efforts were based on a premise that had been discounted in liberal Mormon thought for decades and directly attacked in Brodie's book. Combined with the archaeological and geographical work of John Sorenson and others, Nibley's focus on antiquities in the Book of Mormon helped believing Latter-day Saints understand their scripture as a legitimate ancient text, written by real people who lived in real places and received real visions and revelations.

In the mid-1950s, the Church invited Nibley to bring his work together in one volume that could serve as a priesthood lesson manual. His *Approach to the Book of Mormon* (1957)<sup>154</sup> provided enormous stimulation and food for thought to Latter-day Saints everywhere and put the case for a literally true Book of Mormon squarely on the table. A skeptical BYU faculty member who was teaching out of Nibley's manual commented to him, "I didn't take the Book of Mormon seriously at all, but you've got me wondering."<sup>155</sup>

During the writing process, Nibley found out that the Church was not fully ready for his approach. The committee that oversaw his work turned down every chapter on the grounds that people would not be able to understand his arguments or evidence. President David O. McKay overruled the committee in each instance, saying, "Well, if you think it's over their heads, let them reach for it. We have to give them something more than pat answers."<sup>156</sup> Nibley continued publishing on the Book of Mormon in the *Improvement Era*, the most important work being his series "Since Cumorah," which was released in book form in 1967.

Nibley's efforts did not attract or seek a great deal of support or collaboration from his BYU colleagues, few of whom had the background to do similar work. Nibley did, however, inspire a generation of his students who eventually became professors themselves, principally at BYU. By the 1970s the scholarly work of this next generation began to appear, in particular with the work of Kent Brown, Wilfred Griggs, William Hamblin, Paul Hoskisson, Kent Jackson, John Lundquist, Ann Madsen, Daniel Peterson, Michael Rhodes, Stephen Ricks, Stephen Robinson, David Seely, and John Welch, along with the contributions of Marilyn Arnold, Paul Cheesman, Ross Christenson, Gary Gillum, Cynthia Hallen, Monte Nyman, Catherine Thomas, Gordon Thomasson, John Tvedtnes, David Whittaker, and others.

**The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS).** In 1979, John W. Welch organized the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS). Welch's vision was to create a support institution for scholarly research and publication premised on the Book of Mormon's antiquity. Growth in the first five years was rapid, and by the late 1980s increasing numbers of scholars from a variety of disciplines had become interested in lending their expertise to some aspect of Book of Mormon studies. Financial support grew as ideas for new scholarly projects matured.

By the mid-1990s, the sustained and expanding scholarly output of believing Latter-day Saints had become a force to be reckoned with, in large part because of FARMS. The sheer volume of scholarly investigation that finds the Book of Mormon text credible and related to the ancient world in countless ways left critics far behind. Where they had once been the agenda setters, they could no longer keep up.

One attempt by critics to recapture the initiative appeared in 1993. Editor Brent Metcalfe compiled a collection of essays into *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*,<sup>157</sup> which was intended to administer a great blow to the Book of Mormon's prospects of ever being taken seriously as a genuinely ancient book. This effort, however, fell short. Few of the contributors were recognized, publishing scholars. A large portion of their arguments were readily refutable with already published studies. And they had studiously avoided responding substantively to the many competent studies in support of the book's authenticity. These defects and more were explored in the 1994 and 1995 volumes of the FARMS annual *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*.<sup>158</sup>

In the 1990s, FARMS has published a steady stream of books, journals, articles, newsletters, updates, and reviews about the Book of Mormon. In recognition of the focused contributions of FARMS in coordinating research on the Book of Mormon and making significant results inexpen-

sively available worldwide, President Gordon B. Hinckley invited FARMS in September 1997 to become a part of BYU. In directing this strong step toward the future, he expressed his desire to see the work of FARMS grow even further.

### **A New Day for the Book of Mormon**

In retrospect, it seems truly miraculous that the general intellectual climate of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not permanently disorient the LDS community from its commitments to its origins in the revelations received by Joseph Smith. The positivist assumption that held sway in the mid-twentieth century, asserting that anything not detectable by scientific means does not exist, has produced at least two generations of thinkers in almost every religious tradition who find revelation and direct relationships with God impossible or irrelevant. Students trained in philosophy, the humanities, history, and the social sciences were most vulnerable, as most graduate schools offered little alternative to atheistic assumptions as beginning points for all respectable intellectual endeavor.<sup>159</sup> Bright LDS graduate students were usually not prepared to understand the limitations of religious skepticism, and they frequently lost whatever spiritual testimony they had or found their own budding doubts permanently reinforced. Not until Chauncey Riddle obtained his Ph.D. in philosophy at Columbia University in the 1950s and joined forces with fellow Columbia graduate student David Yarn and later Harvard graduate Truman Madsen did the Church have highly competent intellectuals who understood fully the philosophical options and could fortify future graduate students in their own faith. When one reads the biographies of leading cultural Mormons such as Sterling McMurrin or O. C. Tanner, one is struck by their lack of contact in their formative years with highly educated Latter-day Saints who were thoroughly grounded in the restored gospel. Cultural Mormons generally seemed to buy into the positivist assumption that if they were to take modern science and philosophy seriously, they had to abandon the faith of their fathers, at least as their fathers understood and experienced that faith. No one was showing them the limits of science and philosophy and how those limits pointed to the need for a gospel of revelation.

While some faithful members of the Church may well, for personal reasons, choose to keep their academic and religious lives completely separate from each other, many LDS scholars now openly defend the literal historical reality of the founding revelations and the Book of Mormon. Without exception, Mormon historians who teach in the BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine take this position, as do the wide range of scholars who publish with the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS). Because the Book of Mormon will undoubtedly

continue to be a controversial subject, it seemed worthwhile to me to experiment with a group of scholars who had not previously been exposed to the Book of Mormon to see if they might find it worth their time to analyze the text carefully or to pay any attention to the growing scholarly literature on the Book of Mormon. Accordingly, I organized a small, private conference of mostly non-LDS scholars that included both historians of American religious history and other text-oriented disciplines, with certain questions of political theory as the subject and the Book of Mormon as the text for discussion. Following the three-day meeting of the group in September 1997, one of the participating historians wrote the following letter to the Indianapolis-based sponsoring foundation.<sup>160</sup>

Dr. G. M. Curtis, III  
Liberty Fund, Inc. . . .

Dear Dr. Curtis:

Thank you so much for including me in the Liberty Fund conference on "Personal and Political Liberty in the *Book of Mormon*." The Liberty Fund is to be congratulated for having the imagination and courage to sponsor a conference on this subject, which was fully vindicated by the outcome.

Having taught the history of religion in the United States for some time (nineteen years at UCLA and six so far at Oxford) I was of course familiar with the *Book of Mormon* to some extent, and had read a good deal of it. However, I confess that it had not occurred to me that the text would bear the kind of close analysis to which our group of philosophers, political scientists, literary and historical specialists subjected it. My teaching and writing in the future will benefit from the enriched appreciation the seminar gave me for this complex and inspiring work. . . .

Signed,  
Daniel W. Howe  
Rhodes Professor of American History  
Oxford University

Professor Howe's observations are consistent with the verbal comments of the other participants. Such responses indicate that historians can learn a great deal from intensive textual analysis of the Book of Mormon and that there might be reason to hope treatments of Mormon history in the future will pay more attention to the book's unique and complex content.

Other signs that the non-LDS academic world is beginning to take the Book of Mormon seriously come from surprising quarters. In 1996 two young evangelical scholars, Carl Mosser and Paul Owen, undertook to assess the state of the debate between believing Latter-day Saint scholars and anti-Mormons regarding the Book of Mormon and related matters. They concluded that critics have grossly underestimated the quality of the literature in support of the Book of Mormon and that detractors of the Book of Mormon will have to rise to new levels of scholarly competence before



they will be able to deal effectively with the current generation of LDS scholars and the large body of credible scientific work now supporting the plausibility of the Book of Mormon as history.<sup>161</sup>

While our data is often indirect and partial, the direction of Book of Mormon trends in the late twentieth century is consistent. The last few decades have produced a significant revolution in the LDS community in terms of the increased understanding and competent appreciation for the Book of Mormon as an inspired work of ancient scripture. Latter-day Saint students are much more engaged with the text itself, and the curricula of the Church Educational System and the Sunday School are much more committed to a study of the text in a way that takes its authenticity seriously. In the wake of these strong developments, cultural-Mormon views of the Book of Mormon have been gradually pushed to the periphery of LDS intellectual and religious life.<sup>162</sup> Today, LDS scholars and laymen generally strive to understand the Book of Mormon as an ancient document and to give diligent heed to Christ's gospel that it contains. Increasingly, non-LDS scholars are also willing to take a more serious look at the Book of Mormon in light of LDS scholarship.<sup>163</sup> It has truly been a remarkable century for the Book of Mormon.

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1. Ezra Taft Benson, "A Sacred Responsibility," *Ensign* 16 (May 1986): 78; Sheri L. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 494.

2. Grant Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (autumn 1984): 52–53, 59; Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 6, 7.

3. Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 82.

4. The term "cultural Mormon" gained currency after Louis C. Midgley used it in his review of Hugh Nibley's *Since Cumorah* ("The Secular Relevance of the Gospel," *Dialogue* 4 [winter 1969]: 76–85) in reference to Latter-day Saints who are part of the LDS community but do not embrace orthodox teaching and practice. Cultural Mormons, like liberal Protestants or Jews, tend not to believe in visions or other forms of direct revelation or the scriptures that report such revelation.

5. Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage," 52–53.

6. Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage," 53.

7. Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage," 59.

8. W. W. Phelps, "Some of Mormon's Teachings," *Evening and Morning Star* 1

(January 1833): 60, quoted in Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage," 59–60.

9. Alton D. Merrill, "An Analysis of the Papers and Speeches of Those Who Have Written or Spoken about the Book of Mormon, Published during the Years of 1830 to 1855 and 1915 to 1940, to Ascertain the Shift of Emphasis" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940), 28–30. Merrill's study shows an interesting increase in the number of times the Book of Mormon is quoted in the *Millennial Star*: by the second period of his study (1915–1940), references are nine times greater than in the first period.

10. Shipp and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 22, 148. "By far the most frequent topic in [McLellin's] sermons was the Book of Mormon." Shipp and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 19.

11. John Nicholson, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 22:23, February 6, 1881.

12. German E. Ellsworth, untitled general conference talk, *Conference Reports* (June 1919), 95–96.

13. German E. Ellsworth, untitled general conference talk, *Conference Reports* (April 1908), 42.

14. Marion G. Romney, untitled general conference talks, *Conference Reports* (April 1949), 35–36; (April 1960), 110–11; "The Book of Mormon," *Ensign* 10 (May 1980): 66.

15. Ezra Taft Benson, "The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God," *Ensign* 5 (May 1975): 65. See Richard C. Galbraith, *Scriptural Citation to Ensign General Conference Reports, April 1971–April 1995*, unpublished manuscript, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

16. Richard C. Galbraith, *Data on General Conference Reports, 1942–1995*, unpublished manuscript, Harold B. Lee Library.

17. Allison D. Clark, "Analysis of General Conference Talks 1950–1995," unpublished manuscript. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B. Lee Library.

18. John A. Widstoe and Franklin S. Harris Jr., *Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon: A Collection of Evidences* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1935).

19. Allison D. Clark, "FARMS Preliminary Report on Missionary Plans and Materials Used by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1900–1995," unpublished manuscript, 1–2. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B. Lee Library.

20. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 2; Richard L. Anderson, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 2, 1996, 4. The author has deposited in the Harold B. Lee Library all interviews by Allison D. Clark.

21. Autobiography of Dessie Verene Worthington, 16, as quoted in letter by John C. Thomas to Noel B. Reynolds, May 16, 1997, in possession of the author.

22. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 2–3.

23. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 3.

24. Glenn L. Pearson, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 15, 1996, 1–2; Reid E. Bankhead, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 18, 1996, 1–2.

25. Anderson, interview, 2.

26. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 4.

27. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 4.

28. Truman G. Madsen, interview by Allison D. Clark, March 12, 1996, 1.

29. Robert J. Matthews, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 22, 1996, 2.

30. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 4.

31. Anderson, interview, 3.

32. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 5.

33. Richard Cowan, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 8, 1996, 6.

34. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 5.

35. Reid E. Bankhead and Glenn L. Pearson, "Missionary Work with the Book of Mormon: Cumorah Mission, 1967," unpublished manuscript, Library Division, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; Bankhead, interview, 7.

36. Madsen, interview, 8.

37. Hugh Nibley, interview by Allison D. Clark, June 1996, 13.

38. Clark, "Missionary Plans and Materials," 5.

39. Matthews, interview, 8, 10–11.

40. Arlene Crawley, "The Beginnings of the Family to Family Program," in *Converted to Christ through the Book of Mormon*, ed. Eugene England (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 10–19.

41. See Cory Maylett, "Significant English Editions, Additions" [chart], *Church News*, published by *Deseret News*, January 2, 1988, 2; "Appendix," in *A Comprehensive Annotated Book of Mormon Bibliography*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1996).

42. Hugh G. Stocks, "Book of Mormon Translations," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:213.

43. Parry, Miller, and Thorne, *Book of Mormon Bibliography*. For this study we rearranged the electronic version of the *Bibliography* chronologically to yield year-by-year summaries. Allison Clark sorted each entry into the categories described.

44. See Lance D. Chase, "Spaulding Manuscript," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 3:1402–3; Richard C. Roberts, "View of the Hebrews," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4:1509–10.

45. Allison D. Clark, "FARMS Preliminary Report on Sunday School Manuals Used by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1900–1995," unpublished manuscript. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B. Lee Library. This review indicates that there is a fair amount of continuity in approach throughout the century, with historical and doctrinal elements receiving regular attention. While we surveyed all manuals in the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Harold B. Lee Library, these holdings are not complete for all years. Consequently, this article analyzes only the materials that have survived in those repositories.

46. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 4.

47. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 5.

48. B. Lloyd Poelman, "Sunday School," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 3:1426.

49. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 1, 9.

50. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 2, 12.

51. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 1, 9–11.

52. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 7–9.

53. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 10.

54. Clark, "Report on Sunday School Manuals," 11–15.

55. Poelman, "Sunday School," 3:1426–27.

56. Poelman, "Sunday School," 3:1426–27.

57. Poelman, "Sunday School," 3:1427.

58. Cowan, interview, 4.

59. Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 4 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975–76), 1:524.

60. Robert J. Matthews, "Perspective: A Look at Religious Education at BYU," unpublished essay presented at pre-school meeting for Religious Education full-time faculty, August 28, 1985, 8. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B.

Lee Library.

61. Cowan, interview, 3.
62. Richard Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis: BYU, 1911," *Sunstone* 4 (January/February 1979): 10–16.
63. Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 11–12, 14.
64. Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 12–13.
65. Horace Cummings to President Joseph F. Smith and Members of the General Church Board of Education, January 21, 1911, quoted in Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 12.
66. Cummings to President Smith, quoted in Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 13.
67. Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 14–15.
68. Cummings to President Smith, quoted in Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis," 13.
69. Horace H. Cummings, "Autobiography of Horace Cummings," lesson 41, page 6, photocopy of unpublished typescript in Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as BYU Special Collections), quoted with slight variations in Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 1:421–22. Brimhall left no written record of the dream in his papers. See footnote 46 in Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 1:422. Also quoted in Boyd K. Packer, "The Snow-White Birds," *Brigham Young Magazine* 49, no. 4 (November 1995): 48–49; Boyd K. Packer, "Spiritual Orientation: Three Addresses," in *Educating Zion*, ed. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), 187.
70. George H. Brimhall to Horace Cummings, March 17, 1911; Brimhall to Joseph F. Smith, March 17, 1911; Brimhall to Reed Smoot, March 8, 1911, quoted in Gary James Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 142.
71. Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 1:423–24.
72. Bergera and Priddis, *A House of Faith*, 147–48.
73. Fawn McKay Brodie, "Fawn McKay Brodie: An Oral History Interview," interview by Shirley E. Stephenson, *Dialogue* 14 (summer 1981): 102.
74. These professors were: Edgar J. Goodspeed, William C. Graham, John T. McNeill, and William C. Bower. Russel B. Swensen, "Mormons at the University of Chicago Divinity School: A Personal Reminiscence," *Dialogue* 7 (summer 1972): 40. See also Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 2:287–88.
75. Swensen, "Mormons at the University of Chicago Divinity School," 40. Russel Swensen, Daryl Chase, and George S. Tanner were the initial three chosen to attend the University of Chicago Divinity School. O. C. Tanner reports in his autobiography that he was also invited by Merrill to attend but refused, fearing the Church support would compromise his "intellectual integrity." Obert C. Tanner, *One Man's Journey: In Search of Freedom* (Salt Lake City: The Humanities Center at the University of Utah, 1994), 111.
76. Swensen, "Mormons at the University of Chicago Divinity School," 44–45. Other students who were encouraged to attend the UC Divinity School included: T. Edgar Lyon, Carl J. Furr, Heber C. Snell, Vernon Larsen, Wesley P. Lloyd, Therald N. Jensen, and Anthony S. Cannon. Not all took on skeptical views. For example, Lyon spent his life helping students to maintain their faith.
77. Nibley, interview, 7–8.
78. Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 2:453–55.
79. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "The Charted Course of the Church in Education" (Address given at BYU Alpine Summer School to Church educators), 1938, in BYU Special Collections; reprinted in *Educating Zion*, ed. Welch and Norton, 16, 21.
80. Chauncey C. Riddle, interview by Allison D. Clark, February 26, 1996, 2.
81. Blake Ostler, "An Interview with Sterling McMurrin," *Dialogue* 17 (spring

1984): 24.

82. Based on a review of Brigham Young University General Course Catalogs, years 1930–1990, in BYU Special Collections.

83. Nibley, interview, 7.

84. Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 2:381–3.

85. Wilkinson, *The First One Hundred Years*, 2:385–6.

86. Brigham D. Madsen, *Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Western Historian* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1998), 226.

87. Russel Swensen, Oral History, 27, quoted in Bergera, *A House of Faith*, 61.

88. Ostler, “Interview with Sterling McMurrin,” 26. See also Sterling M. McMurrin and L. Jackson Newell, *Matters of Conscience: Conversations with Sterling M. McMurrin on Philosophy, Education, and Religion* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996), 105–27.

89. David Yarn, interview by Allison D. Clark, February 21, 1996, 16. These facts have been confirmed on the public record in recently published interviews. See also McMurrin and Newell, *Matters of Conscience*.

90. Ostler, “Interview with Sterling McMurrin,” 25.

91. Ostler, “Interview with Sterling McMurrin,” 25.

92. Ellis T. Rasmussen, “Sidney B. Sperry—Student of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign* 16 (July 1986): 24; David H. Yarn Jr., “Sidney B. Sperry: A Reminiscence,” in *They Gladly Taught: Ten BYU Professors*, ed. Jean Anne Waterstradt, 3 vols. (Provo: Brigham Young University and the Emeritus Club, 1986–88), 1:171.

93. Anderson, interview, 1, 9–10; Bankhead, interview, 2–3; Matthews, interview, 6; Pearson, interview, 2, 6; Ellis Rasmussen, interview by Allison D. Clark, February 27, 1996, 2, 8; Riddle, interview, 1–2; Yarn, interview, 1–4.

94. Yarn, “Sperry Reminiscence,” 169.

95. Riddle, interview, 2.

96. Yarn, interview, 6.

97. Nibley, interview, 5.

98. Matthews, interview, 10.

99. Nibley, interview, 7. See Thomas A. Blakely, “The Swearing Elders,” *Sunstone* 10 (September 1985): 8–13; Richard D. Poll, “The Swearing Elders: Some Reflections: A Response to Thomas Blakely,” *Sunstone* 10 (September 1985): 14–17; McMurrin and Newell, *Matters of Conscience*, 181–84, 191–92.

The O. C. Tanner case is particularly interesting because Tanner may have eventually softened his antagonism toward the Book of Mormon. President McKay was persuaded by his son Llewelyn to authorize an invitation from the Sunday School to Tanner to write a Gospel Doctrine manual, in spite of Tanner’s fairly well-known skepticism regarding many fundamental claims of the Church. Tanner, *One Man’s Journey*, 115–21. Glenn L. Pearson remembers this kind of assignment as a common occurrence: “The general boards would pass out the assignments to various individuals, and half the time they weren’t even believers.” Because the particular manual (*Christ’s Ideals for Living*) required a treatment of 3 Nephi, Tanner decided he would have to read the Book of Mormon, and in the process concluded that the Book of Mormon was true after all. “He hadn’t believed it for years and years.” Pearson, interview, 16. Pearson heard the story from Elder Harold B. Lee in the 1954 seminar for CES teachers, and Pearson later pursued the matter in private conversation with Elder Lee. Elder Lee’s point in sharing the story with CES personnel was to show that someone with Tanner’s views could gain a testimony and should not be written off as hopeless. Tanner’s autobiography confirms his doubts in these matters but gives no hint he changed his mind. It may be

that Elder Lee interpreted Tanner's report of increased appreciation for the message of the Book of Mormon as increased belief in its historicity.

100. Packer, "Snow-White Birds," 48.

101. Lucile Tate, *Boyd K. Packer: A Watchman on the Tower* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995), 117.

102. Tate, *Watchman*, 120.

103. Packer, "Snow-White Birds," 48.

104. Based on a review of Brigham Young University Class Schedules, years 1936–1995, in BYU Special Collections. The number of Book of Mormon sections in relation to the size of the student body after the Book of Mormon course was required for freshmen soon leveled off to where it had been in the 1950s. We have not been able to determine the extent to which average section size increased.

105. Yarn, interview, 6–7.

106. A copy of the letter advanced to the board of trustees is in my possession, courtesy of Glenn L. Pearson.

107. Yarn, interview, 7–8; Harvard Heath, interview by Allison D. Clark, May 6, 1996, 2–4.

108. William O. Nelson, "The Institutes of Religion Curriculum: Its History, Evaluation, and a Method Designed for Determining Whether Courses of Study Meet the Criteria of Certain Basic Doctrines and Objectives" (Ed.D. diss., BYU, 1971), 46, 47, 52–53.

109. Based on telephone conversations with various CES personnel, July 28, 1997. See also Karla Haworth, "Idaho State U. Accused of Giving Credit for Church-Sponsored Classes," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Daily News (internet version), October 16, 1997.

110. Tate, *Watchman*, 101.

111. Matthews, interview, 9.

112. Edward A. Geary, "Mormondom's Lost Generation: The Novelists of the 1940s," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 1 (1977): 91–92.

113. See Eugene England, "Mormon Literature: Progress and Prospects," in *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States*, ed. David J. Whittaker (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1995), 469–505; Eugene England, "The Dawning of a Brighter Day: Mormon Literature after 150 Years," *BYU Studies* 22, no. 2 (1982): 131–60.

114. These paintings are now readily seen in John W. Welch and Doris R. Dant, *The Book of Mormon Paintings of Minerva Teichert* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997).

115. Carol Cornwall Madsen and Susan Staker Oman, *Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Primary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979), 121.

116. Richard G. Oman and Robert O. Davis, *Images of Faith: Art of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 102.

117. Reed Benson, interview by Allison D. Clark, April 4, 1996, 3.

118. Ezra Taft Benson, "The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God," *Ensign* 5 (May 1975): 63–65.

119. Ezra Taft Benson, quoted in Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 491–92.

120. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 492.

121. Allison D. Clark, "General Conference Analysis," unpublished data. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B. Lee Library.

122. James M. Paramore, "Leadership—Jesus Was the Perfect Leader," *Brigham Young University 1989–90 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1990), 7.

123. Galbraith, "Data on General Conference Reports."

124. For other examples of Church leaders emphasizing the Book of Mormon, see



Dallin H. Oaks, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," *Brigham Young University 1992–93 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1993), 111–22; Richard G. Scott, "True Friends That Lift," *Ensign* 18 (November 1988): 76–77; Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997).

125. Wayne B. Lynn, "Curriculum," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1:347–52; Frank O. May Jr., "Correlation of the Church, Administration," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1:323–25.

126. Cowan, interview, 8.

127. Madsen, interview, 7.

128. Madsen, interview, 6.

129. Poll, "The Swearing Elders: Some Reflections," 17.

130. Rasmussen, interview, 4.

131. "Computerized Scriptures Now Available: A Conversation with Elder Boyd K. Packer and Elder Russell M. Nelson about the New Computerized Scriptures," *Ensign* 18 (April 1988): 74.

132. John L. Sorenson, *The Geography of Book of Mormon Events: A Source Book* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992), 16–18; Bergera, *A House of Faith*, 10–12.

133. Sorenson, *Geography*, 16–17, 20.

134. Sorenson, *Geography*, 23.

135. Sorenson, *Geography*, 26–29.

136. John L. Sorenson, "Digging into the Book of Mormon: Our Changing Understanding of Ancient America and Its Scripture," parts 1 and 2, *Ensign* 14 (September 1984): 26–37; (October 1984): 12–23; John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1985).

137. See "New Light: Smithsonian Statement on the Book of Mormon Revised," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 (1998), 77.

138. Truman Madsen comments on the transformation of his own interest in the Book of Mormon: "In younger days I was concerned with the question: what is the evidence for the Book of Mormon? Now I am preoccupied with what is the Book of Mormon evidence for? For me it is a window to Christ. I am less interested in studying the frame, or the composition of the glass, or the spots on the pane, than I am in looking through." Madsen, interview, 9.

139. See the summary of George Reynolds's contributions in Bruce A. Van Orden's review of the dictionary in "Every City, Hill, River, Valley, and Person," *FARMS Review of Books* 8, no. 1 (1996): 51–60.

140. Brigham D. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts's Studies of the Book of Mormon," *Dialogue* 26 (fall 1993): 77–86.

141. John W. Welch, "Introduction," in B. H. Roberts, *The Truth, The Way, The Life: An Elementary Treatise on Theology*, ed. John W. Welch, 2d ed. (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), xxvi–xxvii.

142. Roberts, *The Truth, The Way, The Life*. See also B. H. Roberts' *Final Decade: Statements about the Book of Mormon (1921–33)*, comp. Truman G. Madsen, unpublished manuscript, FARMS, Brigham Young University. John W. Welch, "B. H. Roberts: Seeker after Truth," *Ensign* 16 (March 1986): 56–62.

143. John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations: Volumes 1, 2, and 3*, arr. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960).

144. Widtsoe and Harris, *Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon*.

145. Francis W. Kirkham, *A New Witness for Christ in America: The Book of Mormon*, 2 vols. (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1942–51).



146. Francis W. Kirkham, "Oral History Interview with Dr. Francis W. Kirkham," interview by Hollis Scott, November 4, 1966, 28. The author has deposited this document in the Harold B. Lee Library.
147. Brodie, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 104.
148. Louis C. Midgley, "F. M. Brodie—"The Fasting Hermit and Very Saint of Ignorance": A Biographer and Her Legend," *FARMS Review of Books* 8, no. 2 (1996): 148–51.
149. Fawn M. Brodie, *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974). For a critique of the book, see Louis C. Midgley, "The Brodie Connection: Thomas Jefferson and Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 20, no. 1 (1979): 59–67.
150. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946).
151. Hugh W. Nibley, *No Ma'am, That's Not History: A Brief Review of Mrs. Brodie's Reluctant Vindication of a Prophet She Seeks to Expose* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946).
152. Hugh W. Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert; The World of the Jaredites; There Were Jaredites*, Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, vol. 5 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1988).
153. Anderson, interview, 2.
154. Hugh W. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, vol. 6 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1988).
155. Unnamed faculty member quoted in Anderson, interview, 8.
156. Nibley, interview, 4.
157. Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993).
158. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6, no. 1 (1994); Ross David Baron, "Melodie Moench Charles and the Humanist Worldview," 91–119, and Alan Goff, "Uncritical Theory and Thin Description: The Resistance to History," 170–207, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 7, no. 1 (1995).
159. See, for example, Stephen L. Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief* (New York: Basic-Books, 1993), 3–11, 213–24.
160. Daniel W. Howe, letter to G. M. Curtis, September 14, 1997, copy in possession of the author.
161. Carl Mosser and Paul Owen, "Mormon Scholarship, Apologetics and Evangelical Neglect: Losing the Battle and Not Knowing It?" *Trinity Journal of Theology*, 19NS (1998): 179–205.
162. See Louis Midgley, interview by Allison D. Clark, March 5, 1996.
163. Madsen, interview, 7–8. Matthews, interview, 9. This trend of increasing commitment to the Book of Mormon and other scriptures among educated Latter-day Saints is consistent with sociological studies that link religiosity and levels of education. The 1982 Princeton Religion Research Center survey data indicate that American religious communities show significant negative correlation between education and religiosity—as measured by devotion to private prayer, scripture study, church attendance, and other forms of religious activity. But for the LDS community, this correlation is reversed. In the LDS community, the more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to be fully observant and faithful. Stan L. Albrecht and Tim B. Heaton, "Secularization, Higher Education, and Religiosity," *Review of Religious Research* 26, no. 1 (Sept. 1984): 47, 52–54.

## The Wolves

The wolves who take up residence  
in his lungs make their presence known  
each time he breathes. At first there is  
only a solitary lament, so faint  
he barely notices it slumping down  
from the hills. Now it has grown  
to a full pack. He listens until sleep  
overcomes him. He tells no one,  
not even his wife. It is a secret  
he must keep to himself. By day  
they are gone, coursing his veins, perhaps,  
in search of game, but when it gets dark,  
they come back with each expiring breath.  
He learns to distinguish their howls:  
the low-pitched one is Lobo, after  
a story he read when just a child.  
The mate's voice is higher. He calls  
her Blanca. That's all the Spanish he knows,  
so he gives the others names like Black Leg,  
or Gray Wing. Where the words come from,  
he has no idea—no wolf he's ever known  
in life or myth can fly. They just sound good  
to his ear. He goes to the library,

checks out all the books he can find,  
one by Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men*.  
No illustration is even close  
to the images his brain conceives.  
He stays up late, tries not to wake  
his wife with the chorus he brings  
to bed, the voices he has grown  
to love. He adjusts the counterpane,  
takes a deep breath, lets it out slow.  
When the air is almost gone, the wolves  
begin, as he knew they would.  
He counts to see if someone new  
has joined the pack, inhales again,  
lets go. Yes, there it is. He can  
see him, darker than all the rest,  
stalking down. No need to find a name.  
The name he's heard since birth,  
but never speaks aloud, crouches,  
ready to leap with its taste of salt  
from the tip of his tongue.

—Donnell Hunter



FIG. 1. Christ, the Good Samaritan. Illustration from a deluxe edition of the Bible, published in Philadelphia by Holman and Company in 1900, depicting the Good Samaritan as a figure of Christ.

# The Good Samaritan: A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation

John W. Welch

*Before modernity, Christians read this parable allegorically, with the Samaritan, for example, aptly typifying Christ. Such a reading becomes even stronger when enriched by the full plan of salvation.*

One of the most influential stories told by Jesus is the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–35). As a result of this scripture, people all over the world, whether Christians or not, speak of being a Good Samaritan, of doing good for people who are in peril or need. Modern-day Good Samaritans stop to help stranded travelers fix flat tires or find shelter, come to the rescue of people in distress, or serve spontaneously as benevolent volunteers. They even receive legal immunity in many states should they happen to make matters worse while trying to be of help.<sup>1</sup> Most people in modern society know the main details of the story of the Good Samaritan, and this memorable story inspires benevolent daily decisions, both socially and religiously.<sup>2</sup> Because we all have serious needs, this parable speaks deeply to every human soul.

As important and dramatic as its ethical content obviously is, Jesus' story may harbor far more meaning than most people ever imagine. An ancient but now almost forgotten tradition, extending back to the earliest days of Christian interpretation, sees this tale as much more than a story and as far more than a parable. According to this early Christian view, the narrative is to be read as an impressive allegory of the fall and redemption of mankind. In LDS terms, it may be seen even more expansively as a type and shadow of the eternal plan of salvation. This article explores and embraces the allegorical layer of signification and shows how a deeper level of meaning does not detract from the conventional understanding of the parable but adds rich, epic dimensions to the typical understanding of this classic vignette.

## READING THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Jesus told this story to a lawyer, or a Pharisee, who began his exchange with Jesus by asking, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus

responded at first simply by saying, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" The man answered by quoting two scriptures, the first from Deuteronomy 6:5, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," and the second from Leviticus 19:18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." When Jesus promised the man, "This do, and thou shalt live," the man retorted, "And who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:25–29).

In answer to the man's two questions, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan. People usually think of it as answering only the second, technical question, "Who is my neighbour?" But this story also addresses, even more deeply, the first and more important inquiry, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The Prophet Joseph Smith once taught, "I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I enquire, what was the question which drew out the answer, or caused Jesus to utter the parable?"<sup>3</sup> Using the Pharisee's primary question as such a key, with the second question being "like unto it" (Matt. 22:39), shows that the story speaks of eternal life and the plan of salvation in ways that few modern readers have ever paused to notice.

### **From Parable to Allegory and Typology**

The story of the Good Samaritan is usually understood as a straightforward parable. A parable is a short account that parallels or exemplifies some particular religious value, causing introspection and self-reflection that leads to a specific moral outlook or imperative. David Seely offers a convenient definition: "A parable is a narrative containing an extended simile or metaphor intending to convey a single thought or message."<sup>4</sup>

Jesus told many stories that can be viewed as parables. In each of them, he prompted his listeners to act in a single, specific Christlike way. His various parables teach people to be forgiving, as in the story of the forgiven steward who unmercifully refuses to forgive his debtors (Matt. 18:21–35); to be prepared for the coming of the kingdom, as with the watchful householder (Matt. 24:42–44) or the ten bridesmaids (Matt. 25:1–13); to spread the seeds of the gospel, as does the sower whose seeds land on four different soils (Matt. 13:1–9; Mark 4:1–9; Luke 8:4–8); to be persistent, as is the importuning widow who pesters a judge until he helps her (Luke 18:1–8); and to develop the gifts or responsibilities over which one has been given stewardship, represented by talents of gold or silver (Matt. 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27). Seen simply as a parable, the story of the Good Samaritan encourages people to help anyone in need by answering a single, pointed question: "Who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29), or asked in modern terms, "Will I be one who sees, who hears, who pauses, and who helps? Will you?"<sup>5</sup>

The word *parable*, however, does not fully describe the story of the Good Samaritan. Moreover, the story is more than a drama or a “pattern story” that illustrates a single point of doctrine or presents one model of “moral life to be imitated.”<sup>6</sup> Does it have only a single message? If so, why did Jesus tell the story in such detail when a much simpler version of the story could have just as well made the moral point of being kind to anyone in need?

Because of its complexity, the story of the Good Samaritan is better described as an allegory, which is a more complicated configuration than a parable. An allegory portrays a larger picture, puts numerous pieces of an intricate structure into place, and helps to define relationships between various parties or human affairs. In an allegory, “each metaphorical element of the narrative is meant to correspond to a specific counterpart”<sup>7</sup> or to function organically within a conceptual structure.

Moreover, a typology prefigures or is a shadow of a deeper reality that stands behind the verbal construct. Typological allegories in the gospel help listeners understand the ultimate truths of life, history, and reality, not only by depicting a set of relationships, but also by pointing to a more profound meaning beyond. Such allegories “play the role of enshrouding the subject matter in a mysterious (*geheimnisvollen*), protective-revealing (*verhüllend-offenbarenden*) guise, through which the words and various parts of the text are to be substituted more or less for concepts”<sup>8</sup> or for other beings. Several of the parables of Jesus, such as the Wicked Husbandmen (Mark 12:1–11; Matt. 21:33–44; Luke 20:9–18), the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32), and the Good Shepherd (John 10:1–18), are complicated enough that they are probably better described as allegories than as parables, and often they are typological as well.<sup>9</sup>

The story of the Good Samaritan can be understood particularly well as a typological allegory, specifically as a presentation of the plan of salvation. Especially from a Latter-day Saint perspective, each element in the story serves an important purpose in representing a corresponding counterpart and in conveying a symbolic or emblematic depiction. As I show below, each point included by Jesus in the story helps to place the Samaritan’s act of saving mercy in the broader context of the plan of salvation that was established from the foundation of the world and made possible through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The story is not simply a moralistic fable or a generic ethical hypothetical, but a thoroughly Christian contextualization of the perils of mortality and the deeds of saving goodness in an eternal setting of God’s redeeming love and compassion.



## Early Christian Allegorization

In recent years, only a few people who have studied the New Testament in terms of early Christian literature have been aware that this story was originally read as much more than a simple parable.<sup>10</sup> In 1967, for example, Hugh Nibley briefly observed:

To an outsider this is a story of the loftiest humanitarian and moral purpose, completely satisfying in itself. Yet it would now appear that no early Christian could possibly have missed the real significance of the wine and the oil that heal the wounded man as standing for the sacrament and the anointing that restore the ailing human soul to a healthy state, thanks to the intervention of the Lord, who is the Good Samaritan.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, Nibley's point can be extended much further. The overwhelmingly dominant tradition among the early Christian Fathers read this story as an impressive and expansive allegory.

I first became aware of the extensive history of the allegorical interpretation behind the story of the Good Samaritan while my wife and I were standing inside the famous twelfth-century cathedral in Chartres, France. One of the beautiful tall panels of stained glass on the south side of the cathedral's nave depicts, with vibrant green accents that symbolize life, the story of the Good Samaritan together with the fall of Adam and Eve (see figs. 2, 3, 8). As is the case with many medieval stained-glass windows, this panel was meant to be read as if it were a text. Reading the scenes in this window, I realized that the layout was designed to depict the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden in tandem with the familiar New Testament parable.<sup>12</sup> The lower part of the window tells the story of the Good Samaritan in nine scenes, while the top half uses twelve scenes to relate the account of Adam and Eve's creation, expulsion, and redemption, "thereby illustrating a symbolic interpretation of Christ's parable that was popular in the Middle Ages."<sup>13</sup>

Another medieval window in the Bourges Cathedral, south of Paris near Orleans, further develops this schematic in a manner inspired by the widely circulating vulgate commentary, *Glossa ordinaria* (see figs. 4, 5, 9). Another gothic window in the Sens Cathedral, in eastern France, even more skillfully depicts this relationship by surrounding each of three scenes depicting the main elements of the parable of the Good Samaritan with four vignettes from the Creation and Fall, the life of Moses, and the passion of Jesus<sup>14</sup> (see figs. 6, 7, 10). I became intrigued with these associations. What does the parable of the Good Samaritan have to do with the fall of Adam and Eve, the life of Moses, or the suffering of Jesus? Where did these identifications come from? Research soon disclosed a surprisingly rich interpretive history. There is indeed more here than normally meets the eye.

The roots of this allegorical interpretation reach deeply into the earliest Christian literature.<sup>15</sup> Writing in the second century A.D., Irenaeus<sup>16</sup> and Clement of Alexandria<sup>17</sup> both saw the Good Samaritan as symbolizing Christ himself saving the fallen victim from the wounds of sin. Origen, only a few years later, stated that this interpretation came down to him from “one of the elders,” who read the elements of this story allegorically as follows:

The man who was going down is Adam. Jerusalem is paradise, and Jericho is the world. The robbers are hostile powers. The priest is the Law, the Levite is the prophets, and the Samaritan is Christ. The wounds are disobedience, the beast is the Lord’s body, the *pandochium* (that is, the stable), which accepts all [pan-] who wish to enter, is the Church. And further, the two *denarii* mean the Father and the Son. The manager of the stable is the head of the Church, to whom its care has been entrusted. And the fact that the Samaritan promises he will return represents the Savior’s second coming.<sup>18</sup>

While we cannot be sure exactly how far back into early church circles this fascinating interpretation can be traced,<sup>19</sup> it is obviously very old.

Moreover, writers in all parts of the early Christian world fundamentally maintained this allegorical interpretation. With Irenaeus in southern France, Clement in Alexandria, Origen in Judea,<sup>20</sup> Chrysostom in Constantinople,<sup>21</sup> Ambrose in Milan,<sup>22</sup> Augustine in Africa,<sup>23</sup> Isidore in Spain,<sup>24</sup> and Eligius in northern France,<sup>25</sup> these prominent theologians or influential spokesmen covered the corners of the Christian world of their day. Each writer who made use of the Samaritan story adapted its core elements somewhat to suit his individual needs or interests. Some people may feel that this malleability proves that an allegorical reading of this text is a subjective fabrication and therefore should not be taken seriously. But, on the contrary, the varied nuances given to this parable all presuppose an essential, common understanding of the story in a specific allegorical sense to which those subtle modifications were then added.

Into late antiquity and the Middle Ages, other clerics<sup>26</sup> continued to expound on the meaning of the Good Samaritan. Although in some ways they deviated further from the original sense of the allegory, all of them still essentially accepted the outlines of the standard allegorization presented by the earliest writers.<sup>27</sup> From these early Christian writings, it is clear that the dominant if not exclusive understanding of the story of the Good Samaritan in early times was allegorical. (See also plates 1–8.) The story was basically understood from the beginning as a type and shadow of Christ saving mankind from the fall of Adam. In its broad outlines and in its earliest, straightforward rendition, the allegorical reading has much to commend it.

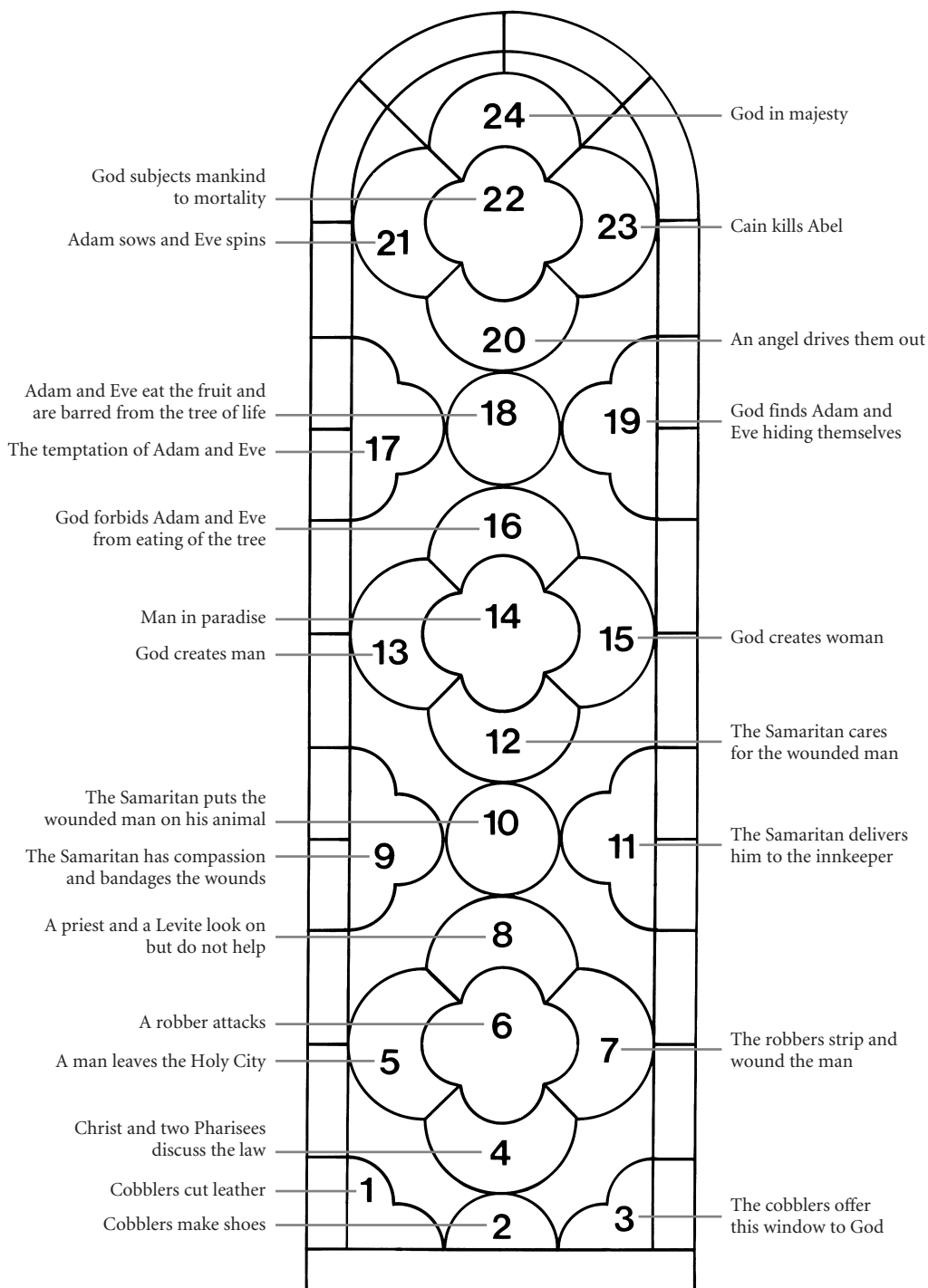


FIG. 2. Key to Chartres Cathedral Window



**FIG. 3. Chartres Cathedral Window.**

A famous stained-glass window in the Chartres Cathedral depicts the parable of the Good Samaritan in tandem with the story of the creation and fall of Adam and Eve. The bottom half (scenes 4–12) tells how a man went down from the Holy City (4), fell among robbers (6–7), and was rescued by the Samaritan (9–12). The top half shows Adam and Eve in Paradise (13–16), their fall and expulsion into the world (17–21, 23), and God in his majesty (22, 24). Christians in the Middle Ages regularly understood Jesus' parable to refer to the fall of Adam and Eve and the redemption of mankind. Read in an ascending pattern of alternating horizontal and diagonal moves, the window emphasizes this one typology.

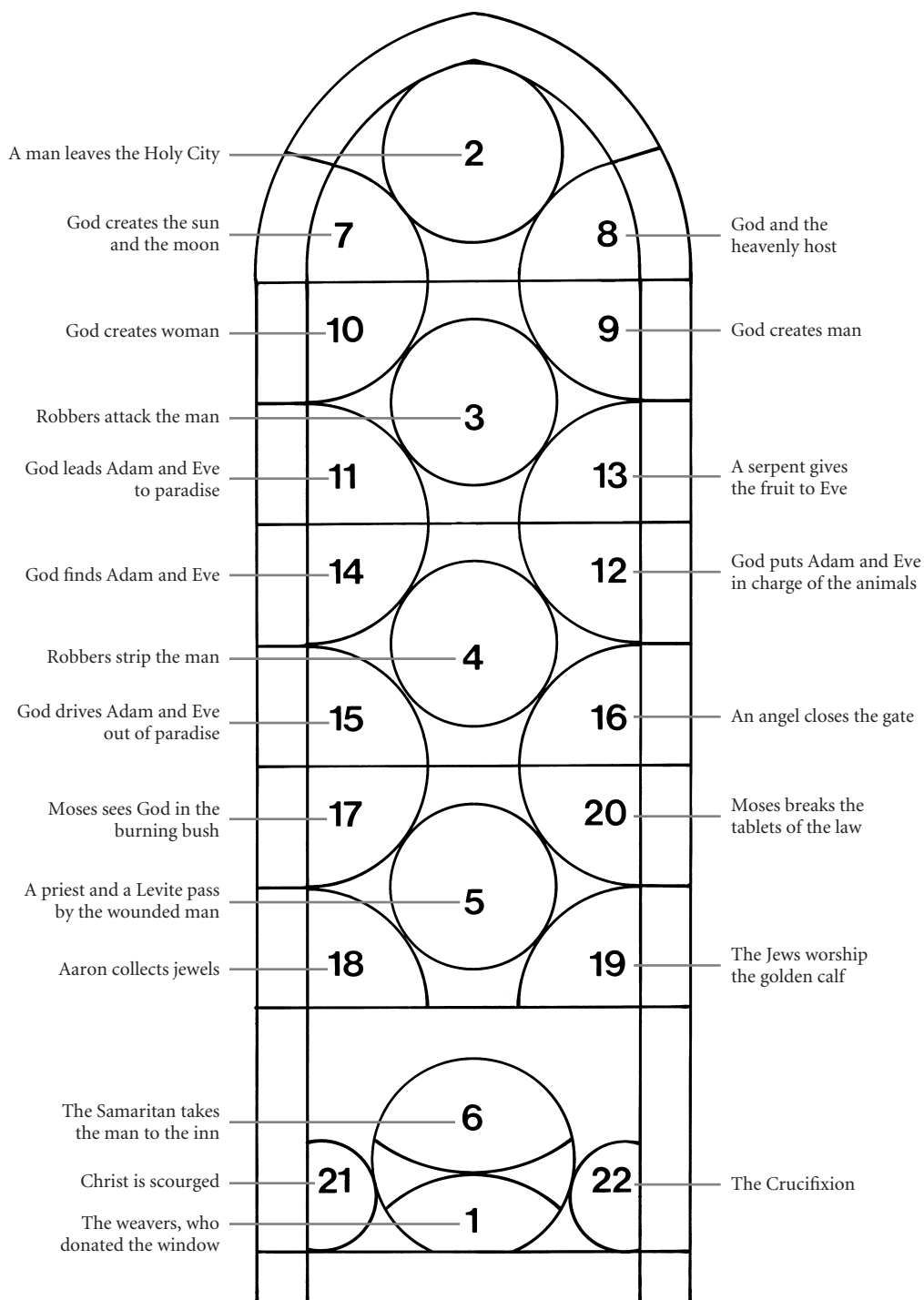
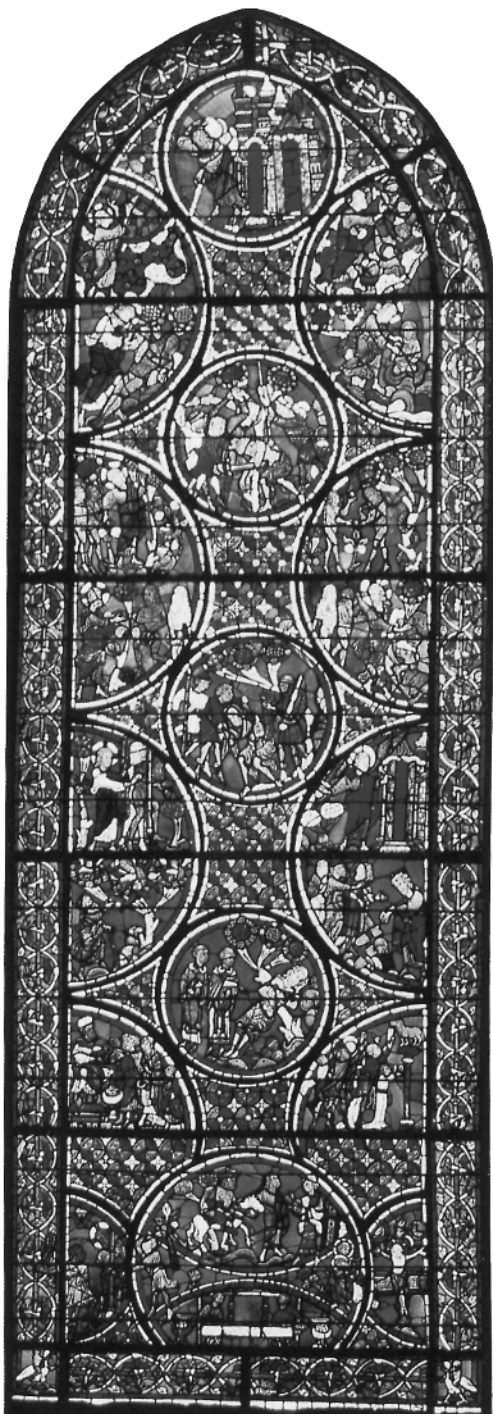


FIG. 4. Key to Bourges Cathedral Window



**FIG. 5. Bourges Cathedral Window.** The Good Samaritan window in the cathedral at Bourges, read from the top down, relates the parable in its central circles (2–6). In the semi-circles on the sides are ten scenes from the creation and fall of Adam and Eve (7–16), four scenes from the life of Moses (17–20), and two small medallions concerning the death of Christ (21–22). While this window places its greatest emphasis on the Fall, with two main scenes showing the attack of the robbers and the victim being stripped (3–4), this window also surrounds the scene of the priest and Levite (5) with four vignettes from the Exodus, especially showing Israel's rejection of Jehovah (18–20). The window thus features two significant typologies, while briefly introducing the third in its last two scenes (21–22).



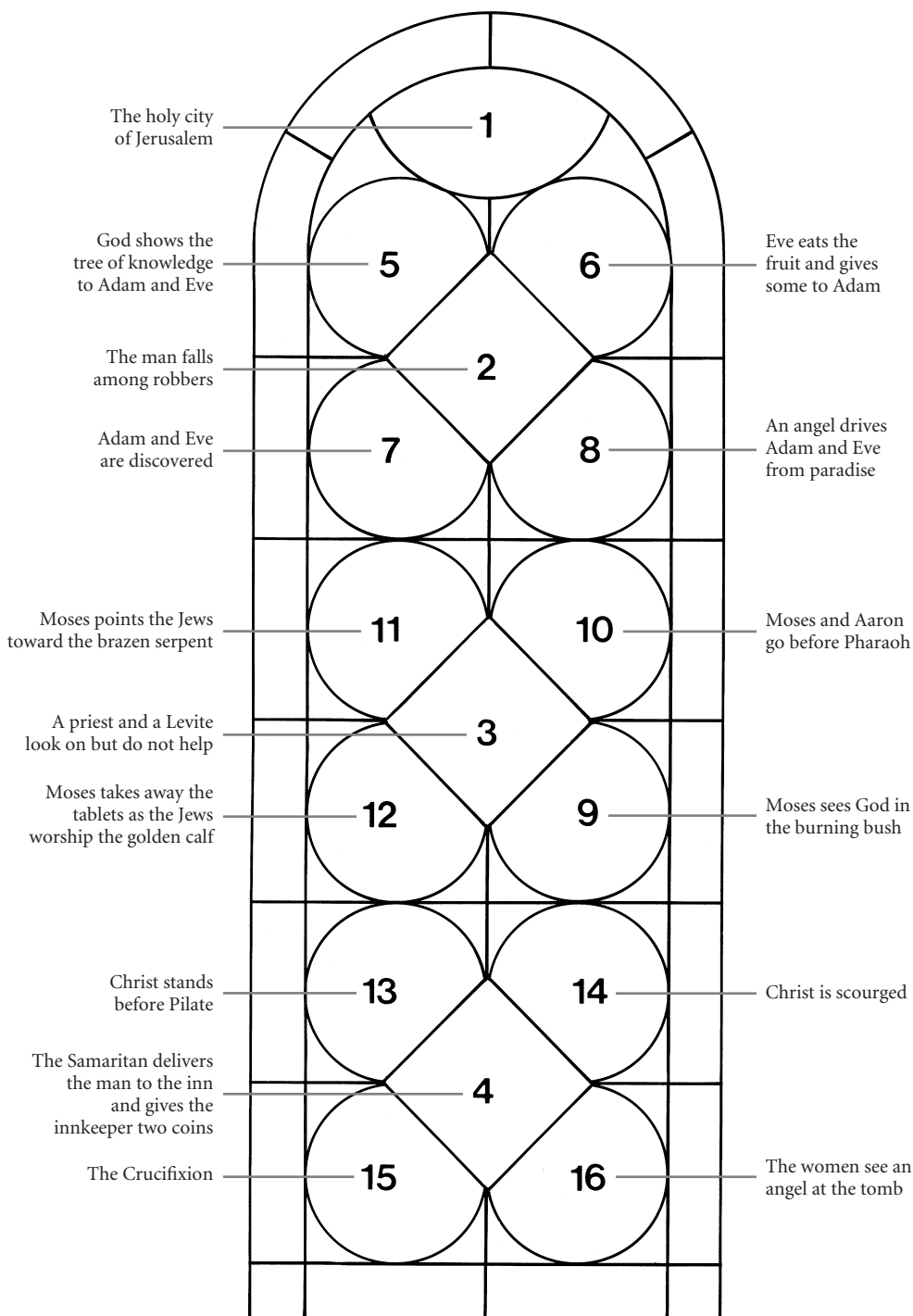
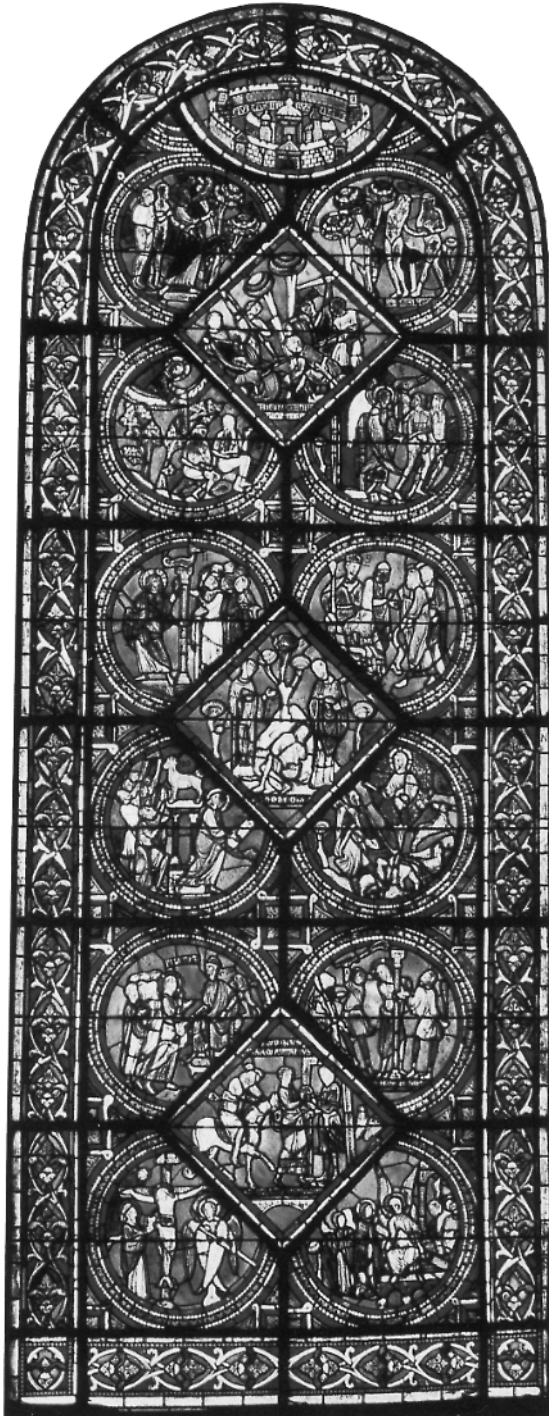


FIG. 6. Key to Sens Cathedral Window





**FIG. 7. Sens Cathedral Window.** The window in the Sens Cathedral is the most systematic of these three Good Samaritan windows. It too is read from the top down (1–4), with its three main scenes being diamond shaped. These three receive equal treatment. Around the attack of the robbers are four scenes focusing only on the transgression of Adam and Eve (5–8) and not on the creation. Around the priest and Levite are four scenes showing not so much the apostasy of the Israelites (12) as Moses' faith (9–11). Around the delivery of the victim to the inn and the Samaritan's payment of two coins are four scenes from the suffering and resurrection of Christ (13–16), as he paid for the sins of mankind and promised to come again.

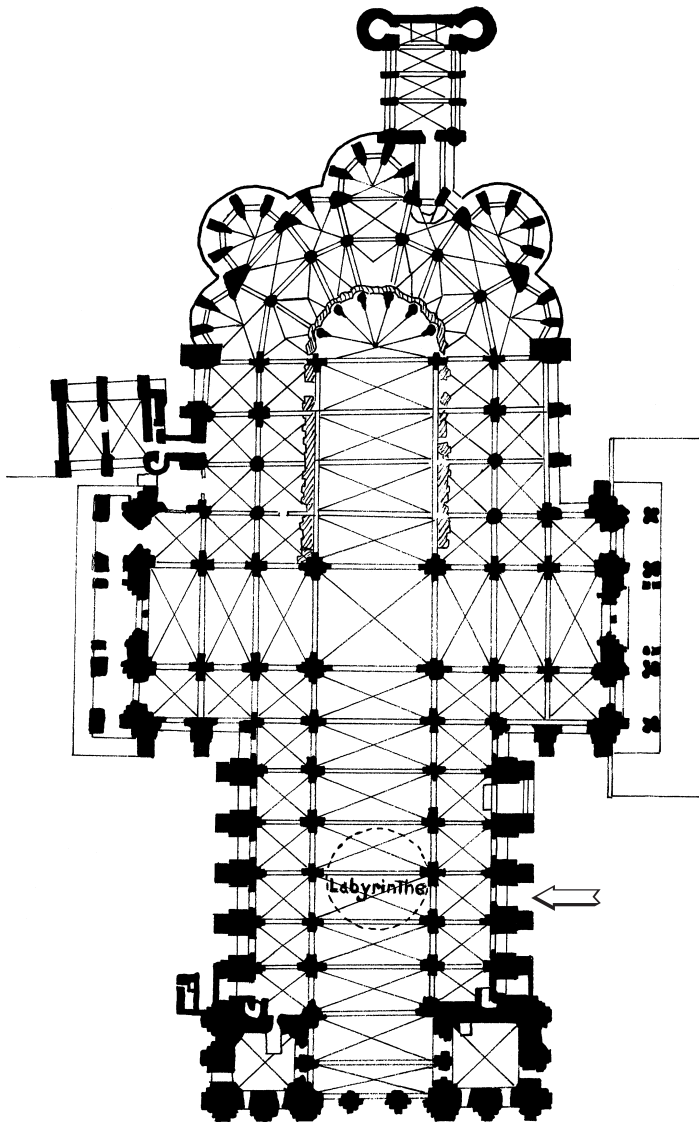


FIG. 8. Location of Chartres  
Cathedral Good Samaritan Window

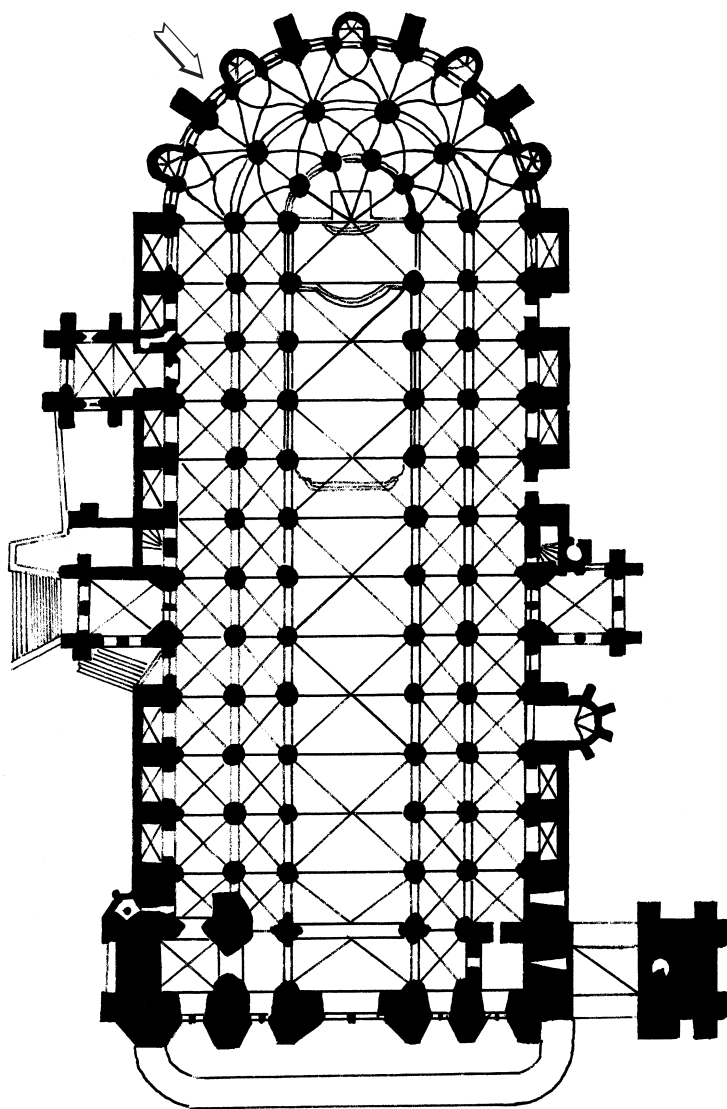


FIG. 9. Location of Bourges  
Cathedral Good Samaritan Window

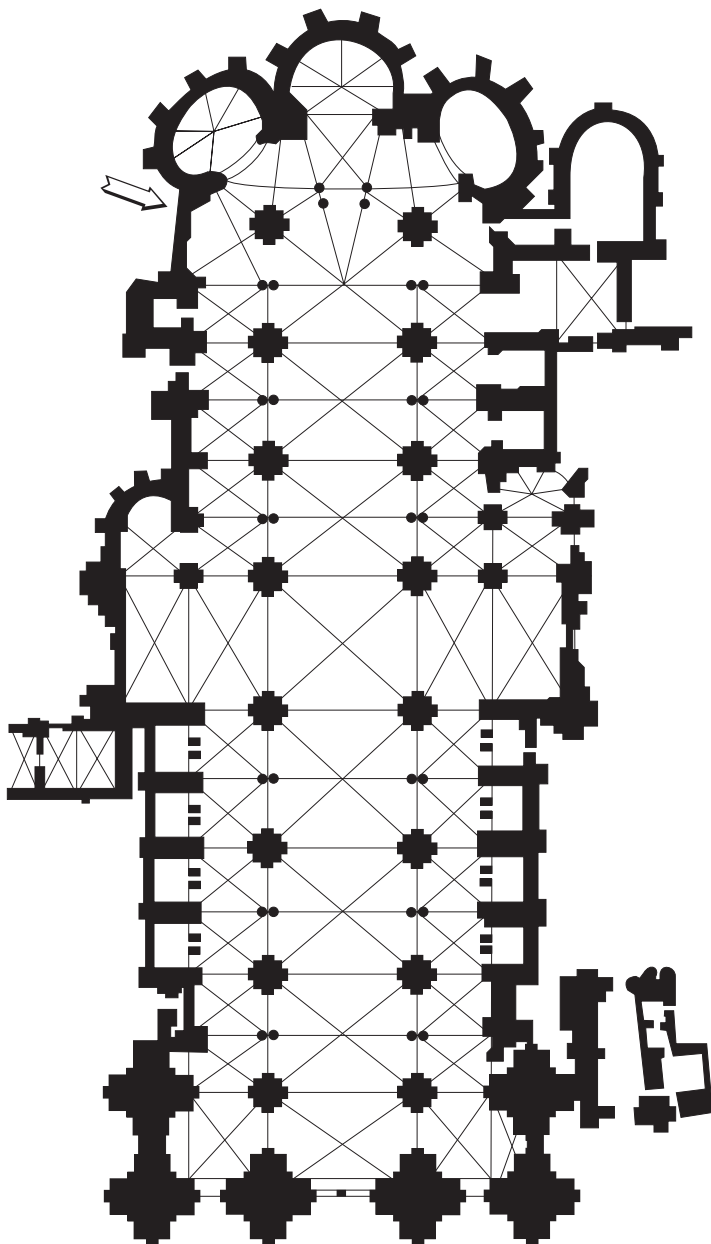


FIG. 10. Location of Sens  
Cathedral Good Samaritan Window





PLATE 1. *Top*: Sens, scene 1. The man began his journey in Jerusalem, the temple city of God. *Bottom*: Chartres, scene 14. Man began in the presence of God. Adam is shown here in paradise.



PLATE 2. *Top*: Bourges, scene 2. The man separates from the city of God on his way out into the world. *Bottom*: Chartres, scene 16. Adam and Eve are instructed not to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.





PLATE 3. *Top*: Sens, scenes 2 and 5–8. The man falls among robbers. The surrounding scenes concern the transgression first of Eve and then of Adam: God shows Adam and Eve the tree of knowledge, Eve eats the fruit and gives some to Adam, Adam and Eve are discovered, and an angel drives them from paradise. *Bottom*: Chartres, scene 20. An angel drives Adam and Eve from the Garden, stripping them of their premortal glory.





PLATE 4. *Top*: Sens, scenes 3 and 9–12. The priest and Levite, holding their books, look on but do not or cannot help the fallen man. The surrounding scenes are Moses sees the burning bush, Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh, Moses raises the brazen serpent, and the Israelites worship the golden calf. *Bottom*: Bourges, scenes 18 and 20. Aaron collects gold for the calf, and Moses breaks the tablets of the law.



PLATE 5. *Top*: Chartres, scene 8. For the early Christians, the priest and Levite symbolized the Old Testament law and the prophets. *Left*: Chartres, scene 9. The Samaritan tilts his head in compassion and binds a bandage around the head of the wounded traveler.





PLATE 6. *Top*: Sens, scenes 4 and 13–16. The wounded man rides on the beast of the Samaritan, who pays the innkeeper two denaria. In the surrounding scenes, Christ stands before Pilate, Christ is scourged, he is crucified, and the women see an angel at the tomb. *Bottom*: Chartres, scene 4. Christ and two Pharisees discuss the law.



PLATE 7. *Top:* Chartres, scene 10. The Samaritan brings the wounded man to the inn, representing the church. *Right:* Chartres, scene 11. The innkeeper welcomes them. *Bottom:* Chartres, scene 12. The Samaritan cares for the man throughout the night.







PLATE 8. Bourges, lower half of window. Scene 6 depicts the compassion of the Samaritan, which represents the pure love of Christ. Flanking that scene are scenes 21 and 22, showing the scourging and crucifixion of Jesus. Courtesy George S. Tate.

### An Allegorical Typology Enriched by LDS Insights

Originally, the elements of the Good Samaritan story appear to have expressed to readers many plain and precious things, all of which are held together and become even richer when understood in terms of restored Latter-day Saint doctrines of God's plan of salvation. As the following step-by-step analysis shows, each element in this allegory corresponds significantly with an important step in the journey of all of mankind toward eternal life. In other words, the parable of the Good Samaritan is not only a story about a man who goes down to Jericho, but also about every person who comes down to walk upon this earth. Simply stated, the man who "went down" from Jerusalem can be seen as representing Adam or all mankind. Jerusalem is the Garden of Eden or a premortal paradise, and Jericho is the world. The man's descent is the Fall or our own entry into mortality. The robbers are the forces of evil that wound the man and leave him half dead and stripped of his garment. The priest and Levite represent the law of Moses, who are thus unable (not just unwilling) to save mankind, while the Samaritan, who comes to the aid and rescue of the victim, represents Christ himself. He has divine compassion on the man, washes him with wine, and anoints him with oil. The Samaritan then takes the man to a public inn, representing the Church, which is open to all. Entrusting the victim to the care of the innkeeper, the Samaritan promises he will come again, at which time he will recompense or reward the faithful innkeeper.

*A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves.*

*A certain man.* The early Christian Fathers mainly identified this man specifically as Adam. Indeed, the Aramaic word for *man* (*adam*) may have stood behind the Greek "a certain man" (*anthrōpos tis*), suggesting that this story alluded to Adam much more obviously in the ordinary Jewish language of Jesus' day than it does in modern languages.<sup>28</sup> The Hebrew *adam*, however, also means "man, mankind," "men," as well as "Adam" as a proper name.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, the Greek word appearing in Luke 10:30, *anthrōpos* (man, person), encompasses each human being in general, both men and women. The more specific Greek word for man (*anēr*) is generally used to designate males only.

Consistent with the broader meanings of *man*, it is noteworthy that Clement of Alexandria, one of the earliest of the Christian Fathers, saw the victim in this allegory as referring to "all of us." Likewise, the idea that the plan of salvation and gospel of Jesus Christ apply universally to each of God's children is fundamental LDS doctrine. We are indeed all travelers, subject to the risks and vicissitudes of mortality.

*Went down.* Chrysostom saw this part of the story as representing the descent of Adam from paradise, the Garden of Eden, into this world—from glory to a loss of glory, from life to death. The Greek is *katebainen*, and the Latin is *descendebat*, both indicating an actual descent. Origen saw here an intentional transgression or falling into individual sinfulness; Ambrose saw this as the fall of mankind under the sinful shadow of original sin.

In light of the second Article of Faith, Latter-day Saints would tend to agree with the intentionality highlighted by Origen, although not with his negativism, and much less with the inherited sinful nature emphasized by Ambrose. If the man who goes down represents all of humanity, then the narrative is not a tale of sin; it is a depiction of the beneficial “coming down” of all spirits from the premortal realm, as all men and women voluntarily and purposefully come down into the world through birth. Following the same steps, even Christ’s birth, baptism, and mortality are described in scripture as a beneficial descent, a coming down, a “condescension,” or coming down to be with us (1 Ne. 11:26; 2 Ne. 4:26).

Indeed, the language in Luke 10 implies that the man goes down intentionally, through his own volition, knowing the risks involved in the journey. In the tale, no one forces the man to go down to Jericho; and for whatever reason, the person apparently feels that the journey is worth the obvious risks of such travel, which were well known to all people in Jesus’ day.<sup>30</sup> When the lone traveler then falls among the robbers, it is an expected part of the mortal experience.

On the one hand, in the typical modern or secular interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan, people usually assume that the victim has suffered his great misfortune due to absolutely no fault of his own. On the other extreme, in the early Christian interpretation, people assumed that the victim had somehow wickedly sinned. The LDS framework of the plan of salvation offers a felicitous middle ground, allowing one to see the plight of the victim when he falls among the robbers as an expected, necessary, and valuable part of the fallen experiences of mortality without overemphasizing the negative aspects of entering into the mortal condition and becoming vulnerable to sin.

*From Jerusalem.* The story depicts the man going down from Jerusalem, not from any ordinary city or place. Because of the sanctity of the Holy City, early Christian interpreters readily sought and found significance in this element of the allegory. For Chrysostom, Jerusalem represented paradise or heavenly living and thoughts. For Augustine, it represented “that heavenly city of peace.” For Isidore, it was not the paradise of the Garden of Eden on earth, but “the paradise of heaven,” and for Eligius it represented “man’s high state of immortality,” perhaps even implying man’s premortal existence.



Latter-day Saints may see in this element all of this significance and more, for the person who descends in the story can represent all mankind coming down from the premortal realms above. Moreover, that person comes down from Jerusalem, the holy temple city, and hence from the ritual presence of God. Presumably, as a person comes down into the world, he or she comes endowed with the blessings and promises obtained from God or conferred upon people in that holy temple city or setting. One of those assurances would have been the knowledge that God would provide a Samaritan necessary to save that person when he or she should encounter grave difficulty along the path of life.

*To Jericho.* The person in the story is on the road that leads down to Jericho, which the Christian interpreters readily identified as this world or, as Eligius said, “this miserable life.” The symbolism is fitting, for at 825 feet below sea level, Jericho and the other settlements near the Dead Sea are the lowest cities on the earth. Jericho’s mild winter climate made it a popular resort area where Herod the Great built his most splendid, luxurious vacation palace.

From a Latter-day Saint point of view, however, it is important to notice that the person has not yet arrived in Jericho when the robbers attack. The person is on the steep way down to Jericho, but may not yet have gone very far and certainly has not yet reached bottom. As a person begins to fall or descend farther and farther from the heavenly state, troubles will undoubtedly become more and more intense. Latter-day Saints might not see Jericho as representing this world, but rather as pointing toward the telestial or lowest degree of glory (or perhaps even outer darkness) in an ultimate sense, looking to some future final judgment or doom from which all mankind can be saved. The attack of the robbers and the intervention of the Samaritan stem that course and take the traveler in a more wholesome direction.<sup>31</sup>

*Fell.* This may, of course, refer to the fall of Adam, but Ambrose and Eligius saw it also as individual human failing. Ambrose blamed this fall on “straying from the heavenly mandate,” and Eligius preached that if the person “had not been puffed up inside, he would not have fallen so easily when tempted on the outside.” The Greek word here, *periptō*, means more than simply *piptō*, to “fall down [or] fall to pieces,” but to “encounter,” “fall in with,” or “fall into [certain circumstances], especially misfortunes.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, it is easy to see here an allusion to the fallen mortal state, the general circumstances of the human condition, or the natural man, as well as the plight of individual sinfulness or the results of falling in with the wrong company.

*Among thieves.* The early Christian writers saw here a reference to “the devil” (Irenaeus, Chrysostom), “the rulers of darkness” (Clement), “hostile

powers” (Origen’s elder), “opposing forces or evil spirits or false teachers” (Origen), “angels of night and darkness” (Ambrose), “the devil and his angels” (Augustine), “angels of darkness” (Isidore), or “evil spirits” (Eligius).

Latter-day Saints may want to add a further dimension to this discussion, for these thieves (or rather bandits or robbers, such as the Gadianton robbers) are not casual operators but organized outlaws acting as a band of robbers (*lēistai*). The traveler is assailed not only by random devils or various wicked spirits, but by a band of highwaymen, a pernicious society that acts with deliberate and concerted intent.<sup>33</sup>

*Which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.*

*Stripped of his raiment.* The early Christians sensed that Jesus spoke of something important here. Origen and Augustine saw here a symbol for mankind’s loss of immortality and incorruptibility. Chrysostom similarly expressed this in terms of a physical loss of “his robe of immortality,” but also as a moral loss of the “robe of obedience.” Ambrose spoke theologically of being “stripped of the covering of spiritual grace which we received [from God],” and Eligius saw this psychologically as the loss of a “robe of innocence.”

Latter-day Saints may find even further significance in the fact that the attackers apparently want the person’s clothing. They undress (*ekdusantes*) the victim.<sup>34</sup> Oddly, they are not interested in the traveler’s wealth or any commodities he or she might be carrying. Nothing in the story indicates that the person is carrying anything at all (although one may assume that the person has sufficient for his needs). For some undisclosed reason, however, the attackers seem to be particularly interested in the garment worn by the person. At least the stripping receives special mention. Perhaps they want this clothing not only for its inherent use as fabric (just as the soldiers divided the garments of Jesus at Golgotha, Matt. 27:35), but also to claim its social status or privileges or powers, especially if it represents a temple or holy garment; or maybe they want to deny the person the privilege of wearing something distinctive or sacred, somewhat reminiscent of the story of Joseph’s coat taken by his brothers<sup>35</sup> or the young men or soldiers who confronted Elisha near Jericho after he received the priesthood garment or mantle of Elijah.<sup>36</sup> In any case, according to Origen’s Fragment 71, the robes are not only taken off, but also “taken away” (*aphairesis*).

*Wounded.* The early Christian Fathers consistently mentioned here references to the pains of life, the travails of the soul, the afflictions due to diverse sins and acts of disobedience, or the sins and vices of this mortal condition in general. Latter-day Saints would agree: sin and the enemies of the soul do indeed wound the spirit, whether those blows of mortality

involve willful rebellion or inadvertent transgression. Furthermore, it may be significant that the robbers do not kill the victim. Perhaps this is to say that they do not have the power to tempt or torment the man beyond his ability to resist (1 Cor. 10:13) or beyond the Lord's power to redeem.

*Departed.* They simply go away. The Christian Fathers offered no thoughts about why or how they go away. Latter-day Saints might infer that they are somehow commanded to depart or that the robbers are at least afraid that someone with greater power will find them and catch them in their treachery, and so they quickly run to hide. Chrysostom came the closest to this idea, suggesting that the robbers do not kill the victim because God does not allow it.

*Half dead.* The robbers depart, leaving the person exactly half dead (*hemithanatos*). In this, Chrysostom saw a faint indication of God's protection, and he oddly assumed that the robbers do want to kill the traveler. Eligius found in the depiction of the human condition as being "half-dead" the idea that the devil may "deprive us of the happiness of immortal life but not of our sense of reason."

Latter-day Saints may find in this detail, however, a much more likely, specific reference to the first and second deaths (compare Alma 12:31–32). The person had fallen, had become subject to sin, and thus had suffered the first death, becoming subject to mortality. But the traveler is only half dead; the second death (permanent separation from God) can still be averted. The early Fragment 71 left by Origen contains a similar idea: this represents "the death of half of our nature, for the soul is immortal"; but then this notion drops out of later commentary.

*And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.*

*By chance.* In other words, the arrival of the Jewish priest is not the result of a conscious search on his part. This priest is not out looking for people who are in need of his help. Stated even more strongly, neither is the priest there by any eternal plan or by divine intervention. He is simply there "by chance" (*kata synkurian*).<sup>37</sup>

*A certain priest.* The early Christian commentators saw this as a reference to the law of Moses (Origen) or to Moses himself (Chrysostom) or to the priesthood of the Old Testament (Augustine), which did not have the power to lead to salvation. In New Testament times, the priests in Jerusalem were aristocratic clergy who administered the affairs of the temple. Many of the ruling priests were Sadducees, who were largely sympathetic with Hellenism and the Roman authorities. The story of Jesus does not specify whether the priest (*iereus*) is a high-ranking priest or one of the 7,200 ordi-

nary priests who took their weekly and daily turns serving in the temple.<sup>38</sup> Because this character is left somewhat indefinite, he may point to any high-ranking priest or religious leader, including those of pagan temples or gentile churches, who might use any ordinances or teach people any doctrines of men that do not have the power to bring people into life eternal.

*A Levite.* Origen and Chrysostom consistently say that the Levite represents “prophetic discourse” or the “body of prophets after Moses.” In other words, for these early commentators, the priest and the Levite represented the law and the prophets of the Old Testament, which Jesus came to fulfill (Matt. 5:17). This idea fits the ethical message of the Good Samaritan, for doing unto others as you would have them do unto you “is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

But associating the Levites exclusively with the prophets seems an unlikely connection for Jesus’ audience. The Levites were a lower class of priest, relegated to menial chores and duties within the temple. If they were lucky, they served as singers and musicians; otherwise they “swept the porches and those parts of the Temple area open to the sky” or served as police “to prevent any unlawful person [such as a Gentile] from setting foot [in the Temple], either intentionally or unintentionally.”<sup>39</sup> Interestingly, although the Levites did not have access to the altar, one of their auxiliary assignments was “to help the priest on and off with his vestments. . . . ‘These stripped them of their raiment,’”<sup>40</sup> the latter conduct being ascribed by Jesus to the robbers.

Nevertheless, in Jesus’ story, at least this lower Levitical priest does more than the aristocratic priest who comes first. The ordinary Levite “came” and saw, whereas the priest only looks from a distance or considers the problem briefly. Perhaps the Levite wants to help, but views himself as too lowly; and even more than the priest, this Aaronic functionary also lacks the full power or authority to save the dying person. But at least this ordinary servant in the House of Israel comes closer than does the aristocratic priest. In the end, however, the lowly Levite also looks away and passes by on the other side.

*Saw him.* Significantly, the priest remains at a distance, and the Levite, who seems to come closer, immediately withdraws. They are apparently unable to help in their present condition, perhaps for several reasons. The point may be that they are unable or unprepared to help, as much as that they are unwilling to do so. The parable gives no reason why they do not help. They “saw” but did not act, perhaps an allusion to the fact that some of the Jews were blinded by “looking beyond the mark” (Jacob 4:14), fore-seeing and watching for the coming of the Messiah, but then not receiving him or acting as he would act.

*Passed by on the other side.* Chrysostom suggested that the priest and

Levite cannot help because they share in the fallen state, but there may be more. The priest and Levite will not cross over to the side of this traveler but stay on the opposite side (*antiparêlthen*). This element emphasizes the fact that they will not switch over or convert to the gospel but stay on their previous Mosaic course.

*But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine.*

*Samaritan.* In all cases, the early Christians saw the Good Samaritan as Christ himself (Irenaeus), “the keeper of our souls” (Chrysostom), “the guardian” (Origen), “the good shepherd” (Augustine), or “the Lord and Savior” (Eligius). Chrysostom suggested that a Samaritan is a particularly apt representative of Christ because “as a Samaritan is not from Judea, so Christ is not of this world.” Modern readers, for the most part, have lost this plain point of view.

This association, however, is probably the strongest emblematic element in the story. This “Christological interpretation,” as Monselewski defines it, is readily acknowledged by several scholarly commentators and theologians, even if they do not extend the allegorical interpretation to include further elements.<sup>41</sup>

Jesus’ audience in Jerusalem may well have recognized in Jesus’ Samaritan a reference by the Savior to himself. Heinrich Zimmermann even promotes the hypothesis that Jesus’ tale may have originated in an actual event in the life of Jesus himself.<sup>42</sup>

Scriptural corroboration for the relevance of this identification of Jesus with the Samaritan comes from the Gospel of John, when some Jews in Jerusalem rejected Jesus with the insult, “Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?” (John 8:48). Perhaps because Nazareth is right across the valley to the north of Samaria, and because Jewish people generally thought as little of Nazareth as they did of Samaria (John 1:46), the two locations could easily be lumped geographically and culturally together.

Latter-day Saint doctrine resonates strongly with this notion, for just as the Samaritans were viewed as the least of all humanity, so it was prophesied that the Servant Messiah would be “despised and rejected of men” and “esteemed . . . not” (Isa. 53:3). Thus, the idea of the lowest outcast fits the role of Christ, who had to descend below all things in order to redeem humanity from death and hell (see D&C 122:8; compare Alma 7:12).

Also, knowing that Jesus intended the story to motivate listeners to “go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37), Latter-day Saints will identify with the Samaritan, desiring to go and do as he did, not only seeing to the physical needs of those who have experienced misfortune, but also becoming “sav-

iours . . . on mount Zion” (Obad. 1:21) and helping to bring to pass the work of God, namely “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). By doing like the Samaritan, we join him in a crucial role as his companions in bringing to pass the work of salvation and exaltation. This relationship between Christ and his disciples is described in two other sayings of the Savior: “I am the vine, ye are the branches,” and “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me” (John 15:5, 4). Likewise, without branches, the vine does not yield fruit.

Furthermore, as has been expounded in great detail by Birger Gerhardsson and others, the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 shares many ethical and religious parallels with the discourse on the Good Shepherd in John 10:1–18.<sup>43</sup> In both, Christ, as the Good Shepherd or the Good Samaritan, saves his flock from robbers (John 10:8) and does not turn away from his duty, as do the hirelings (John 10:13) and the priest and Levite. Perhaps even more pointed may be the connecting linguistic detail that the Hebrew word “sounding most like the name Samaritan” (Hebrew, *Shomeroni*) is, according to Gerhardsson, the word *shamar*, meaning not only guardian or keeper “in the general sense of watchman but also occasionally in the special sense of *shepherd*” (as in 1 Sam. 17:20). The verb *shamar* means “to keep, watch, preserve, support, aid, or tend,”<sup>44</sup> and is “often used as [a] designation of God and of his Anointed,” drawing even closer the linguistic connections between Jesus, the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd, and God.<sup>45</sup> Of course, one should not push any of these verbal connections too far, but these etymological similarities were notably influential in the minds of many of the most knowledgeable early Christian interpreters (Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Isidore).

*As he journeyed.* The text may imply that the Samaritan (representing Christ or his emulators) is purposely looking for people in need of help. Origen, especially, took note of this prospect and its theological implications, that “he went down [intending] to rescue and care for the dying man.” The New Testament text makes it clear that the others come “by chance”; but by saying that the Samaritan “came where he was,” the text does not give the impression that his arrival is by happenstance or coincidence. His conduct is depicted as being more deliberate. “Seeing” (*idōn*), the Samaritan sees with his eyes but also understands the situation with his heart.

*Had compassion.* This is one of the most important words in the story. It speaks of the pure love of Christ. The early Christian writers saw little need to comment specifically on the compassion of Christ, perhaps taking its importance for granted.

Latter-day Saints, however, may wish to think more deeply in this context about the pure love of Christ that each disciple of Christ should cultivate (Moro. 7:47) and also about the deep sympathy that the Savior

feels for the sinner in need, and not just about the misery of the heart (*misericordia*) that became the prominent sentiment felt in this connection due to that Latin word regularly used to translate the Greek word for compassion. The Greek literally means that his bowels are moved with deep, inner sympathy (*esplangchnisthē; splangchnon*, meaning inward parts, bowels; compare Alma 7:12).

This Greek word is used elsewhere in the New Testament only in sentences that describe God's or Christ's emotions of mercy. As is well recognized, "outside the original parables of Jesus there is no instance of the word being used of men."<sup>46</sup> Thus, Daniélou rightly argues that this word is used in the Bible as a distinctive theological marker, referring exclusively to "God's love" or "divine compassion," further strengthening the allegorical identification of the Samaritan as God or Christ.<sup>47</sup> This word appears prominently in two other New Testament parables: in the parable of the unmerciful servant, when "the lord of that servant," clearly representing God, "was moved with compassion" (Matt. 18:27); and in the Prodigal Son, when the father, again representing God, sees his son returning, he "had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (Luke 15:20). Likewise, the Samaritan represents the divinely compassionate God.

*Went to him.* The injured traveler cannot move, but Christ comes to succor him in his hour of greatest need. He runs to the side of those who suffer and comes to their aid. Without this help, people cannot recover and the victim does not move forward.

*Bound up his wounds.* For Clement, love, faith, and hope are "the ligatures . . . of salvation which cannot be undone." For Chrysostom, "the bandages are the teachings of Christ," or the binding of Satan and freeing of man. For Ambrose, Christ binds the sinner "with a stricter rule." For Augustine, the Lord restrains the traveler from further sin. Isidore posited that the Samaritan "cured the human race of their wounds of sin," while Eligius believed the Samaritan "bound his wounds while telling him to repent." Interestingly, Origen made the point that the Samaritan apparently comes prepared: "he had bandages, oil, and wine with him."

Latter-day Saints will understand that the repentant person is bound to the Lord through covenants and thus might find further significance in the process of binding than in the possible symbolic meaning of the fabric of those ligatures. As in the binding of Isaac, the receiving soul is prepared to be bound, to sacrifice all for the Lord. The soul is also bound to the Lord in covenant, and the wounds are tied together with a new dressing. Inasmuch as the robbers have carried off the garment of the traveler and have left him stripped, the Samaritan begins the process of replacing the lost garment or rebuilding the victim's spiritual protection by binding the wounds—"to bind up the brokenhearted" (D&C 138:42)—with these bandages.

*Oil.* A lotion of olive oil would have been very soothing. While most



early Christian writers saw here only a symbol of Christ's words of consolation, words of good hope or remission, Chrysostom saw the oil as a reference to "the holy anointing." This may refer to many ordinances or priesthood blessings: the initial ordinance of anointing (Ps. 2:2; 18:50; 20:6), the use of consecrated oil to heal the sick (James 5:14), the gift of the Holy Ghost (often symbolized by the anointing with olive oil),<sup>48</sup> or the final anointing of a person to be or become a king or a queen.<sup>49</sup> In ancient Israel, kings were anointed with olive oil. The names Christ and Messiah also mean "the anointed one," and accordingly the Christ figure gives the needy soul that which is of his very essence. Latter-day Saints recognize the importance of being anointed in preparation to receive the blessings of eternal life, and LDS scholars find it interesting that "in both scripture and early Christian tradition, olive oil is symbolic of the Holy Ghost. This is because the Holy Ghost provides spiritual nourishment, enlightenment, and comfort, just as olive oil in the ancient Near East was used for food, light, and anointing."<sup>50</sup>

*Wine.* The Samaritan also takes his wine and lets it gush out into (*epicheōn*) the open wound, helping to cleanse and disinfect it. For some of the Fathers, this wine represented the mystery of faith (Chrysostom), the doctrine or word of God (Origen), or the exhortation to labor with the highest fervor of soul (Augustine, Eligius); but others were quick to point out that the wine is "something that stings" (Origen), for God "stings our wounds with a declaration of judgment" (Ambrose).

The earliest Christian interpretation associates this wine with the blood of Christ, "the blood of David's vine" (Clement), an idea with which Latter-day Saints would readily identify. The redeeming blood of Christ symbolized in the administration of the sacrament purifies the body and soul. The administration of the wine, which cleanses and purifies the body and renews the covenant of baptism, potently represents the atoning blood of Christ. Accordingly, the Good Samaritan brings not only physical help but also the saving ordinances of the gospel. This atoning wine may sting at first, but it soon brings healing and purity and becomes soothing and comforting.

***And set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.***

*Set him on his own beast.* The early Fathers uniformly saw in this phrase a reference to Christ's own body, fulfilling the prophecy that the servant will bear "our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17 quoting Isa. 53:4). Augustine said that to be placed on the beast is "to believe in Christ's incarnation," for in the flesh Jesus bore our sins and suffered for us. Certainly Christ carries each of us into salvation. The allegory, however, does not say that the Samaritan carries us on his own back or flesh. The story says that the vic-



FIG. 11. The compassionate service of the Samaritan. Illustration by Rudolf Schäfer, from a 1929 German edition of the Bible published in Stuttgart.

tim is placed on the Samaritan's own beast, which might represent Christ's yoke or some other extension of his power, such as the priesthood, missionaries, or other agents through whom Christ ministers in bringing people into the Church. Although the text does not specify what kind of beast is involved, it may well be an ass, prefiguring a sharing of the Lord's beast of triumphal entry, with Christ allowing each person whom he rescues to ride as the king himself.

*Inn.* For the early Christians this element readily symbolized "the church," "the holy church," or "the universal church" of God. In his Latin translation of Origen's homily containing the words of "one of the elders," Jerome adds a reference to "the stable," but the inn (*katalumē*) of Luke 2:7, meaning "a guest room," should not be confused with the inn (*pan-docheion*) of Luke 10:34, meaning "a public house." Interestingly, the story in no way indicates where the inn is located or where the robbers attack, so the Samaritan may take the victim back up the road toward Jerusalem, beginning his ascent back toward the holy state.

The ideas of a wayside inn, a public shelter, or a hospital, all of which are implicit here, offer meaningful symbols for the Church of Christ. It is not the heavenly destination, but a necessary aid in helping travelers reach their eternal home. Those within the inn are cared for temporarily, and those who work there expect the Samaritan to come again, perhaps with other victims in need of their care.

*Took care of him.* Christ stays with the injured person and takes care of

him personally the entire first night. The Lord does not turn the injured person over too quickly to the innkeeper; he stays with him through the darkest hours. As Origen commented, Jesus cares for the wounded “not only during the day, but also at night. He devotes all his attention and activity to him.”

*And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.*

*On the morrow.* Chrysostom assumed that this refers to a time after this life, “after the holy resurrection,” but Ambrose and Augustine saw here a prophecy by Jesus that he would be resurrected, that he would come again after Easter or “after the resurrection of the Lord.” In other words, Christ ministered in person to his disciples for a short time, for one day and through that night; but “on the morrow” when he departed (that is, after his death, resurrection, and ascension), he left the traveler in the care and keeping of the Church. For Latter-day Saints, however, the dawning of the new day in the life of the rescued victim naturally relates to the beginning of the convert’s new life, enlightened by the true light.

*Two pence.* Early on, Irenaeus, Origen, and the elder saw these coins (which would have borne the images of Caesar) as symbolizing the image of God the Father and his Son, the one being the identical image of the other (Heb. 1:1–3). Chrysostom and Ambrose, however, found here a reference to the scriptures, specifically the Old and the New Testaments, while Augustine identified them with “the two instructions on charity” or love (Luke 10:27). One might suggest that they could also represent in modern times the two priesthoods or any two witnesses to the truth.

Because the two pence (*denaria*) would represent two days’ wages, these coins could well represent making adequate provision for the needs of the person through the stewardship of the Church. If Jesus is saying, “I will pay you for two days’ work,” then he may also be implying that he will return on the third day.<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, the amount of money involved here was probably not arbitrarily selected. Two denaria, or one half-shekel, was the amount each Jewish man had to pay as the temple tax each year.<sup>52</sup> By paying this amount, the Samaritan may be saying symbolically that he has now paid that obligation for the hapless traveler, providing the means for him to be in good standing within the house of the Lord.

*Innkeeper.* Chrysostom and Augustine saw the innkeeper as Paul, but Isidore suggested that the innkeeper could represent all of the Apostles or their successors who preached the gospel. If the inn refers to the Church in general, however, the host could be any Church leader who takes responsi-

bility for the nurturing and retaining of any rescued and redeemed soul.

*When I come again.* The Christ figure promises to come again, a ready allusion for several commentators to the Second Coming of Christ (the unnamed elder and Chrysostom) or to the day of judgment (Ambrose). As Daniélou notes, the Greek word *epanerchesthai* is the same word that appears one other time in the New Testament, in Luke 19:15, referring distinctively to the time when Christ will come again to judge who has done what with the talents or pounds they have been given. These two occurrences of *epanerchomai* are the only uses of this word in the New Testament, significantly heightening the strength of this eschatological element in the allegory of the Good Samaritan.<sup>53</sup>

*Repay or reward.* The innkeeper is promised that Christ will cover all the costs, “whatever you expend.” The root of the Greek word *prosdapanaō* means not only “expend,” but also implies “spend[ing] freely,” even to the point of wearing out or exhaustion.<sup>54</sup> The expectation is that the stewards over the Church will drain themselves in carrying out their responsibilities and that the Lord will make them whole in the day of judgment.

Beyond that, the New Testament text implies more than simply that the Samaritan will reimburse the innkeeper upon his return. He will “reward” (*apodidomai*) the worker generously and appropriately. While the word *apodidomai* can mean simply to repay a debt (as in Matt. 18:25–34), it is also the word used in Matthew 6:4, 18, speaking of God’s great rewards to the righteous (he “shall reward thee openly”), and in Matthew 16:27 (“he shall reward every man according to his works”), as well as in Luke 19:8 (to “restore fourfold”). The innkeeper is therefore assured that, eternally, all his effort will be worthwhile. Chrysostom thus saw the Samaritan’s pledge as a promise of bestowing “a crown of justice” and “a payment worthy of your labor.” Accordingly, this final, significant element in the story gives the assurance that all those who do the Lord’s bidding will receive a just and generous reward in the day of reckoning (compare Matt. 25:40) based, as Irenaeus said, “on the increase we have produced.”

Perhaps more than any other element in the story, this promise of the Samaritan to pay the innkeeper whatever it costs—in effect giving him a blank check—has troubled commentators who try to visualize this story as a real-life event. Who in his right mind in the first century would give such a commitment to an unknown innkeeper, especially considering that hostellers were often thought to be disreputable? But when the story is understood allegorically, it becomes clear that when the Samaritan (Christ) makes this promise and gives the innkeeper his charge, they already know and trust each other quite thoroughly.<sup>55</sup> Otherwise the ending of the parable limps rather badly, for why else would the innkeeper exhaust his resources on behalf of the victim if he did not already know and trust the Samaritan?

Thus, the story of the Good Samaritan works very well as an extended

TABLE 1. A Summary of Patristic Allegorizations  
and LDS Types and Shadows of Luke 10

Luke 10	Patristic Allegorizations	LDS Types and Shadows
a man	Adam	all mankind
went down	left Paradise	left premortal existence
from Jerusalem	a heavenly place	presence of God
to Jericho	the world	a telestial world
fell	straying, pride	fallen state, sins
among robbers	Satan, evil forces	Satan, expected trials
stripped him	losing immortality	stripping authority, garment
wounded him	effects of disobedience, sin	blows of mortality
departed	God did not allow more	required to depart
left him half dead	soul is immortal	two deaths
by chance	n/a	not by the original divine plan
priest and Levite	law and prophets	those with partial authority
passed by	could not help	lacked higher power to save
Samaritan	Christ, guardian	Christ, most humble, despised
saw	n/a	knowing him and seeing all
had compassion	misericordia	pure love of Christ
went to him	to be a neighbor	succoring him in need
bound his wounds	teachings, rules	binding, covenant
pouring in	n/a	gushing forth and filling up
oil	soothing, hope	healing, anointing, Holy Spirit
wine	stinging reprimand	atoning blood
on his own beast	body of Christ	with helper, triumphal rescue
inn	the church	church, but not a final destination
took care	church accepts all	Jesus personally cares for all
on the morrow	after resurrection	dawning of new day, born again
two denaria	Father and Son, two Testaments	two days, annual temple tax
the innkeeper	apostles, Paul	any church leader
when I come again	Second Coming	Second Coming
repay	suitable reward	cover all costs, reward well

allegory for the plan of salvation. All of its elements fit meaningfully into an allegory of the fall and redemption of mankind, encasing many allusions to divine, sacred, sacramental, ecclesiastical and eschatological symbolic elements. Especially from a Latter-day Saint point of view, this interpretation offers a strong reading of the text. In terms of completeness, coherence, insight and outlook, this may be its best reading. Even beyond the elements recognized by the early Christian commentators, the follow-

ing factors have heightened significance for Latter-day Saints: the universality of all people coming down from the premortal world to this earth, the holy temple symbolism of Jerusalem, the stripping of the garment, the implicit reference to the first and second deaths in being half dead, the limitations of the Aaronic or lower priesthood, the pure love and succoring condescension of Christ, the anointing with oil, the washing away of sins through the blood of the Savior, the necessary role of the Church in assisting in the work of the plan of salvation, and the prospect that each faithful servant of the Lord can and should go and do like the Savior himself in helping to bring to pass the eternal life of all mankind.

### QUESTIONS AND FURTHER REFLECTIONS

Thinking about the implications of this allegorical interpretation of the Good Samaritan raises several questions of various kinds that call for further exploration. In each case, additional research sheds positive light on this interesting and, I think, important understanding of this story, one of the most significant and influential stories ever crafted and told by the Savior. The purpose of the remaining sections of this article is not only to legitimize this allegorical interpretation, but, even more, to explore some of its attractive implications.

### The Loss of the Allegorical Approach

On learning about the broad allegorical design of the Good Samaritan, one quickly wonders, Why have people not heard more about the early Christian approach to the Good Samaritan before? When did the story of the Good Samaritan lose its primary allegorical signification? Seeing it as an allegory of the plan of salvation discloses a whole new range of powerful meaning in the traditional parable. When and how did this understanding get lost?

It is clear that the allegorical interpretation remained the dominant understanding of this New Testament passage at least well into the Middle Ages, as is evidenced in the stained-glass windows of several European cathedrals. Even into the Protestant Reformation, the allegorical or Christological interpretation remained the basic understanding.<sup>56</sup> It was so deeply ingrained that even Martin Luther retained all of the basic elements in the traditional allegorical interpretation. Because he rejected the efficacy of the Catholic sacraments in bringing about the salvation of mankind, Luther made a few small adjustments, seeing the oil and wine as simply symbolizing “the gospel” and the Samaritan’s animal as “the cross.” Thus, in his sermon on August 22, 1529, Luther worked through each element in the parable, commenting allegorically on such things as the love of God, the Samaritan as the image of Christ, the robbers as the

devil, the plight of the victim as the helplessness of mankind, and the inn as the Christian church.<sup>57</sup>

The rise of humanism, scholasticism, individualism, science, and secularism during the Enlightenment, coupled with Calvin's strong antiallegorical stance<sup>58</sup> and capped off with the dominantly historical approach to scripture favored in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, eventually diminished the inclination of scholars to see much more in this text than a moral injunction to be kind to all people<sup>59</sup> and a criticism of organized religion as not having the power to benefit mankind.<sup>60</sup> In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "the Christological interpretation almost completely disappeared."<sup>61</sup>

As Leslie Barnard points out, "the great German scholar Von Harnack described [allegorization] as a species of 'biblical alchemy,'" but Barnard is right that such a view is "facile in the extreme."<sup>62</sup> With Barnard, those who enjoy the identification of multiple levels of meaning in the words of Jesus and who recognize that the parable of the Good Samaritan need not necessarily have had only "one, original, simple meaning in Jesus' eyes" may well lament the loss of the original inclination to see this parable as an allegory or typology.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, this approach has been largely overwhelmed in recent years by the critical historical or sociological approaches strongly preferred today in modern biblical scholarship.

### The Strengths and Weaknesses of Historical Approaches

How have modern biblical scholars approached the story of the Good Samaritan? Where do they focus their attention? Most modern exegetes have concentrated on historical matters in an effort to explain the real-life significance of details in the story. Significant studies have been published, for example, on the following subjects:

1. The animosity that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans at the time of Jesus.<sup>64</sup>
2. The rabbinic debates at the time of Jesus over the meaning of the biblical law on loving one's neighbor.<sup>65</sup>
3. Jewish sayings on the priority of mercy (*hēšed*) over law or sacrifice, commenting especially on Hosea 6:6, "for I desired mercy, and not sacrifice."<sup>66</sup>
4. The ritual purity laws that might have inhibited a Jewish priest or the Levite from helping the injured traveler.<sup>67</sup>
5. "The apostasy of the Jewish religious leaders" in first-century Judaism.<sup>68</sup>
6. The infestation of robbers that made it dangerous for people to travel



from Jerusalem to Jericho or in the hill country or desert wadis during the days of Jesus.<sup>69</sup>

7. The illegality of importing oil from Samaria into Judea.<sup>70</sup>
8. The filthy and dangerous conditions of wayside inns in the ancient world.<sup>71</sup>
9. The commercial status of debts incurred at public inns in that era.<sup>72</sup>

Building on these pieces of background information, most of these commentators have sought to intensify the central ethical message of the parable. For example, hatred between Jews and Samaritans can serve to emphasize the shamefulness of not showing kindness to anyone in need, even if the needy person falls outside of one's own accepted religious or societal group; petty technicalities concerning blood or corpse defilement can be used to accentuate the idea that charitable deeds are more important than priestly purity.<sup>73</sup>

Other approaches, of course, have been taken by modern interpreters. Some have applied reader or audience response analysis to the narrative,<sup>74</sup> and others have employed redaction criticism, literary criticism, or text-linguistic criticism.<sup>75</sup> But for the most part, interest in historical factors has predominated.

As interesting and as instructive as these historical details may be, however, they often run contrary to the plain ethical reading of the parable, let alone its overall allegorical thrust. For example, while it may have been hard for a Jew to admit that a Samaritan had been a neighbor to the injured man, we know nothing about the ethnicity or occupation of the beaten man himself. Despite the fact that some commentators flatly state that "the one who is robbed and beaten is a Jew,"<sup>76</sup> and others have even been so bold as to figure that he is a "notoriously dishonest" Jewish merchant whose itinerant lifestyle prevents him from observing "even the most basic laws concerning food preparation and purity,"<sup>77</sup> for all we actually are told in the text the man who is left half dead may be a Samaritan or a Gentile or a pious Jew. His identity is unstated. But without knowing his identity, we know little about the social nature of the Samaritan's compassion. Hence, historical information about such things as the hostility between Jews and Samaritans, the illegality of importing oil from Samaria into Judea, the need to show mercy to foreigners,<sup>78</sup> or the issue of Jews showing kindness to proselytes,<sup>79</sup> while interesting issues, are largely irrelevant to the actual story and superfluous to one's becoming or being like the Savior. If Jesus' purpose was to instruct people to be kind to those outside one's normal circle of friends, he should have clearly identified the victim, for instance, as a Jew or a Roman. Jewish debates may have prompted the lawyer's questions, but they did not dictate Jesus' answer.

Likewise, concerns about priestly impurity may be a red herring. After

all, the man is not yet dead, and thus corpse impurity (Num. 19:11–12) is not a live issue. Moreover, in Jewish law, saving life was a high legal obligation for all people: “One is under an express affirmative duty to save and protect any person in physical danger. ‘If thou seest him drowning in the river or robbers attacking him or a wild beast coming upon him, thou art duty bound to save him.’”<sup>80</sup> Jewish law derived this rule from Leviticus 19:16, “Thou shalt not . . . stand [idly by] against the blood of thy neighbour,” and concerning the risk of attempting to rescue someone who is already dead, “doubt there operates in favour of life.”<sup>81</sup> Moreover, logic requires that the problem of corpse contamination could not have been a major legal impediment in any case of rescuing a person from life-threatening distress, for such a concern would have necessarily presented itself in every case of saving life.<sup>82</sup> While a narrow, legalistic definition of the term “neighbor” might relieve a person of this duty to rescue, just as it would shorten the tether of the second commandment (Lev. 19:18), a supposed concern over corpse impurity adds nothing in support of excusing a person from rescuing a victim in such a case and thus is irrelevant to the logic of the story.

Similarly, all of the historical information about robbers in the countryside surrounding Jerusalem may heighten a modern reader’s awareness of the dangers to which travelers were exposed at the time of Jesus, but this information may actually undermine the effectiveness of the parable. Why would any traveler in his right mind go out into such an area alone? Knowing those risks, a historically sensitive audience would have been puzzled by the implausibility of Jesus’ tale: Does this man go down from Jerusalem recklessly or irresponsibly? Likewise, the foolishness of the Samaritan in giving an innkeeper an open financial account would not seem to help the audience in encouraging them to “go and do likewise” and to think more deeply about the fuller meaning of the story.

Thus, paying too much attention to historical detail may actually derail the richness of the story. Jesus’ contemporary listeners probably would have been thrown off balance from the outset of this scenario precisely because this hypothetical fact situation ran contrary to the social or historical norms of the day. In a similar fashion, the parable of the Prodigal Son also begins with a situation that was at least “deplorable,” when that son asks his father to accelerate the distribution of his inheritance while such a transfer by a living father to a son was highly irregular under the Jewish laws of inheritance in Jesus’ day.<sup>83</sup> Rather than shedding great light on these parables, such anomalies would have been the audience’s first clue that these stories were not to be understood primarily “historically” but typologically. The same realization should tip off modern readers that overemphasizing historical details will lead them down wrong roads as well.

**Previous LDS Commentaries**

How have Latter-day Saint commentators interpreted the parable? LDS writers have published too little about the Good Samaritan to allow one to speak of an LDS interpretive history with respect to this text. Although some LDS writers have sensed the depth of doctrine embedded in this episode, normally the story has been passed over by writers or speakers, as if it offers little beyond the patently obvious.<sup>84</sup>

Of those who have paused to write about this text, most have fallen into line with the ideas emphasized by modern Protestant historicism. Elder James E. Talmage focused his few comments largely on historical observations about the dangers of traveling and Jewish-Samaritan hostilities; indeed, Jesus' story seems so richly realistic that Elder Talmage ventured the opinion that it may even be "true history as well as parable."<sup>85</sup> Of course, an actual event may have stood behind parts of this story, and allegorization and historicity need not be mutually exclusive.

Robert Matthews has accented the polemical setting of the lawyer's question in rabbinic arguments in Judaism around the time of Jesus and interprets the parable as a stern warning against what he sees as the Jewish attitudes of intellectual line drawing.<sup>86</sup> Keith Howick similarly perceived the narrative as antidialectical and antirabbinical ("the parable exemplified the selfish nature of Judaism common at the time of Jesus"), urging modern people to avoid the mind-set of the lawyer who "asked his question from a stilted, narrow, and unloving perspective" and, instead, teaching people to "no longer be bound by duty, but by love."<sup>87</sup> Placing emphasis on the negative historical backdrops frequently mentioned in connection with this story, however, may lead us to make unfair judgments. After all, Jesus was a Jew, not all Jews were dialectical fanatics, not all Jews hated the Samaritans, and the feelings of the priest and Levite remain unstated. While historical caricatures simplify certain extremes and occasionally drive home important messages, they usually do so at the expense of many other valuable insights and attitudes that can enrich our reading of the text.

Taking a strong Christ-centered but still fairly elemental approach to this text, Brent Farley has astutely read the story as a reflection of Jesus (the Samaritan) being born into an "unpopular race" as a Jew, as a symbolic depiction of Jesus' atonement for sinners, and as encouragement for people to accept "the Savior's atoning payment" by showing mercy and love to their fellow beings themselves.<sup>88</sup> Farley is the main LDS commentator, besides Nibley, mentioned above, who has stepped even a short distance beyond the historically based approach usually taken to this parable by modern writers. However, as a paradigm of the human condition and the plan of salvation, the story embraces a broad symbolic view of human progress that extends well beyond this basic connection, noted by Farley and Nibley, between the Samaritan and Jesus himself.<sup>89</sup>

### **An Eternal Imperative**

One may next wonder, does the allegorical reading diminish the moral force of the parable? Ian McDonald has expressed the concern that “in the hands of the Fathers the parable loses its provocative, moral challenge. It becomes instead a confirmation of the faith of the church.”<sup>90</sup> Fred Craddock, who offers a strong ethical interpretation of the story by emphasizing the great energy expended and the dangers risked by the ceremonially unclean Samaritan to act with love expecting nothing in return, worries that “often poor analogies trivialize [the] text.”<sup>91</sup> The entire allegorical approach should not be judged, however, by its weakest exemplar, any more than the entire historical approach should be dismissed because of the silliest of any historical assertions. Rather than detracting from the moral implications of this story, an allegorical reading that is solidly grounded in the plan of salvation enhances its power to motivate ethical conduct. While there is obviously great value in approaching the parable temporally and moralistically, the allegorical approach adds an important eternal perspective to the moral guidance offered by the Good Samaritan. As Werner Monselewski rightly concludes in his extensive survey of the history of interpretation of the Good Samaritan, one need not force a choice between “ethical or nonethical” interpretations: “Emphasis can be placed sometimes more on the ethical aspect and other times more on the theological aspect.”<sup>92</sup> The two do not exclude or threaten each other.

The allegorical foundation undergirds the ethical force of this story by supplying this narrative with its unique, Christian rationale. Without the gospel of Jesus Christ, the story of the Good Samaritan is just another ethical tale, with no greater moral force than one of Aesop’s fables. Without the background of the plan of salvation and the purpose of this mortal existence, the parable lacks a compelling moral mandate, in which case its principal remaining rhetorical motivator is shame: one should stop to help the victim because it would be shameful to be like the insensitive priest or uncaring Levite. When it is superimposed upon an underlying awareness of the plan of salvation, however, the lesson of the parable gains an eternal mandate that impels moral conduct: one should stop to help the victim because this will help to bring about the kingdom of God on earth and bring to pass the eternal life of man. This reading positions deeds of neighborly kindness within an expansive awareness of where we have come from, how we have fallen into our present plight, and how the binding ordinances and healing love of the promised Redeemer and the nurture of his Church can rescue us from our present situation, provided we live worthy of the reward at the time of his Second Coming. In this view, even the smallest of these deeds are not to be seen as trivial acts of politeness or common courtesy, but as the way to follow in the footsteps of the Savior himself by helping to save lives, both physically and spiritually. The alle-

gory thus confirms the entire purpose of this existence. No wonder Jesus told this story, not so much to answer the question, “Who is my neighbour?” but ultimately to respond to the query, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

### The Lawyer’s Questions

Where, then, does an allegorical reading of this story leave the second question asked by the lawyer? The main scholarly objection to any allegorical reading of this parable arises from the specific context in which Luke relates this story, namely in response to the question, “Who is my neighbour?” After telling his story, Jesus did not return to the first question, but only to the second question when he asked, “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” (Luke 10:36). This is where the pericope in Luke ends. If we are to understand that the story of the Good Samaritan is about Christ himself rescuing all of mankind, how is that story responsive to the lawyer’s second question?

In addressing this query, some have wondered if the story of the Good Samaritan originally belonged in the setting of the legalist’s questions, or if Luke took two separate accounts (one dealing with the two great commandments and another about rescuing those in need) and worked them into a single narrative. On the one hand, Eta Linnemann has concluded, “The dialogue of the scribe with Jesus [in Luke 10:25–28] over the question ‘Who is my neighbour?’ was linked in the course of tradition with another dialogue of a scribe with Jesus [in Luke 10:30–37], in which the catch-word ‘neighbour’ also occurred.”<sup>93</sup> Joseph Fitzmyer also holds that “only secondarily has [the story of the Good Samaritan] been joined to the preceding [questions of the lawyer], since it does not really answer the lawyer’s second question.”<sup>94</sup> Many other biblical commentators note that the story seems to be forced into the context of Luke 10:25–28 and that it does not legally settle the question of defining who is one’s neighbor.<sup>95</sup> According to this view, the original form of this encounter is preserved “best in Mark 12:28–34,” which discusses the issue, “Which is the first commandment of all?” (Mark 12:28) without the aid of a parable of mercy.<sup>96</sup>

If it should turn out that the Good Samaritan story originally stood separate from the lawyer’s questions, this would not be troubling for present purposes. In fact it might actually strengthen the argument in favor of interpreting the tale allegorically and acontextually. As a freestanding story it could readily serve as a symbolic kingdom parable or as a parable of self-reference to Jesus quite independent of the legal question about the definition of the term *neighbor*.

On the other hand, perhaps one should not give up too quickly on the

connecting context presented by the Gospel of Luke. By responding to three objections that have been raised by scholars against the Lucan setting, Howard Marshall defends the Lucan context of the Good Samaritan. Marshall points out (1) that in the larger setting of Luke 10:29–11:13 we find “an exposition (in chiasmic order) of the two commandments,” and so the lawyer’s question is integral to the overall context and has not been downgraded by Luke; (2) that the connection between the question and the parable is not “contrived,” but grows out of the close link between the terms *love* and *neighbor* in Leviticus 19:18; and (3) that Luke’s faithfulness to his sources and the Palestinian nature of the story argue against the idea that the parable is merely a redaction of Mark 12:28–34.<sup>97</sup>

Similarly, William Stegner has mounted an interesting argument that, because the words *do*, *live*, and *a [any] man* are found in Leviticus 18:5 (“ye shall therefore keep my statutes, . . . which if a man do, he shall live in them”), which was arguably interpreted in the conventional exegesis of Jesus’ day as applying to “the world to come,” we should understand that the legalist was asking Jesus to interpret the meaning of that specific passage, and that, in telling the story of the Good Samaritan, “apparently, Jesus was simply following the conventional exegesis of Leviticus 18:5 of that day,” thus closely linking the lawyer’s question and Jesus’ mode of response. As interpreted by rabbinic logic, Leviticus 18:5 confirmed that any ordinary man who studies the Torah will enjoy eternal life as much as a priest, Levite, or Israelite.<sup>98</sup> Against the backdrop of this schematic, Stegner argues, an ordinary Samaritan becomes as good as a High Priest in attaining eternal life.

Additionally, one might point to an interesting array of wordplays that bind together the lawyer’s question and the story of the Good Samaritan. Gerhardsson advances the idea that in Hebrew, words for *neighbor*, *shepherd*, and *Samaritan* are close enough to suggest that the lawyer’s question and the parable of the Good Samaritan, indeed, belonged originally to each other, linked through Leviticus 19:18, “for here there is a play upon words of the same kind as we find in the Jewish midrash, where it is a matter of serious exegetical principle. . . . The pericope Lk 10:25–37 was a unity from the first.”<sup>99</sup>

Thus, arguments can be mounted for, as well as against, the original linkage between the lawyer’s second question and Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan. If that question and the parable were originally connected, as Luke reports, perhaps (even more potent than philological or rabbinic evidence) the allegorical message of the parable may offer the strongest corroboration of all for that linkage, for the lawyer’s original question was not “Who is my neighbour?” but “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25). Jesus answered that first question precisely with



a story that depicts the plan of salvation, the course of mortality, the Fall, sin, facing certain death, redemption through Christ, being restored to life, and enduring to the end in righteousness. The real issue was not the second question but the first, from which Jesus was not distracted. The story of the Good Samaritan seems out of context only when the first and primary question is forgotten.

The lawyer was not prepared to understand all of this: that Jesus was the good neighbor, that people should love Christ the neighbor as themselves, or that every person who comes down from heaven to this earth is not only one's neighbor, but also a spiritual brother or sister. But if the lawyer was able to understand even part of the allegory, enough that he would go and do like the Samaritan, he would be set on the path that would eventually lead to his goal of inheriting eternal life. When Jesus concluded his instruction with the injunction, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37), he was inviting the lawyer to consider his own divine potential to do like the Savior himself and, in so doing, to become eventually like the Savior in enjoying eternal life.

### **Hearing the Intent of Jesus**

Is it possible, then, that Jesus intended anyone in his audience to understand the story of the Good Samaritan as an allegory referring to himself and the plan of salvation? It would easily appear that he could have expected some to hear and understand. Jesus usually intended his parables to be understood at several levels. After he had told the parable of the sower, his disciples asked him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" (Matt. 13:10). Jesus answered, some people know the deeper meanings of things pertaining to "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" but to others "it is not given" (Matt. 13:11). As Joseph Smith went on to affirm, "the parables were all plainly elucidated" by Jesus to his disciples,<sup>100</sup> and many of those elucidations were allegorical,<sup>101</sup> presenting truths "so plain and so glorious, that every Saint in the last days must respond with a hearty Amen to them."<sup>102</sup> Assuming that the parable of the Good Samaritan was also intended to be understood as having a deeper meaning, we underestimate the story if we do not look for a second level of meaning in this text. If the allegorical interpretation followed for so many years among Christian readers is not to be accepted as the deeper mystery behind the story, then what else might serve us with such an esoteric reading?

Moreover, many of the parables and analogies in the sayings of Jesus contain some element of self-reference to Jesus himself:<sup>103</sup> the light (John 8:12), the living water (John 4:10), the bread of life (John 6:48, 51), the good shepherd (John 10:11), the true vine (John 15:1), the rock (Matt. 7:24), the gate (Matt. 7:13)—all of these images can refer to Jesus himself. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, Jesus is well understood as the farmer who

“sowed good seed in his field” and wisely allows the wheat and tares to grow together until the harvest (Matt. 13:24–30). In the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:18–23), Jesus scatters his words, which fall on variously receptive soils. In the parable of the wicked tenants (Matt. 21:33–39), Jesus clearly refers to himself as the son and to the wicked husbandmen as the chief priests (Matt. 21:45). In the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids, the bridegroom represents the coming Lord (Matt. 25:1–13). Indeed, this manner of interpretation is recommended in the New Testament itself. In John 5:39, Jesus admonished people to “search the scriptures,” in particular to find ways in which the scriptures testify of him and thereby find “eternal life.” In keeping with these practices and instructions of Jesus, the story of the Good Samaritan also refers to Jesus himself and to the mysteries of the kingdom in his gospel of salvation. Given this rhetorical environment, would not a discerning audience have been conditioned to look for, and indeed to expect to find, some reference in the story of the Samaritan by Jesus to himself, who himself had been called “a Samaritan” by people in Jerusalem (John 8:48)?

### Implications for Finding the Historical Jesus

Can one, then, suggest that the historical Jesus taught a concise plan of salvation that went well beyond a mere proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God? Knowing the scholarly fire storms that swirl around any attempt to speak definitively about the historical Jesus, most scholars would probably not venture an opinion about how much of the allegorical meaning Jesus himself actually intended. But if one may assume (as many do) that Jesus wrote himself into this story in the figure of the Samaritan, then the invitation is open to see many of the other allegorical meanings in the story as originating with Jesus as well.

No one doubts that Jesus created and told the story of the Good Samaritan. Even the Jesus Seminar, in its critical “search for the authentic words of Jesus,” places Luke 10:30–35 in red, the group’s highest attribution of authenticity.<sup>104</sup> The Seminar recognized that the parable challenged a Jewish audience to include “a different ethnic group” within their definition of the term *neighbor*, and seeing the story “as a metaphorical tale that redraws the map of both the social and the sacred world, the Seminar regarded this parable as a classic example of the provocative public speech of Jesus the parabler.”<sup>105</sup>

The Jesus Seminar and most New Testament scholars would go this far, but no further. For the historian, Jesus is permitted to speak on legal and social issues, but not on theological or ecclesiastical matters. That restriction, however, anachronistically presupposes a modern distinction between church and state, between religion and politics. Bright lines between those

domains did not exist in Western thought until perhaps as late as the Enlightenment. From an ancient perspective, Jesus is at least as likely to have been a provocative parabler on theological issues as on political questions.

One cannot prove, of course, that Jesus intended his tale to be understood soteriologically or theologically, as the typological analysis suggests. But if people dismiss this possibility on the grounds that Jesus did not make theological or ecclesiastical statements, their argument begs the question, for Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan itself may be just such a statement.

Indeed, on other occasions, the historical Jesus used such concepts as robbers or Adam and Eve in his regular course of theological instruction. When he called the temple merchants a "den of thieves [robbers]" (Mark 11:17), he conjured up not only political, but also prophetic images (Jer. 7:11); and by logical extension, he found in the Genesis narratives important instructions regarding the theological underpinnings of the law of divorce (Matt. 19:4–7).

The historical Jesus also regularly grounded his ethical teachings in a theological matrix. He spoke in the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain about compassion and love: "If the story of the Good Samaritan bears any similarity to any other New Testament text, it is closest to Matthew 5:43–48 and Luke 6:27–36."<sup>106</sup> Those two texts explicitly state theological motives for showing mercy and brotherly love in bringing to earth the kingdom of heaven: "[God] sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45) and "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36). It is not hard to imagine that Jesus similarly grounded the ethical message of the Good Samaritan in theology as well.

If Jesus intended his audience to see the path to eternal life in theological and ecclesiastical as well as ethical terms, many opinions about who Jesus was and what he taught would change drastically. In this regard, the evidence of the plan of salvation found in the Good Samaritan may be a stone rejected by the builders (to paraphrase Ps. 118:22; Mark 12:10). It is always possible that the allegorical understanding of the early Christian Fathers was first detected in the story retrospectively, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, but it all fits so well with the plan of salvation that it seems improbable that the creator of this parable was unaware of the symbolic payload that its words easily carry. It may well be the premier place in scripture where the Savior himself teaches the plan of salvation during his mortal ministry.

### **Not an Isolated Case**

Do the scriptures speak allegorically about the plan of salvation on other occasions? Other allegories of the plan of salvation are indeed to be found in the scriptures and elsewhere in early Christian literature. These

clear instances of allegory increase the plausibility that Jesus intended the story of the Good Samaritan to be understood allegorically as well. The use of allegory has a long-standing place in Israelite scripture,<sup>107</sup> in Jewish wisdom literature before the Christian era,<sup>108</sup> and a most interesting example is found in the early Christian “Hymn of the Pearl.” This text is a beautiful example of another allegory conveying the paradigm of the plan of salvation, of mankind coming from a premortal state to be tested, to be given robes, powers, and the ability to overcome the adversary.<sup>109</sup> Thus, seeing the story of the Good Samaritan as an allegory is in keeping with the world of early Jewish and Christian literature.

While the modern mind seeks a single right answer to the meaning of a text, ancient Jewish and Christian writers and readers expected texts to convey meanings at multiple levels. The school of Rabbi Ishmael taught: “*And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces*: i.e., just as [the rock] is split into many splinters, so also may one Biblical verse convey many teachings.”<sup>110</sup> In each passage of scripture, Origen sought a bodily or literal sense, a soul or moral sense, and a spiritual or allegorical sense. Likewise, Jesus, the great parabler, would not have expected his audience to listen with only one ear.

### Enriched Reader Response

One of the great strengths of seeing the Good Samaritan as an allegory is that it allows listeners in the audience to identify, at different points in their lives, with virtually all of the characters in the story. Readers may well ask themselves, “With whom in this allegory should the listener identify?” The richest reading draws the reader in at various positions. “Though the action of the Samaritan is at the center of the parable, as polyvalent, it invites us to identify with the other characters.”<sup>111</sup>

When this account is reduced to a historical, one-level parable, the listener gets the impression that the only role with which the listener should identify is that of the rescuing Good Samaritan. Christ surely intended that all people should see themselves as the Samaritan in a physical sense, and also as saviors on Mount Zion in a spiritual sense, aiding in the cause of rescuing lost souls, assisting in the work and glory of God in bringing all of God’s children to eternal life. Through this story, people should learn that they should strive to go and do like Jesus, who cast himself in the role of Joseph in Egypt, who also said in rescuing his brethren, “This do, and live” (Gen. 42:18).<sup>112</sup>

Disciples, however, may also want to think of themselves as the innkeeper and go and be like that man who tends to the long-term recovery needs of the injured traveler. He too is neighbor to the one who falls among the robbers. Eventually it is the innkeeper who is promised the

Samaritan's reward. It also even becomes possible for a listener to identify with the Lord's beast, guided by the Savior and helping him to rescue souls.

Or again, the listener may identify with the traveler himself.<sup>113</sup> As the story begins, the audience sympathizes with the traveler, and listeners are invited to put themselves into the position of this unfortunate person. James Gordon stresses this as the original turn of the story: "I believe that Jesus was really suggesting to the lawyer that he should place himself in the position of the *wounded traveller!*"<sup>114</sup> Understood from this angle, the story becomes a commentary on the Golden Rule, seeing that you should do unto others as you would have them do to you. There is power and virtue in positioning oneself, initially, not as the Christ or the rescuer, but as the person in need of being saved: "More existentially, . . . identification with the victim relativizes our notions of how we can receive the graciousness of God. It often comes from those least expected."<sup>115</sup>

Thus, a listener may identify in different ways with each of the characters in this story. Accordingly, we might at times call this story "The Parable of the Distressed Traveler," or "The Parable of the Loyal Innkeeper."

### Symptoms of the Apostasy

A significant by-product of this study is the collecting of evidence that shows how the Christian understanding of the parable of the Good Samaritan changed over time. Most modern critics simply lump all of the early allegorical readings of the parable into the same hopper without recognizing that meaningful variations existed from one interpreter to another. In several respects, the core elements of the allegory remained constant from one writer to the next, but as time went on and as Christian doctrine moved further and further away from the first century, certain key elements grew fainter and eventually dropped out of the picture.

For example, very early in this development Clement expressly stated that "the man" who goes down represents "all of us," but most of the later writers identified him only as "Adam." Those early Christians, like Origen, who understood the doctrine of the universal premortal state of all mankind<sup>116</sup> could have readily recognized "the man" as a representative of all humanity, who have come down from a premortal world, not only as a depiction of the primal parent.

Likewise, Chrysostom recognized the man's robe as a concrete symbol, calling it a "robe of immortality" or "robe of obedience," while later interpreters saw this element more metaphorically as "the covering of spiritual grace" or simply as "immortality," dropping the thought of actual robes or garments from the discussion.

Origen came close to noting the concept of the second death in his identification of being left "half dead," commenting that the soul is immortal

and cannot be killed. Clement perceived that the “wine” has something to do with the blood of Christ as the son of David. Irenaeus understood that the Samaritan, by giving the two coins, entrusts “to us,” meaning all Christians, the duties of being fruitful in caring for the household of God. These potent, early ideas, however, gave way to duller and more blatantly didactic associations in the writings of the later Fathers, or faded from recognition entirely.

Cases such as these suggest that time took its toll as the Apostasy moved, century by century, father away from original Christianity. As a full understanding of the plan of salvation faded from consciousness, the ability or proclivity of Christians to detect in the allegory of the Good Samaritan the full mystery of that plan of salvation also diminished in respect to certain important details.

As I have explained elsewhere and for similar reasons, the prophet Nephi predicted that the apostasy would involve at least three stages with respect to the scriptures: first, “plain and most precious” parts would be “taken away from the gospel”; second, “many covenants of the Lord” would be lost; and third, “plain and precious things” would be “taken away from the book” (1 Ne. 13:26–28).<sup>117</sup> Significantly, much can be lost in the way of understanding, especially from the kinds of knowledge that come from proper covenant-making ordinances, without losing much in the way of actual text.

### Objections to an Allegorical Approach

It should not surprise us, then, that some people, lacking a full understanding of the plan of salvation, have rejected the value of this allegorical reading out of hand. Of course, different people may simply prefer different approaches to literary criticism or textual interpretation. But we may still wonder, what evidence or attitudes motivate their objections? As far as I can see, the reasons proffered against a typological or archetypal allegorical reading of this parable have not been overwhelming.

C. H. Dodd, an important Protestant Oxford classicist of the mid-twentieth century, simply viewed the allegorical approach with abhorrence, calling it “quite perverse.”<sup>118</sup> Such a gross sentiment on Dodd’s part should probably be attributed to the flowering of positivism and the excesses of historical realism that were in their heyday at Oxford at that time. As John Donahue points out, although some allegorizations may have become “fanciful,” the malleability of allegory need not be viewed as a soft reading or as an interpretation lacking in rigor.<sup>119</sup>

Darrell Bock, a recent evangelical commentator, readily concedes that Egelkraut and Schurmann have shown that the Samaritan represents Jesus,<sup>120</sup> but then he goes out of his way to denigrate all other allegorical



features of the story: "Efforts to allegorize other aspects of the parable fail. The man leaving Jerusalem does not equal the Adamic fall nor are the robbers Satan. The priest does not represent the Law nor the Levite the Prophets. The parable focuses on basic morals and compassion, not salvation history. The text gives no basis for reading the parable symbolically."<sup>121</sup> No reasons are stated for these claims, beyond these bald proclamations. I suspect that Bock's evangelical theology drives him to reject so vehemently any such allegorical allusions to salvation history. After all, for a person who believes that salvation is obtained solely by confessing one's faith in Jesus, the story of the Good Samaritan should have ended with the injured man simply looking up at the Christ figure and declaring, "I have been saved."

Similarly, Father Joseph Fitzmyer generously acknowledges the long-standing allegorical exegesis in his own Catholic tradition, but he discounts it on the ground that such a reading is based on ideas that are "extrinsic" to the text.<sup>122</sup> But this objection proves too much, for the same logic would preclude the possibility of any symbolic meaning behind most of the parables of Jesus, for in most cases symbolism is not intrinsically self-evident or overtly stated in any text. Fitzmyer concedes that "Luke would be the first to stress the love of Jesus for the afflicted and distressed of humanity, but," he asserts, "that is not the point of this so-called parable."<sup>123</sup> One wonders, why not? And can the parable only have one "point"? In addition, Fitzmyer willingly traces this extrinsic allegorical material back to the second century, with Marcion and Irenaeus; but again one wonders, may the larger allegory not stem from Christian understandings even a step or two earlier than that?

Joachim Jeremias concluded that none of Luke's parables should be read as allegories because Luke does not explicitly give them an allegorical interpretation. Jeremias argued that "various layers of tradition" in first-century Christianity differed widely "in their use of allegorical interpretation."<sup>124</sup> To support this claim, he tried to distinguish the voice of Jesus from the work of Matthew, the hand of Mark, or the influence of the early church, especially in light of the surprising absence of allegorization in the Gospel of Thomas.<sup>125</sup> Regrettably, Jeremias passed over all of Luke in a single paragraph. While he rightly observed that Luke drew heavily on the explicit allegorical "tradition lying behind him" when using his Synoptic source materials, Jeremias saw in the rich collection of Luke's unique parables "no examples of allegorical interpretation."<sup>126</sup> He based this conclusion on the absence of overt evidence in Luke that spells out the intended allegorical interpretation. But the absence of such pointers does not necessarily preclude an inherent allegorical dimension in the Lucan parables, especially in a case such as that of the Good Samaritan, which was given to answer the

lawyer's questions in an obviously symbolic manner. One finds in Jeremias the odd conclusion that, although the origin of allegorization "is evidently to be found in the first place on Palestinian soil,"<sup>127</sup> the Lucan-source parables (indisputably from Palestine) were originally "free from allegorizing interpretations."<sup>128</sup> But maybe not. The argument from Luke's interpretative silence is weak, especially in light of the text's inclusion of the lawyer's formative questions at the outset that make an interpretive postscript unnecessary. Perhaps Luke gave his future scholars too much credit, assuming that they would get the allegorical or Christological message without needing to have it all laid out for them.

Thus, the objections raised against the use of allegory in reading the Good Samaritan are not particularly persuasive. Reticence to embrace the idea that the parable envelops an allegory of the plan of salvation may be less a result of logic and more a reflection of the loss of clear knowledge about that foundational plan.

### **A Turn toward Allegorical Thinking**

Of course, not all modern scholars turn away from allegorical or multi-valent readings. One may even ask if the allegorical approach has made something of a comeback in recent years in some literary circles. Indeed, several recent interpretations of the Good Samaritan have gone beyond the limits of historical criticism, leading Fitzmyer to acknowledge that "many modes of exposition, most of them allegorical and extrinsic," including Christological, ecclesiological, sacramental, or soteriological readings, "have not been wanting in modern times."<sup>129</sup> Several reasons may account for this resurgence.

Some scholars, such as Father Daniélou, are drawn to the value of the "ancient tradition" as an antidote to modernity. He concludes: "It is legitimate to see in this parable one of the most admirable expressions of the plan of salvation. And when the theologians borrow from its terminology, this is not fantasy but legitimate development in the transmission of the meaning of the parable."<sup>130</sup>

More modernist interpreters, such as Ian McDonald, correctly draw on critical theory to point out that all readers, including the historicist readers, unavoidably "bring their presuppositions to the text."<sup>131</sup> Using postmodern insights, McDonald shows that the parable may not be as simple as people have usually assumed.<sup>132</sup> Through the use of reader response analysis and the view of the victim "from the ditch," McDonald concludes that "the parable crafts an image of divine reality invading the conventional world of first-century Palestine. The Fathers were right," he emphasizes, "to look for something beyond the literal or historical dimension."<sup>133</sup>

In a postmodern age, other readers may be more willing to ask, with Leslie Barnard, “What if the parable of the Good Samaritan did not have one, original, simple meaning in Jesus’ eyes?”<sup>134</sup> Allowing also for the possibility of an allegorical or archetypal reading requires “no flight from reality into a world of make-believe” or the use of some “inferior art-forms.”<sup>135</sup> This sort of interpretive work is not to be “discarded by a more enlightened and critical age” but is “an essential part of what is an ongoing task—the theological and spiritual interpretation of the New Testament—a task which must be attempted in every age.”<sup>136</sup>

### A Stronger Allegorical Reading

Surveying all of the foregoing, readers in this latter-day age may thus ask: Is it possible, in light of the restored knowledge of the plan of salvation, to see the parable of the Good Samaritan in stronger allegorical terms than ever before? Indeed, the restored gospel of Jesus Christ offers a deep spiritual reading and reinstates a more coherent flow of thought into the parable’s allegorical subtext than is found in the traditional expositions.

It must be conceded that the patristic allegorization suffers at certain points from jarring shifts and disjunctures. For example, one begins with “the man” representing “Adam,” but by the end of the story, the victim has inexplicably transmuted into a representation of “all people” who are brought to the Church. One feels the allegorical ground shifting beneath the reader’s feet. Another problem arises when the “bandages” and the “wine” are said to represent the “teachings” of Christ. But one would expect “teachings” to be conveyed at a time of instruction by the innkeeper or Church leader (who transmits the instructions of the gospel), and not to be introduced by the Samaritan at the agonizing point of the victim’s near death and incoherence. Likewise, the beast seems to be a poor representation for the body of Christ when the Christ figure is still in the picture, walking alongside the animal.<sup>137</sup> Incongenial points such as these in the traditional interpretation have left the patristic exegesis vulnerable to complaints that it is too facile and capricious to be taken seriously.

Latter-day Saint doctrine, however, lays alongside the parable more congruously than do the traditional readings. The plan of salvation, as taught by the modern-day prophets, offers an overriding framework that embraces each element in the parable comfortably and sequentially. The LDS typology runs smoothly from beginning to end, including the doctrine that the spirits of all mankind have come down from a premortal sphere, that all humans have entered into this telestial world, have suffered the effects of the fall, have sinned and depend necessarily on the atonement of Jesus Christ, are washed clean from the effects of the Fall by the gift of our Lord, are carried triumphantly back into the fold, are cared for by the pure love of Jesus, need to serve and be served within his Church, strive to

prepare for his Second Coming, and, ultimately, are to go out and do for others as the Savior himself would do.

Indeed, Latter-day Saints may understand the plan of salvation and readily recognize its relevance to the parable of the Good Samaritan precisely because they enjoy the blessings of the temple and the Pearl of Great Price, which clarify the pattern of the fall and redemption that was established from the foundations of the world (Gen. 1–3; Moses 1–5). That sequence clearly begins with Adam and Eve and all mankind (Moses 3:5), a lone journey into this telestial world (Moses 5:1), and efforts by the great impostor to attack,<sup>138</sup> usurp authority,<sup>139</sup> and destroy (Moses 5:13, 18–57). The cycle ends in a step by step preparation, through priesthood (Moses 6:7), anointing and washing (Moses 6:35), covenants (Moses 6:52–54), the atonement of Jesus Christ and his comfort (Moses 6:59–62), and the building up of Zion and the kingdom of God (Moses 7:16–19), preparing the world to greet the Lord on the day of judgment and to receive the celestial reward of eternal life (Moses 7:21). Nothing is more naturally paradigmatic for Latter-day Saints than is this plan, this road map of salvation, the “great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8), a major element in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>140</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Seeing the parable of the Good Samaritan as a capsule of the plan of salvation offers a strong, respectable reading of this text. The strength of seeing this text as an allegory derives largely from the fact that all the elements in the story fit naturally and easily into place in the overall layout. Nothing seems forced or contrived. The pieces all interlock and fit together, as they should if they were designed to be understood that way. A Latter-day Saint construction of the allegory makes even stronger sense of each of its elements, recognizing once again how the scriptures “truly testify of Christ” (Jacob 7:11).

In light of these strengths, it is not surprising that the basic elements of this allegorical interpretation thrived as a very early Christian tradition. This plain and precious reading was the dominant understanding of this story among the early Christian Fathers. Variations that flowered on this stock interpretation over the years evidence the vitality of a received understanding of the story put to use in various devotional or theological settings.

These readings provide a second level of meaning to the parable, a hallmark of the teachings of Jesus. If this meaning is not the hidden “mystery” of this parable, what other message of the kingdom should one seek for in this story? Or should we think that in this, one of the most effective of all his parables, Jesus, for some inexplicable reason, had no divine kingdom message in mind?

Moreover, the allegorical or typological reading works better in some ways than does the purely historical approach. For example, it solves such problems as why a person would go down the dangerous road from Jerusalem to Jericho alone, or why the Samaritan would give a blank check to an unknown innkeeper. If the story was intended primarily to reflect historical reality, it is hard to imagine such events actually occurring or Jesus recommending the latter imprudent behavior as a regular practice, even in the name of charity.

Rather, the allegorical view focuses the attention of Jesus and the reader on the primary question asked by the lawyer about how one might obtain “eternal life.” Only at the allegorical level does Jesus’ answer involve the plan of salvation, the way of obtaining eternal life. Only in this way is Jesus’ response not evasive, but directed at the primary question of the lawyer. At the same time, the allegory also responds to the derivative and narrower question about the definition of the term *neighbor*.

This journey turned out to be longer, but at the same time more interesting, than I originally expected. As I have shared these ideas with friends and colleagues, they too have found the allegorical approach to be intriguing and enriching. At a minimum, one may confidently conclude that, whatever else a person might think about the ultimate probity of the methods of symbolic interpretation, seeing the parable of the Good Samaritan as an allegory of the plan of salvation offers a powerful, spiritual avenue for recognizing that the same truths were taught by the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry as were restored in this dispensation by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Knowledge of God’s eternal plan of redemption indelibly transforms and enriches the meaning of this quintessential Christian text. For me, the tale will never be the same again.

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John W. Welch is Editor in Chief of *BYU Studies* and the Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law, Brigham Young University. Unless otherwise noted, all plates are from Le Centre International du Vitrail, Chartres, or Colette Manhes and Jean-Paul Deremble, *Le Vitrail du bon Samaritain: Chartres, Sens, Bourges* (Paris: Centurion, 1986). Used by permission.

1. For example, *Utah Code Annotated* 26–8–11 (emergency medical assistance); 40–5–6 (mine rescues); and 78–11–22 (motor vehicle accidents), which is listed under the heading “Good Samaritan Act” in *Utah Code Unannotated*.

2. For a discussion of how Jesus’ story motivates moral perception and builds Christian identity, see William C. Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 1999).

3. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 5:261; Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 276–77.

4. David Rolph Seely, "The Allegory of the Olive Tree and the Use of Related Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament," in *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1994), 291. For a discussion of the use of metaphor, simile, allegory, and hyperbole in the parables of Jesus, see Richard D. Draper, "The Parables of Jesus (Matthew 13)," in *Studies in Scripture: Volume Five, the Gospels*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 5:262–78.

5. Thomas S. Monson, "Your Jericho Road," *Ensign* 19 (February 1989): 2.

6. Ceslaus Spicq, "The Charity of the Good Samaritan," in *Contemporary New Testament Studies*, ed. M. Rosalie Ryan (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1965), 219. Spicq argues that the story is more than a parable, but he sees it as a "pattern story," which is not much different.

7. Seely, "Allegory of the Olive Tree," 291.

8. Werner Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter: Eine auslegungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Lukas 10, 25–37* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1967), 15.

9. Not all allegories are typological, and not all typologies are based on an allegory.

10. See, for example, Michel Zink, *Littérature française du Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1992), 229–33.

11. Hugh W. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 2d ed., Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, vol. 7 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1988), 100.

12. Malcolm Miller, *Chartres Cathedral* (Andover, Eng.: Pitkin Pictorials, 1985), 66, 68, 71.

13. Miller, *Chartres Cathedral*, 68.

14. Wolfgang Kemp, *The Narratives of Gothic Stained Glass*, trans. Caroline Dobson Saltzweid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 66–78; Colette Manhes and Jean-Paul Deremle, *Le Vitrail du bon Samaritain: Chartres, Sens, Bourges* (Paris: Centurion, 1986). A window at Rouen employs thirty-seven scenes associating Christ with the story of the Good Samaritan but not necessarily in allegorical mode.

15. Leslie W. Barnard, "To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?" *Studia Theologica* 36 (1982): 1–10; Jean Daniélou, "Le Bon Samaritain," in *Mélanges bibliques: Rédigés en l'honneur de André Robert* (Paris: Bloud and Gay, 1956), 457–65. It exceeds the scope and purpose of this article to analyze in detail the differences between the readings of the Good Samaritan that can be found in the writings of the early Christian fathers, let alone to describe their broad theological stances that influenced each particular allegorization of this parable. It is sufficient at this point to recognize that the tale of the Good Samaritan was understood from very early times as more than a simple story.

16. All quotes of Irenaeus in this article come from: *Contra Haereses*, 3.17.3, in *Patrologiae Graecae*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 161 vols. (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857–1900), 7:930–31; or *Against Heresies*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1950–57), 1:445.

Irenaeus (c. 140–c. 202) was one of the first to comment on the Good Samaritan. Writing in opposition to certain heresies in the second century A.D., he used the story to buttress his point that God had conferred his Spirit upon the church, like the dews from heaven, protecting church members from being consumed by the heretical fires of the devil. For Irenaeus, this assuring point was proved by the fact that the Good Samaritan (symbolizing Christ himself) gives to his disciples the image and superscription of the Father and the Son, represented by the "two royal denaria [coins]" mentioned in Luke 10:35. In particular, Jesus' description of the Samaritan giving the innkeeper the two coins symbolizes God giving his image to the leaders of the church, who give



the image to the man, restoring him to the image and likeness of God in which he was originally created. Irenaeus's argumentative use of the Good Samaritan in this way may give evidence that his orthodox readers already understood the story in a broad authoritative allegorical sense; otherwise, he could not very well have assumed that this allegorization would have carried much weight in rebutting his heretical opponents.

17. All quotes of Clement in this article come from: Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος Πλουσίος, 27–29, in *Patrologiae Graecae*, 9:633–36; or *Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?* in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 2:599.

Clement of Alexandria (died c. 215), writing in the second and third century, argued generally that man should love God (as required under the first great commandment) and should likewise love Christ (because he was the neighbor who helped the victim in the narrative in Luke 10 and, therefore, must be loved under the second great commandment). For Clement, the answer to the lawyer's question "Who is my neighbour?" is none other than "the Saviour Himself," who pitied us, was put to death, and is the only physician who cuts out our sinful "passions thoroughly by the root." In Clement's view, the main conclusion to be drawn from the story of the Good Samaritan is that "we are therefore to love [Jesus Christ] equally with God," and we do that by helping our neighbors.

18. Origen, quoted in Joseph T. Lienhard, trans., *Origen: Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke*, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation, vol. 94 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1996), 138.

19. Because Origen attributed all the rudiments of this interpretation to one of "the elders," who for Origen and other early Fathers were "rigorously" associated with the earliest Jewish Christians (Daniélou, "Le Bon Samaritain," 458, citing also Irenaeus, Papias, and Clement), one may conclude that this reading may well have been known in the original circles of Church leaders. The precise meaning of the word *elders* in second-century Christianity, however, is unfortunately obscure and in flux. R. Alastair Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity*, Studies of the New Testament and Its World, ed. John Riches (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1994), 210–35. In the second century, Papias declared that whenever possible he would ask people what they had heard from "the elders," by whom he meant by name Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or "any other of the Lord's disciples." *Fragments of Papias*, 1, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1:153.

20. All quotes of Origen in this article are based on either Jerome's surviving Latin translation, Origen, *In Lucam Homiliae*, 34, in *Patrologiae Graecae*, 13:1886–88; or from *Origen: Homilies on Luke*, trans. Lienhard, cited above, 137–41; or from a related fragment in Greek often attributed to Origen, Fragment 71 (Rauer 168) in Origen, *Homélies sur S. Luc: Texte latin et fragments grecs*, trans. and ed. Henri Crouzel, François Fournier, and Pierre Périchon, vol. 87 of Sources Chrésiennes (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1962), 520.

Origen (c. 184–c. 254) himself modified one, but only one, part of the understanding he received from "one of the elders." Preferring an interpretation that kept some people out of harm's way, Origen argued that "we should not think that [the story of the man who fell among robbers] applies to every man" but only to those who wrongly and intentionally go down into "vices and sins," suffering the wounds of disobedience. Accordingly, for Origen, Jesus (the Samaritan) goes out intentionally (with bandages and oil in hand) to rescue the wounded man who has caused his own misfortune, just as Jesus goes out seeking the lost sheep of the fold who have wrongly strayed off the path and away from the church.

Other than quibbling over this one detail, however, Origen accepted all of the other allegorical elements in the interpretation that was apparently current in his day.

Thus, Origen saw Christ as “this Samaritan [who] ‘bears our sins’” and exhorted all of the righteous to “‘be imitators’” of Christ, “to pity those who ‘have fallen among thieves’” and to “bear their burdens.” Such an interpretation was consistent with the conclusion that Jesus gave to the story, “Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37). Compare Luke T. Johnson, *Sharing Possessions* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 105. Origen’s exhortation also harmonized with his limited reading of “a man,” but it diminished the audience’s inherent identification with the victim, who otherwise had symbolized all people everywhere, who are fallen and in need of being rescued.

21. All quotes credited to Chrysostom (346–407) in this article come from: Ἀνθρώπος τις κατέβαινεν καὶ λησταῖς, in *Patrologiae Graecae*, 61:755–58; and Εἰς τὴν παραβολὴν τοῦ ἔμπεσόντος εἰς τοὺς Ληστὰς, in *Patrologiae Graecae*, 62:755–58. These texts were possibly written by Proclus of Constantinople or someone else. Whoever wrote them, these texts add further evidence of the common tradition in early Christianity regarding the Good Samaritan. For convenience, they will be attributed to Chrysostom.

Chrysostom did not label the story “The Parable of the Good Samaritan,” but rather “The Parable of Him Who Fell among Robbers” and “A Certain Man Who Went Down, and Fell among Robbers.” He accepted all the standard allegorical components in the traditional reading but used the story in the end mainly to show that the gospel welcomes all the Gentiles, that when the Gentiles do good it is because they “shew the work of the law written in their hearts,” and that the church (the “inn”) embraces all people, as the Apostle Paul taught.

22. All quotes of Ambrose in this article come from: *Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam*, 7.69–84, in *Ambrosii Mediolanensis Opera* part 4, *Corpus Christianorum*, vol. 14 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1957), 237–41.

Ambrose (c. 339–397), who advised Roman emperors and wrote in the West in the late fourth century, was a strong advocate of celibacy and strict Christian living in order to overcome the fall of Adam. In his lengthy commentary on the Gospel of Luke, Ambrose emphasized the “amazing mystery” signified by the parable of the Good Samaritan. He built upon the traditional approach and used it as a strong vehicle through which to convey his message of the perils, terrors, and exile of mortality: the bandages are the stricter rules of Christ that bind up our sinful wounds; the wine that cleanses us with judgment is stinging, not soothing; and without Christ (the Samaritan) we are in a state of utter despair because of our poor and filthy condition from which he alone rescues us.

23. All quotes of Augustine in this article come from *Quaestionum Evangeliorum Libri Duo, Liber Secundus: Quaestiones in Evangelium secundum Lucam*, 19, in *Patrologiae Latinae*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1841–1903), 35:1340–41.

Augustine (354–430) was influential in the West. He was baptized by Ambrose and became the bishop of Hippo Regius (in modern-day Algeria). One of his fifth-century treatises gives answers to questions covering numerous passages in the Gospel of Luke. Augustine’s interpretation of the story of the Good Samaritan, which he referred to as the story of “The Man Who Descended from Jerusalem to Jericho,” paralleled rather mechanically the basic allegorical understanding promoted by Origen’s unnamed elder, except at the end. There Augustine equated the innkeeper with the Apostle Paul, who advised people to remain celibate virgins in order to serve others in charity and receive the promise of future glory as the Samaritan promises the innkeeper that he will return and pay him for his services.

24. All quotes of Isidore in this article come from *Allegoriae quaedam Scripturae Sacrae*, 204–6, in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 83:124.

In the sixth century, Isidore (560–636), archbishop of Seville, wrote about the Good Samaritan only in passing. He saw the Samaritan as Christ curing all “the human

race from their wounds of sin” and the inn symbolizing “the Apostles or their successors who rectify our predicaments through the gospel.”

25. All quotes ascribed to Eligius in this article are from *Homilia 9: De vulnerato Samaritano*, in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 87:627–28.

Homily 9, usually attributed to Eligius (588–660) in France, is curiously headed “The Wounded Samaritan” (*De vulnerato Samaritano*). Apparently the author assumed that the wounded man is a Samaritan, and perhaps for that reason the Jewish passersby do not come to his aid and rescue. For him, the main attraction in this story was the compassion, the tears, and the immense grace of the Savior who accepts our confession and forgives our sins.

26. The allegory was reiterated or explicated for several centuries by Fulgentius of Ruspe (467–533) in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 65:931–32; the Venerable Bede (672–735) in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 92:468–70; Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel (d. about 825) in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 102:446–48; Rabanus Maurus (776?–856) in *Patrologiae Latinae*, 110:448–51 and 111:80; and Theophanes Kerameus (1129–52) in *Patrologiae Graecae*, 132:291–304.

27. To be clear, I use these words to mean the following: *Allegorization* is a mode or method of interpretation that can be applied to any kind of text while not denying, for example, the text’s historical content. An *allegory* is a specific kind of composition. With reference to the Good Samaritan, both meanings can apply. Jesus composed this story, perhaps based on an actual event, in the form of an extended allegory; that text can then be read allegorically to elicit from its elements various allegorizations. On medieval allegorization, see Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale, 1: Les quatre sens de l’écriture* (Paris: Aubier, 1959), especially the first chapter. I thank Carl Griffin for his comments on these early Christian sources and their methods.

28. It is impossible to know which Aramaic words Jesus used. It may be relevant that the Syriac versions of Luke 10:30 use a different root word in their term for *man*.

29. Leonard J. Coppes, “’ādām,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, 2 vols. (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 1:10; Fritz Maass, “’ādām,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974), 1:75–87.

30. On the high risks of being attacked by robbers or suffering other misfortunes while traveling in the ancient world, see Barry J. Beitzel, “Travel and Communication,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6:644–46; and notes 69 and 71 below.

31. Of course, the symbolism of Jericho can be understood in other ways. It is possible that Jericho is not all bad. For present purposes, however, I am simply assuming that the traveler intentionally embarks on the experience of mortality and is on his way down but is rescued when forces beyond his own strength leave him helpless. It is interesting to wonder where the traveler should go after he leaves the inn: should he go on to Jericho? back to Jerusalem? or on to some destination better than either of them? Perhaps he will choose to stay at the inn to help others as he has been helped.

32. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 664–65, 655.

33. See John W. Welch, “Legal and Social Perspectives on Robbers in First-Century Judea,” in *Masada and the World of the New Testament*, ed. John W. Welch and John F. Hall (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1997), 141–53.

34. *Ekduō* is the opposite of *enduō*, to “get dressed,” from which the word *endow* literally derives.

35. On Joseph's coat as a sacred garment, along with an extensive discussion of priestly clothing in general, see Hugh W. Nibley, "Sacred Vestments," in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present*, Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, vol 12 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992), 131–32.

36. Fred E. Woods, "Elisha and the Children: The Question of Accepting Prophetic Succession," *BYU Studies* 32, no. 3 (1992): 47–58.

37. Ironically, the word *synkuria*, from *syn* and *kureō* (literally to hit or fall together, and hence a coincidence), nevertheless sounds as if it comes from the word *kuria* (lady, mistress) with its cognate *kurios* (lord, or the Lord). This verbal happenstance is itself simply a coincidence. Significantly, the word used in the parable is not *tuche* (by fate, or luck). The priest is not there by chance or by fortune, but simply as events happen to run together.

38. Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 147–207. Jeremias examines in detail the various roles of these priests, chief priests, and the high priest. For the number of priests, see his analysis on pp. 199–205, especially his conclusion on p. 203.

39. Philo, *The Special Laws*, 1:156, in *Philo*, trans. F. H. Colson, 10 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), 7:188–89; quoted and discussed in Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 209.

40. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 209, quoting Tamid 32b, Soncino Talmud, 18 volume edition (London: Soncino, 1978).

41. For example, Heinrich Zimmermann, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter: Luke 10:25–37," in *Die Zeit Jesu*, ed. Günther Bornkamm and Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Herder, 1970), 67. For the definition and a discussion of several such Christological interpreters, including Barth, Gollwitzer, and others, see Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter*, 7–14.

42. Zimmermann, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter," 66–67.

43. Birger Gerhardsson, *The Good Samaritan—The Good Shepherd?* Coniectanea Neotestamentica, vol. 16 (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksells, 1958).

44. Francis Brown, *The New Brown—Driver—Briggs—Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979), 1036.

45. Gerhardsson, *The Good Samaritan—The Good Shepherd?* 17; italics in original.

46. Helmut Köster in Gerhard Friedrich, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971), 7:553.

47. Daniélou, "Le Bon Samaritain," 461.

48. John A. Tvedtnes, "Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost," in *Allegory of the Olive Tree*, 427–59.

49. Stephen D. Ricks, "Kingship, Coronation, and Covenant in Mosiah 1–6," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 249–50.

50. Tvedtnes, "Olive Oil," 427.

51. Daniélou, "Le Bon Samaritain," 461.

52. See John E. Stambaugh and David L. Balch, *The New Testament in Its Social Environment*, Library of Early Christianity, ed. Wayne A. Meeks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 78.

53. Daniélou, "Le Bon Samaritain," 461.

54. Bauer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 169–70.

55. Although Eric Bishop does not mention any allegorical interpretation, he endeavors to solve the infelicity in reading the story historically by speculating that

"presumably the Samaritan and the inn-keeper were already acquainted from the former's previous trips across Jordan." Eric F. F. Bishop, "People on the Road to Jericho: The Good Samaritan—and the Others," *Evangelical Quarterly* 42 (1970): 4.

56. The most extensive history of the interpretation of the Good Samaritan over the past two millennia is Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter*.

57. Hartmut Hoevelmann, "Wer ist der barmherzige Samariter? Eine ungewohnte Perspektive in Luthers Auslegung von Lk 10, 23–37," *Luther* 64 (1993): 54–57.

58. Hans Gunther Klemm, *Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter: Grundzüge der Auslegung im 16./17. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973), 129–41.

59. James C. Gordon, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke 10:25–37): A Suggested Re-orientation," *Expository Times* 56 (1944–45): 302–4.

60. Hermann Binder argues that the priest and the Levite symbolically represent organized or "cultic religion." Hermann Binder, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 15 (1959): 176–94.

61. Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter*, 159.

62. Barnard, "To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?" 5.

63. Barnard, "To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?" 10.

64. Jewish-Samaritan hostilities is a favorite theme among scholars. Spicq, "Charity of the Good Samaritan," 221–22; David Wenham, *The Parables of Jesus* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1989), 154–61; William R. Farmer, ed., *The International Bible Commentary: A Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998), 1407, citing Ben Sirach 50:25–26; James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 430–32; see generally Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 352–58, who sees the message of the parable simply as "neighbourly love triumphing over deep-rooted national hatred," 358.

65. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 3d ed. (Oxford, 1886; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971), 234–39; Georg Eichholz, *Gleichnisse der Evangelien: Form, Überlieferung, Auslegung* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1971), 153–63.

66. J. Duncan M. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1970), 220–22, 226.

67. W. J. Masson, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan," *Expository Times* 48 (1936–37): 179–81; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 202–5; Binder, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter," 176–94; Spicq, "Charity of the Good Samaritan," 221; Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, *New International Biblical Commentary* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1990), 176; Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 218; David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, vol. 119 (Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 82–83. Sharon Ringe, however, speculates that the priest and Levite are traveling away from Jerusalem and therefore cannot be concerned about ritual purity. Sharon H. Ringe, *Luke*, *Westminster Bible Companion*, ed. Patrick D. Miller and David L. Bartlett (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 159.

68. S. Brent Farley, "The Calling of the Seventy and the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:1–37)," *Studies in Scripture*, 5:318.

69. Douglas E. Oakman, "Was Jesus a Peasant? Implications for Reading the Samaritan Story (Luke 10:30–35)," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 22 (fall 1992): 121–22. When Jews in that time period embarked on a journey, they prayed: "May it be Thy will,

O Lord my God, to lead me forth in peace, and direct my steps in peace and uphold me in peace, and deliver me from the hand of every enemy and ambush by the way.” Berakoth 29b, Soncino Talmud. Ringe, however, goes so far as to think that some in Jesus’ audience “may well have seen the robbers as the only sympathetic characters in the story. Some might even have engaged in such activity [as freedom fighters] themselves.” Ringe, *Luke*, 158–59.

70. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 220–21.

71. Oakman, “Was Jesus a Peasant?” 122; Ringe, *Luke*, 158: “Decent people would avoid them at all cost.”

72. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 218–19; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 449–50.

73. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke (X–XXIV)*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 884; Eric Franklin, *Christ the Lord: A Study in the Purpose and Theology of Luke–Acts* (London: SPCK, 1975), 158; Eta Linnemann, *Jesus of the Parables* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 54; Frederick Houk Borsch, *Many Things in Parables* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 64–71.

74. Oakman, “Was Jesus a Peasant?” 117–25.

75. Kristján Búason, “The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25–37: One Text Three Methods,” in *Luke–Acts: Scandinavian Perspectives*, ed. Petri Luomanen (Vandenhoeck: Finnish Exegetical Society, 1991), 1–35.

76. Farmer, *International Bible Commentary*, 1407; see also Francis Zerwick, “The Good Samaritan,” *Furrow* 6 (1955): 293, who argues that it was “likely that the man lying in his blood was their brother, a Jew like themselves.”

77. Ringe, *Luke*, 158.

78. Evans believes that in this parable Christ teaches a higher law: that the Old Testament commandment to love one’s neighbor also extends to foreigners. But this seems unlikely on two accounts: it is unclear that the Samaritan has loved a foreigner, and the point is not that one should love the Samaritan (a foreigner) but rather be like him. Evans, *Luke*, 177.

79. John Bowman, “The Parable of the Good Samaritan,” *Expository Times* 59 (1947–48): 151–53.

80. George Horowitz, *The Spirit of Jewish Law* (New York: Bloch, 1953): 124.

81. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 215, citing Mishnah, *Pesahim* 8.6.

82. In any event, the impurity could be cured in seven days, a relatively minor inconvenience. Corpse impurity was not limited to priests but affected everyone (Num. 5:2, 19:11), although it would have hit the priest harder than the Levite or a lay person.

83. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 100–125.

84. David O. McKay, Richard Anderson, and Catherine Parry discuss many of Jesus’ parables but say little or nothing about the Good Samaritan. David O. McKay does not mention the Good Samaritan. David O. McKay, “Jesus, the Master Storyteller,” *Instructor* 87 (November 1952): 321–22, 339. Richard Anderson sees the Samaritan as “a moral hero.” Richard Lloyd Anderson, “How to Read a Parable,” *Ensign* 4 (September 1974): 58–63. Catherine Parry does not cover the Good Samaritan; however, she has addressed this parable for a forthcoming publication. Catherine Corman Parry, “‘Simon, I Have Somewhat to Say unto Thee’: Judgment and Condemnation in the Parables of Jesus,” *BYU 1990–91 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1991), 113–19.

85. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 430–32.

86. Robert J. Matthews, *The Parables of Jesus*, published typescript (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1969), 64–66.



87. E. Keith Howick, *The Parables of Jesus the Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986), 97, 98.

88. S. Brent Farley, "The Parables: A Reflection of the Mission of Christ," in *A Symposium on the New Testament* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1980), 78; restated in Farley, "Calling of the Seventy," 318–19.

89. Farley, "Calling of the Seventy," 318–19. H. Wallace Goddard similarly recognizes that the "Samaritan clearly represents Jesus." Goddard finds "remarkable lessons for family life" in the behavior of the Good Samaritan as it contrasts with the behavior of others in the parable. H. Wallace Goddard, "The Good Samaritan as a Model for Family Life," in *My Soul Delighteth in the Scriptures*, ed. H. Wallace Goddard and Richard H. Cracroft (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), 176, 171.

90. J. Ian H. McDonald, "Alien Grace (Luke 10:30–36): The Parable of the Good Samaritan," in *Jesus and His Parables: Interpreting the Parables of Jesus Today*, ed. V. George Shillington (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1997), 48.

91. Fred B. Craddock, *Luke* (Louisville: John Knox, 1990), 151.

92. Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter*, 180.

93. Linnemann, *Jesus of the Parables*, 56.

94. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 883.

95. For further discussion, see Jan Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished: The Parables of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 64–66; Ringe, *Luke*, 157; Zimmermann, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter," 58–62.

96. Linnemann, *Jesus of the Parables*, 56.

97. Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 445–46.

98. William Richard Stegner, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan and Leviticus 18:5," in *The Living Text: Essays in Honor of Ernest W. Saunders*, ed. Dennis E. Groh and Robert Jewett (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985), 30–33.

99. Gerhardsson, *The Good Samaritan—The Good Shepherd?* 17, 28–29.

100. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 98.

101. Joseph Smith taught that the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:3–8) alludes directly "to the commencement, or the setting up of the Kingdom" at the time of Christ. The parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24–30) has, at first, to do with early Christianity "in its infancy," while in its reference to the harvest we "have an allusion directly to the human family in the last days." Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 97, 98, 101.

The mustard seed (Matt. 13:31–32) represents the expansive growth of the restored Kingdom through the sprouting of the Book of Mormon out of the earth "in the last days," and the leaven (Matt. 13:33) may be understood as the rise of the Church out of "a little leaven that was put into three witnesses." Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 98, 100.

The treasure hid in the field (Matt. 13:44) is "the Latter-day Saints selling all that they have, and gathering themselves together unto a place that they may purchase"; and the man seeking goodly pearls (Matt. 13:45–46) represents "men traveling to find places for Zion, . . . who, when they find the place for Zion, or the pearl of great price, straightway sell that they have, and buy it." Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 101–2.

The net cast in the sea (Matt. 13:47–48) is "the seed of Joseph spreading forth the Gospel net upon the face of the earth," and the scribe bringing forth out of his treasury both old and new (Matt. 13:52) represents the restoration of old truths and "covenants" through the coming forth of "the Book of Mormon" and "also the translation of the Bible—thus bringing forth out of the heart things new and old." Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 102.

102. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 102. Unfortunately, we have no evidence that Joseph Smith ever commented on the parable of the Good Samaritan.

103. "One main doctrine [in the parables] is the Savior's witness to his divine calling." Anderson, "How to Read a Parable," 62.

104. Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 323; red type indicates that the text would be included "unequivocally in the database for determining who Jesus was," 36.

105. Funk, Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *Five Gospels*, 324.

106. Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter*, 159.

107. Isaiah used the vineyard allegorically in Isaiah 5. Zenos's allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5 is perhaps the best example found anywhere of an extended, symbolic depiction of the relationship between God and his people, individually and collectively, and the process and history of salvation.

108. Speaking in popular parables or seeking deeper meaning in scriptural stories was already a well established part of Jewish wisdom from at least the second century B.C. As Elias Bickerman shows, pious Jewish intellectuals in hellenistic Jerusalem busied themselves with discovering hidden double meanings in just about all of their traditional literature:

As for the intellectual duties of the sage, Ben Sira says that he will interpret the hidden meanings of maxims and be conversant in dark parables. . . . The wise Kohelet, for instance, was busy with *meshalim* (12:9). This bewildering terminology is derived from the wise men of olden times, from the age of Ahikar, who spoke in proverbs, and from the age of Solomon, who spoke of trees, beasts, and fishes. Elias J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 168.

Jewish sectarians at that time sought to "fulfill" (*darash*) the Torah, literally to fill the Hebrew scriptures with their fullest possible meanings. Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*, 172. This often involved what modern critics would clearly identify as embellishing, stylizing, or appropriating old stories for new purposes; but to the ancient exegete the meaning was embedded in the text itself: "The rabbis called this work of actualization 'Haggadah,' a term that intimates that Scripture itself is 'telling' its new meaning." Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*, 177. Similarly, but more systematically, Philo of Alexandria in the first century A.D. sought to discover a spiritual allegory behind each passage of Jewish scripture. For example, see Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis* 2–3, in Colson, *Philo*, 1:140–473.

109. John W. Welch and James V. Garrison, "The 'Hymn of the Pearl': An Ancient Counterpart to 'O My Father,'" *BYU Studies* 36, no. 1 (1996–97): 127–38.

110. Sanhedrin 34a, Soncino Talmud.

111. John R. Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 133.

112. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 219.

113. Zimmermann, "Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter," 64.

114. Gordon, "Parable of the Good Samaritan," 303; italics in original.

115. Donahue, *Gospel in Parable*, 134.

116. See Hugh Nibley, "Treasures in the Heavens," in *Old Testament and Related Studies*, Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, vol. 1 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1986), 173–77.

117. John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and Sermon on the Mount: An Approach to 3 Nephi 11–18 and Matthew 5–7* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), 119–20.

118. C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 2.

119. Donahue, *Gospel in Parable*, 133–34.

120. Zimmermann also readily agrees that “the Christian tradition is not in error, seeing Christ in the compassionate Samaritan” but shies away from further allegorical meanings that must be “kept at a distance.” Zimmermann, “Das Gleichnis vom barmherzigen Samariter,” 67.

121. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Volume Two: 9:51–24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), 2:1033–34.

122. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 885. Eichholz, *Gleichnisse der Evangelien*, 175–78, similarly recognizes the allegorical tradition from the Alexandrian elder and Augustine on down to Luther and Erasmus but rejects it as “foreign” to the independent meaning of the text and, in the words of Calvin, as “foolish games,” 177.

123. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 885.

124. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 67.

125. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 66–89.

126. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 87.

127. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 89.

128. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 88.

129. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 885.

130. Daniélou, “Le Bon Samaritain,” 465.

131. McDonald, “Alien Grace,” 42. See generally Hans-Georg Godamer, *Truth and Method*, 2d rev. ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1993).

132. For example, I would point to David Tiede, who has written, “It is difficult to gain a fresh perspective on a text which is so familiar” and is “simple enough for a child to see.” David L. Tiede, *Luke*, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 207, 209.

133. McDonald, “Alien Grace,” 44–45.

134. Barnard, “To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?” 10.

135. Barnard, “To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?” 5.

136. Barnard, “To Allegorize or not to Allegorize?” 10.

137. If Jesus had wanted the parable to indicate that he alone would bring the victim into the Church, he could have had the Samaritan carry the victim on his own back.

138. Represented in the parable in the form of death blows. Compare Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 108–111, 216; see also the apocryphal work, *Vita Adae et Evae*, 34:1–2, in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, ed. R. H. Charles, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 2:142, in which Adam suffers seventy blows to various parts of his body as chastisement for the Fall. I thank Don Norton for this point.

139. This element is present in the parable as the robbers strip or undress (literally, “un-dow”) the victim.

140. Gerald N. Lund, “Plan of Salvation, Plan of Redemption,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 3:1088–91.

## Getting There

The best entrances are close to the ground,  
Usually by where you already are.  
They are also the hardest to find.  
You know, shrubs and tall grass,  
Camouflaging tricks in front of, say,  
A loose plank. Plus the fact that we like  
To gaze at the stars. But stars make such tiny  
Holes that usually we can't get through.  
No, not stars. Openings close to the ground.  
Sometimes they are the space between  
Two overlapping sections, and you have  
To slip in sideways. But horrendous leaps,  
The kind that take you to the stars,  
Are not required. Sometimes they are hollows  
Underneath where lying flat is more likely  
To succeed. That way you can hold onto  
The grass and walk on the fronts of your thighs  
While the earth rolls toward upside down  
And all the star-jumpers collide overhead.

Just be sure that when you spot the opening,  
You don't get so excited that you start  
Jumping around and hit beside or above  
Instead of going through.

It is like slipping between the words  
To get to the world behind.

—Kathryn R. Ashworth

# Values of Christian Families: Do They Come from Unrecognized Idols?

Brent D. Slife

*Family values among today's Christians show the popularity of modernist and postmodernist philosophies. Of the four most prevalent views, only one is truly compatible with Christianity.*

The phrase *family values* has come to occupy a central role in political and religious discourse in America. Politicians endeavor to associate themselves with this expression, and some religious communities advocate family values as the cure to many of our nation's ills. Many Americans relate these values to a Judeo-Christian tradition, where there is supposedly a clear moral compass for raising children and distinguishing right from wrong. However, this tradition is actually only one component of the values of American families—even religious families. Indeed, it is questionable whether a Judeo-Christian moral tradition is even the *primary* component of American family values.

Instead, two secular philosophies—modernism and postmodernism—have become significant, if not crucial, factors in America's family values. Neither of these philosophies is typically associated with such values. However, these philosophies have together popularized four centers for family (and cultural) values that enjoy immense popularity. The term *center* is used here to mean the core or root of a particular system of values. Examination of a center means to cut away peripheral issues and study the main beliefs that give these value systems their vitality.

The first two centers—hedonism and moralism—are shaped and sustained most recently by modernism. They command the allegiance of the vast majority of American families, including, I contend, many religious families. Two other family value centers—relativism and relationalism—are shaped and sustained most recently by postmodernism. Relativism is considerably more popular than relationalism in American families—including, again, religious families. Yet, of the four centers, relationalism is the one that is most friendly to religion.

Indeed, I would like to explore the possibility that the values supported by the relational brand of postmodernism are *necessary* to Christianity. This possibility may be surprising, especially to many Christian communities,

because postmodernism is often understood as an “enemy” of the truly Christian. But, as I will attempt to demonstrate, in relationalism families can be truly God centered. Moreover, a surprising number of current religious practices and prevalent interpretations of scripture stem from hedonism, moralism, and relativism, sources of values that are ultimately idols in the Christian religious tradition. Christian families will need to look past these philosophies to find a firmer foundation.

### Modernist Centers of Family Values

Historians and philosophers differ in their interpretations of modernism.<sup>1</sup> An important interpretation of the core of modernism, however, is described by social scientist Donald Polkinghorne in this manner: “At the core of modernism or Enlightenment discourse was the belief that a method for uncovering the laws of nature had been discovered and that the use of this method would eventually accumulate enough knowledge to build ‘the heavenly kingdom on earth.’”<sup>2</sup> The primary assertion of the modernist, then, is that scientific method will eventually discover the laws of nature. A sometimes overlooked assumption in this assertion is that such “laws of nature” exist and are crucially important. This means that science, in order to do its job as the modernist advocates, must assume a world in which natural laws exist and are fundamental. Two modernist centers for family values are popularized and maintained by this assumption.

**The Center of Hedonism.** The first center concerns the pervasive authority and power of one of the “laws of nature”—namely, hedonism, or the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain.<sup>3</sup> As will be seen, this particular principle has become so influential that it is widely considered to govern phenomena in the social as well as the natural sciences. Although the word *hedonism* has many negative connotations—such as immediate physical gratification—it is also used to mean that an individual or family should seek happiness (a form of pleasure) and should avoid suffering (a form of pain). The word *should* here is the key to the hedonist value orientation, because it indicates that people *ought* to act in ways that maximize their happiness and minimize their suffering.

Although natural scientists have not officially endowed this orientation with natural law status, hedonism has attained this status nevertheless. Scientists consider virtually all plants and animals to be seeking “pleasure” and avoiding “pain” because even a plant will move naturally toward a source of water or light. Certainly, most biologists do not consider plants or animals to seek pain and suffering—at least, not naturally. The reason is



hedonism's perceived connection to evolution theory, where pleasure and pain are linked to species survival.<sup>4</sup> Presumably, to consistently engage in painful activity is to court possible extinction.

As a basic principle or law of nature, hedonism has had a wide influence on the theories of the social sciences. Several approaches to behavior, mind, and personality consider hedonism to be critically important. Freud, for example, surmised that all operations of the psyche ultimately reduce to what he termed "the pleasure principle." Even the ego and superego—concerned primarily with reality and social values—ultimately serve the id and its seeking of pleasure. As another example in the social sciences, behaviorists have focused scientific attention on hedonism. They have historically assumed that reward, or "reinforcement," is the prime motivator of all animals, including "higher" animals such as humans. These basic conceptions have in turn influenced other social scientists such as economists and political scientists. Economists routinely make the economic assumption that people act in their own self-interest,<sup>5</sup> and many political scientists presume that holders of political office are similarly hedonistic.<sup>6</sup>

Many such scholars assert that hedonism is not a matter of what we "should" or "ought" to do, because this implies that we are agents of our actions—that we are capable of doing something other than seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Those social scientists say that hedonism simply reflects the way we *are*, naturally. We have no choice about the matter, because our hedonism is a function of natural law. We do not control it; it controls us. We do not ordinarily consider a lower animal to have "values" that say it should avoid pain; lower animals simply *do* avoid pain, as a natural consequence of their genetic endowment. Similarly, humans, as higher animals, are not in the position of asking whether they *should* seek pleasure and avoid pain, because humans *must* seek pleasure and avoid pain, like all other animals in the evolutionary chain.

Other social science scholars disagree with this deterministic position, even if they agree with the centrality of hedonism in social life.<sup>7</sup> These scholars argue that this position overlooks the evidence that humans possess an agency of sorts. Humans, they contend, really *could* do otherwise than seek pleasure and avoid pain—they just don't. That is, these scholars admit the possibility of a choice,<sup>8</sup> but they assume that only the rare Mother Teresa will actually choose to do otherwise. In this sense, there is little functional difference between the deterministic and agentic positions, at least in the mainstream of the social sciences. In either case, hedonism is considered a natural social force that leads the vast majority of people and families to engage in various forms of pleasure seeking.

As mentioned, the most pervasive form of pleasure seeking in our culture is probably the pursuit of happiness. Not only is this pursuit consid-



Alinari/Art Resource, NY

*The Family of Charles IV*, by Francisco de Goya y Lucientes. Oil on canvas, 110" x 132", 1800. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

Wealth and power are viewed by this family as morally good. In addition, considerable energy seems to have been expended to prepare the royal offspring for success in their current and future roles. These two manifestations of hedonistic family values are often found in modern Christian families.

In addition, those political scientists who believe hedonism is a natural law would presume that Charles IV and other political leaders are hedonistic not only in their private lives but also in their public lives, the assumption being that leaders act in their own self-interest.

ered a fundamental political right, but it is also viewed as a moral good to which all people should aspire. Such happiness has, of course, many other aliases and guises in our culture: self-esteem, security, fulfillment, and peace, along with the avoidance of depression, insecurity, anxiety, and discomfort. However, the common theme among all these aliases is that feelings of happiness and self-esteem are "good" and feelings of depression and discomfort are "bad." These basic hedonistic notions are so ingrained in our cultural mind-set that they have become a kind of "common sense." They are so prevalent and so reasonable that only the weird or insane would appear not to follow them. These notions seem to question why any-

one would ever want to seek or tolerate suffering or anxiety.

Even the religious are not exempt from this hedonistic way of thinking. An example of this value among religious people is the idea that they should seek heaven and avoid hell. Although a divine being may be involved in this thinking, this being serves as a means to these hedonistic ends. Serving God is not an end in itself. The pursuit of hedonistic pleasure, broadly speaking, encompasses many “religious” goals, including the seeking of “treasures in heaven” and the quest for certain forms of “perfection” or “holiness.” Reaching these goals may not be hedonism *per se*. However, seeking them as the ultimate objective for ourselves—while treating everything else, including God, as the means to these self-oriented ends—is hedonism.

Likewise, for religious people the avoidance of suffering includes the avoidance of not just “fire and brimstone” in the future but, often, present personal setbacks and physical ailments as well. For some hedonistic families, mortal suffering indicates questionable religious commitment. Because suffering is morally bad and God is the Grand Rewarder and Punisher, people who suffer may be in trouble with God. This type of hedonistic theology raises the classic problem of why good or innocent people suffer. Since only bad or guilty people should suffer, according to hedonism, a person who is suffering must be guilty of some offense, and God is (or should be) the one who dispenses this hedonistic justice in retribution. Conversely, people whose lives seem pleasure-filled and pain-free must be the recipients of God’s favor. The prevalence of this notion among Christian families shows how widespread the influences of hedonism are, because the problem of good people suffering is a problem primarily for those with a hedonistic outlook. In value systems where pleasure is not the goal and where pain is not the result of sin, the problem no longer involves personal worthiness or God’s favor.

Parents of families with this hedonistic center have a simple injunction: keep everyone happy. This includes the long term as well as the short term and one’s spouse as well as one’s children; few parents with any value center are concerned with merely the short-term happiness of their families. Considerable parental energy is expended to prepare children for happiness and achievement in their future lives, even if this means some short-term suffering. This preparation includes good work habits, social skills, emotional maturity, and all the rest of what today’s society expects parents to teach their children—all for the sake of a child’s future happiness. The measure of a parent is thus equally simple, according to this hedonistic center: a child’s happiness, particularly in the long term, indicates successful parenting, while a child’s long-term suffering is the sign of



Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY

*The Peasant Wedding*, by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Panel, 44 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 64", about 1565. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.

The festivities depicted in this scene emphasize sources of pleasure and downplay any pain that may be associated with the marriage. If happiness—material, social, occupational, or heavenly—is the primary pursuit of Christian families, their core value is hedonism. For such families, particularly modern ones, marriage is primarily a means to obtain individual fulfillment. As long as they are happy in their relationships, they remain committed. However, should they no longer feel fulfilled, they believe they are justified in seeking a new relationship they hope will produce happiness.

The pursuit of hedonistic pleasure can also encompass the desirable goals of “treasures in heaven” and “perfection” or “holiness.” But for a hedonistic Christian family, those goals become a form of idolatry if everything else, including God, is treated as merely the means to acquiring these objectives for themselves.

parental failure.

Marriages are also frequently gauged by these hedonistic values. Like the religious means-end relationship—with God as the means to a heavenly end—marriage is viewed as the cultural means to individual fulfillment. That is, people pursue marriage because they believe that it is necessary to a happy individual life.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, people divorce when the marriage is no longer fulfilling this function. After all, the hedonist argues, it is “common sense” for people who are unhappy in a marriage to seek a relationship that will make them happy. Individual happiness trumps marital commitment in the hedonistic family.

Needless to say, hedonistic values encourage families to partake of the

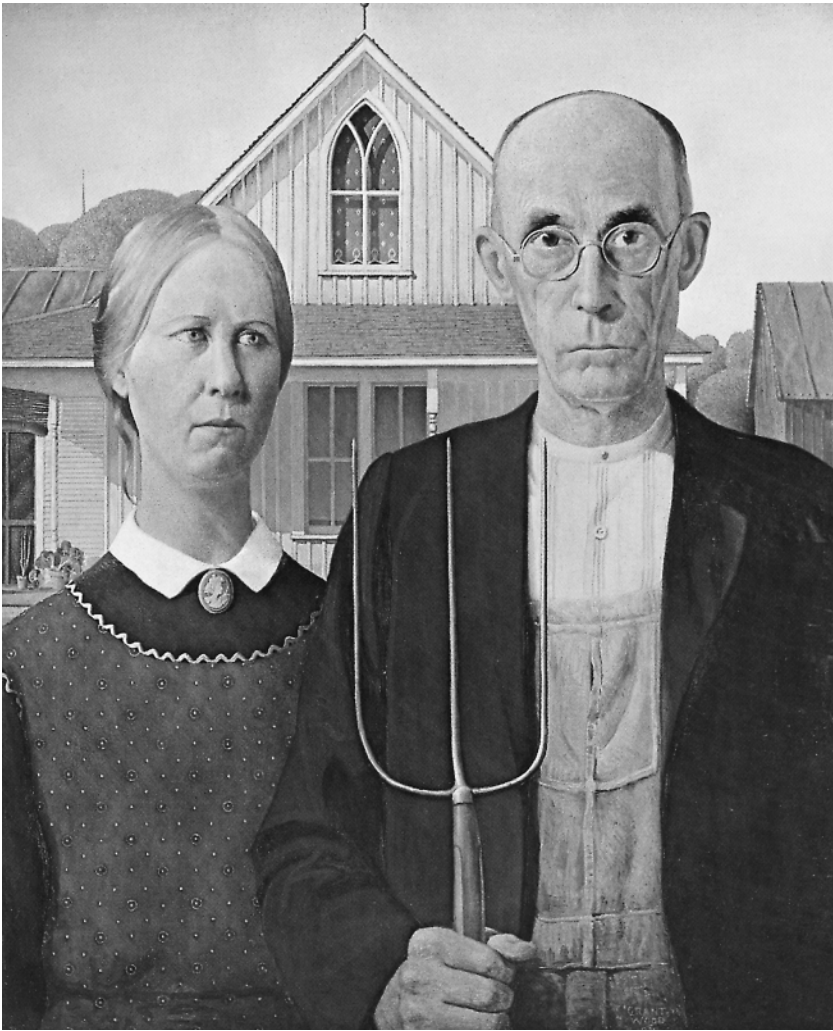
widespread materialism in our society. Keeping up with the Joneses by acquiring material possessions is justified, because they supposedly increase our happiness and comfort; they are morally good. Conversely, there can be no meaning or goodness in suffering; suffering is morally repugnant. Children are taught very early that suffering is bad and should be avoided. Parents are to shield children from such things—unless, of course, some degree of suffering will help children suffer less in the future. Self-sacrifice, another form of suffering, makes no sense from this perspective—unless, again, it is a trade-off for some greater happiness. Pure altruism—performing a service without hope of a return—is either impossible, because all people *must* be hedonistic as dictated by natural law, or merely silly, because all people *should* be hedonistic.

**The Center of Moralism.** Contrasting rather dramatically with hedonism is a second modernist stance on values: moralism. Whereas hedonism involves a *particular* natural law, moralism involves the *quality* of natural lawfulness. Stated simply, in order for a natural law to *be* lawful, it must apply in all times and places. This implication is sometimes termed *atemporality*, because lawfulness is “without time,” or timeless. To take a notable example from the physical sciences, the law of gravity applied both in the tenth and the nineteenth centuries; it is unchanging in terms of time. Similarly, it applies both in South America and North America; it is unchanging in terms of location. The law of gravity is considered a natural law because its effects on earthly bodies never vary; if they did, it could not be considered “lawful” in an all-encompassing, atemporal sense.

The center of moralism consists of moral principles or ethical rules that have this lawful, atemporal quality. A family adopts this center when its interactions and relationships focus on the principles and rules that it considers unchanging and timeless in nature. The moralism center is probably the belief center most frequently associated with the “family values” movement, but it is more encompassing, because neither the broader culture nor a religious community has to sanction the principles and rules it contains. Although generally endorsed or religiously sanctioned moral principles are perhaps the most prominent content of this center, relatively unique moral codes and unarticulated rules of conduct can also form the center of family interactions.

The pivotal characteristic of a moralistic center is that the family members see the values as atemporal. For moral principles and rules of conduct to be unchanged by the particular situation at hand or culture involved, they must exist in some other realm outside the particular context and then be “applied” to a particular era, culture, or context. For example, many in the Judeo-Christian tradition consider the injunction “Thou shalt not kill” to be a transcendent and absolute principle. It is applicable, they believe, to





Art Institute of Chicago

*American Gothic*, by Grant Wood. Oil on beaverboard, 29 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ ", 1930. Art Institute of Chicago.

The moralistic Christian family has its own form of idolatry. Their *ultimate* focus, in all cases, is obedience to rules, not to the God who gave them the rules. In this view, Christ is significant only as an exemplar and teacher. Churches are important only as repositories and instillers of the *right* moral principles (those that Christ lived by).

The sacred job of moralistic Christians is to identify these principles and adapt them to their own families, for moral principles are thought to be the center, or "glue," of the family. Without such constructs, these families are unable to function. Moral principles, then, are viewed as the key to preserving the future generation. Parental success is measured by how well family moral values are reflected in children's behavior.



all contexts and all eras, and it cannot be essentially altered across these contexts and eras. Such moral principles are thought to transcend and unite our changing times and to provide a firm universal ground from which the moralistic family may derive its values.

In the medieval period, many theologians considered moral principles to be the divine principles of God, a timeless and unchangeable entity. Because God was seen as atemporal, these principles took on his atemporal quality. At the time of the Enlightenment, many modernists essentially abandoned the notion of these principles residing in a divine being. However, present-day modernists preserve the belief that an atemporal link among contexts and eras remains necessary; modernists replaced an atemporal God with atemporal natural laws. Just as God was deemed transcendent, immutable, and the unifier of all things, so now from a modernist perspective the principles of nature are deemed transcendent, immutable, and the unifiers of all things. In fact, moralists believe that all principles—including moral principles—possess these atemporal properties. Most professional organizations, for instance, have formulated codes of ethics they believe fit this description.

The nature of a moralistic center, then, depends on the type of moral principles that are endorsed. Many families endorse the dominant principles of their culture. In the case of many Americans, these principles center on the Judeo-Christian tradition, almost by default. The phrase “almost by default” connotes how few families sit down and discuss what type of values they will uphold. Family values, in this sense, are handed down by previous generations. Each moralistic family puts its own unique imprint on the previous generation’s values, to be sure, but much of the previous moral code is—sometimes unknowingly—preserved.

Part of this preservation is due to moralistic parents. These parents see the transfer of moral codes as their primary family task. Because moral principles are the center, or “glue,” of the family, they are highly valued and viewed as the key to preserving the future generation. Without this critical glue, families are thought to be unable to exist and function. Giving children such family values, then, is considered a crucial role for society in general. This role explains why so many politicians wish to associate themselves with family values. These politicians assume, along with moralists, that atemporal values are vital not only to the structure of families but also to the structure of society itself. Success in facilitating this structure is measured by how well children reflect these values in their behavior by obeying the absolute rules of conduct. Behavior that violates this implicit or explicit code is considered a failure of parenting and, in some sense, a violation of the family structure itself.

Many religious families are found to have this particular center for val-

ues. In fact, many people of all faiths return to church—sometimes after long absences—when they begin having children. They return because they are concerned about the future conduct of their children. They perceive churches as repositories and instillers of elaborate sets of moral principles. Church congregations are thought to form communities that support a child's obedience to these principles. Of course, few such parents would agree to just *any* set of principles. Many feel that churches support the *right* moral principles. In other words, these parents turn to churches, as opposed to other institutions supporting moral codes, because they assume that churches have access to inspired and righteous moral principles.

In Christianity, for instance, moralism may mean that Christ himself is viewed as having lived by a moral code. Because he was the Messiah, the sacred job of Christians is to take the moral principles Christ lived by and adapt them to their own families. They accomplish this adaptation both by emulating his behaviors and by discerning the ethical rules that lie behind his sermons and other statements. Once families have adopted these principles, they are considered to be followers of Christ, because they have internalized his immutable rules for living. Moralistic families then assume that the next step is to pass these rules on to subsequent generations. Consequently, the primary role of Christ, according to moralism, is that of exemplar and teacher. The *ultimate* focus, in all cases, is the rules; Christ simply exemplified and taught them.

Are moralistic and hedonistic value centers mutually exclusive? Is it possible for families to adhere to both centers at the same time? Although families can incorporate aspects of both centers, one center is typically ascendant. For instance, a common type of incorporation of the two centers is obeying the rules to achieve happiness. However, the hedonistic center is clearly ascendant in this case since it is the end and moralism is the means. If another means were found that would facilitate hedonism better, then obedience to the rules would presumably be replaced by this alternate means. In this sense, only one of the value centers has a privileged status, and the two (or four) centers cannot be mixed in determining the *ultimate* objective of the family.

### Postmodernist Centers of Family Values

The modernist understanding of the world—as manifested in its value centers of hedonism and moralism—is only half of the family values picture. The other half is the philosophical perspective generally considered to be a reaction to modernism: postmodernism. Unfortunately, the meaning of the label *postmodernist* is notoriously difficult to capture. It tends to encompass an extraordinarily diverse group of scholars whose only unit-

ing bond may be a disenchantment with the tenets of modernism. Thus, postmodernism may be defined best in negative terms—what it is *against*. Understanding this point, however, can provide clues as to what some postmodernists assert positively.

To illustrate, the modernist assumption that natural laws are basic to everything is central to the complaints of many postmodernists. As noted in relation to hedonism, modernists consider natural laws to be *foundational* to any understanding or explanation of either natural or social phenomena, implying that these laws govern all things, regardless of their culture or context. If a psychologist, for instance, discovers a law of interpersonal attraction, then this law will be assumed to dictate the actions of all people caught up in the attraction. The differing beliefs, cultures, and languages of the people have no consequence. The foundation of natural laws overrides any such extraneous variables.

However, postmodernists reject this foundationalism. They contend, instead, that any foundation is itself formulated within a cultural context. For example, this hypothetical law of interpersonal attraction is cultural in at least two ways: one, it was formulated by real human beings (scientists) who are themselves participating in a cultural mind-set and way of thinking; and two, the subjects used to scientifically investigate this “law” of attraction were themselves part of a particular culture. In other words, the culture is thought to contribute to what is considered a law. The notion of natural law itself, including hedonism, is viewed as a product of culture. In this sense, the education of other cultures regarding nature’s laws is a kind of cultural imperialism.<sup>10</sup> From a postmodern perspective, any such “natural law” should be understood as *relative* to the particular context in which it was derived.<sup>11</sup> This contention forms, then, the first of the value centers to be sustained by postmodernism: relativism.

**The Center of Relativism.** A “center of relativism” may seem a contradiction in terms. Indeed, many relativists would claim to have avoided a moral center of any kind. Because they decry foundationalism, “foundations” and “centers” are viewed as merely social constructions.<sup>12</sup> What is foundational for one particular culture may not be foundational for another; who is to say which foundation is correct? Why should one culture’s “natural laws” or moral system be privileged over another’s? Thus, no particular center for values should be considered more important or basic than another. Relativists do recognize that certain moral systems enjoy a privileged status in their respective cultures, but they consider these systems to attain their status through power rather than truth. In other words, the privileging of certain social constructions cannot be justified by their being true in any objective sense; they can be legitimized only by the social power that supports them. In this manner, the relativists seem to have

avoided any sort of moral center.

This conclusion is premature, though, because these relativist contentions have led to many relativist moral implications. The moral language of relativists, using words like *should* and *ought*, betrays the value center of relativism. For instance, if no particular moral system has any objective justification for its privileged status—and none can, from a relativistic perspective—then no moral system *should* be privileged in a particular culture. Power may help some to privilege their particular version of morality, but this use of power is *morally unjustified*. Instead, people *ought* to be respectful and tolerant toward other moral orientations. People *should* not judge others from their own moral framework, nor *ought* they to consider their own views and morals to be better than those of others. Certainly, under no circumstances *should* they seek to impose their morals on others.

The terms emphasized above reveal much about the relativistic center for family values. Although in one sense the relativist endorses none of the existing moral systems, in another sense this lack of endorsement is itself a moral system. That is, the notion that one *ought* to avoid endorsing a particular moral system implies a host of implicit moral injunctions that form the center for relativism: First, it is wrong to claim an objective or absolute moral justification that one does not possess (because one should be honest). Second, it is wrong to privilege one moral system over another when the only basis for privileging is power (because might should not make right). Third, the tolerance of other moral systems is a supreme virtue (and intolerance should not be tolerated). Fourth, it is wrong to “judge” other people from one’s own moral framework (because one should be nonjudgmental). And fifth, it is wrong to persuade others to abandon their own moral system (because one should respect the views of others).

The paradox of this relativist moral position is that it *is* a particular moral position, even while it claims that one should not endorse a particular moral position. Consider the case of a culture that explicitly maintains that its own moral system is the absolute, objective truth—and many cultures, in fact, assert this moral position.<sup>13</sup> If relativists deny this cultural position in favor of their own moral position, they are disrespectful to and intolerant of this culture (violating their own moral position). If, on the other hand, they choose to respect this culture’s absolute values, then they must deny the truth of their own relativism. Put another way, relativists claim that all value centers are relative to the particular culture in which they are embedded, yet the values of the relativist—tolerance, respect, honesty—are often treated as if they are independent of any particular cultural context. On the other hand, if relativism is viewed as itself a product of culture, then it must give equal authority to cultures that disagree with relativism’s values. In either case, relativism—by its own rationale—has no

justification for its rationale being taken seriously.

Interestingly, the paradoxical nature of this relativistic center for family values has not precluded its widespread endorsement and popular use among many American families. Many parents assert the legitimacy of relativism, and they seem particularly sensitive to its caveats regarding power. According to relativists, American parents are the “power brokers” of their respective families. This means that parents should be especially careful not to impose their own family values upon their children. After all, what right do parents have to do this? Given the essential equivalence of family value systems, why would the parents’ views be any better than those of their children? Encouraging children to adopt a specific moral system is akin to a boss encouraging employees to adopt a specific moral system. It violates the dual injunctions of the relativist against intolerance and the misuse of power. Children should be allowed to experiment, grow, and eventually find their own way, without parental influence. Parents should avoid all “power plays”—such as limit setting and authoritarian guidelines—and should attempt to facilitate a nonjudgmental and affirming view of the world that allows all moral systems to be respected as basically equal.

This respect also implies that family members should avoid taking any particular moral system too seriously. All value systems should have a certain degree of respect, of course, but a child’s endorsement of a particular system—especially as the child grows into adulthood—is perhaps the greatest fear of a relativistic parent, since this means that the adult-child is no longer a relativist. To endorse one particular moral orientation—to take it truly seriously—is to believe that all moral systems are *not* essentially equivalent. Moral systems that disagree with the one being affirmed must be considered wrong, at least in part. Furthermore, it is the nature of any moral system to make discriminations between what is right and what is wrong. Such discriminations mean that some judgments *are* needed and some things should *not* be tolerated.

This situation violates the relativist’s own injunctions against intolerance and judging others. The fact that these injunctions are themselves a type of moral system points again to the paradoxical nature of this value center. Nevertheless, the relativist cites the difficulty of objectively evaluating the rightness or truth of any moral system. What reason, asks the relativist, has anyone for adopting a particular moral system? From this perspective, the only logical approach is to avoid becoming too serious about any such system. A religious system, for example, is all right in its place. However, even religious people should avoid a serious belief in their religious system, because this commitment would lead to “fanaticism” or “extremism” and ultimately to a brand of “close-mindedness”—positions



Scala/Art Resource, NY

*Family*, 1935, by Henry Moore (1898–1986). Wood sculpture.

In a Christian family based on relativistic values, the parents avoid setting limits, providing authoritarian guidelines, and imposing their own family values on their children. Instead, the parents encourage exploration and experimentation, allowing their children the freedom to find their own way. They teach their children to see all moral systems as basically equal, to respect them without endorsing a particular system.

In adopting a nonjudgmental, open-minded attitude, such a family manifests its belief that Christ is a tolerant redeemer, a redeemer who unconditionally loves and saves all people. This universal salvation means that religions and value systems are unnecessary, since they all lead to the same reward. Such a family's relativism becomes its unrecognized idol.



that offend the relativist.

According to this view, children should instead be taught an important companion of tolerance: open-mindedness. To relativists, open-mindedness is next to godliness. All worldviews and religious systems have their place, but none should ever be taken in and truly incorporated into one's own beliefs, for this privileging would disallow an openness to all points of view. Without such openness—or “objectivity,” as it is sometimes termed—the world would not be seen for what it is. The observer would be biased, would attend to certain aspects of the world and not to others, and would view even those aspects through a distorted “lens.” All these difficulties can be avoided, warns the relativist, by not taking any moral or religious system too seriously. Religions and moral orientations are nice places to visit—for educational purposes—but no one should ever want to live with any of them.

It might seem that a Christian God could have no role in such a value center, yet there are many relativistic Christian families. For them, God becomes the ultimate tolerator. He is seen as the advocate and the dispenser of an unconditional love that transcends all belief systems. He is the one who will ultimately save all people through Christ, regardless of their values and their actions. This universal salvation means that religions and value systems are unnecessary, since they all lead to the same reward. Following any one of them will make no difference in the end, according to relativism.

**The Center of Relationalism.** The second of the postmodernist centers of family values, relationalism, directly addresses the modernist assumption of atemporality, that crucial quality of the lawfulness of natural laws. Lawfulness is timeless and unchangeable, and the modernist conception of truth is similarly atemporal. This view of truth is the reason that a modernist endows moral principles with atemporality so readily: if such principles are truthful, they are assumed to be timeless and unchangeable as well. Any truth, by modernist definition, has to be atemporal. Moreover, many religious people have assumed that timelessness and unchangeability are sure signs of divine truth. Some postmodernists, however, claim not only that secular truth is temporal, rather than atemporal, but that religious truth can also be understood as temporal. I believe this claim has considerable merit. Indeed, I would like now to explore the notion that temporality is necessary for those who claim specifically Christian family values.

What, then, is this temporal and relational value center for families? How, especially, can this value center claim to be dealing with truth? To answer these questions, it is important to understand the postmodern conception of temporality and, specifically, how it differs from the concept of

relativism. The “relational” properties of this value center must also be understood. Because this latter task is impossible to accomplish without a context and because I contend that Christianity requires this relationalism, I use the context of a “God-centered” family here. In the final portion of this article, I describe how this center differs from the other three value centers—hedonism, moralism, and relativism.

*Temporality.* Temporal explanations stem from the hermeneutic tradition, in which the philosopher Martin Heidegger, among others, maintained that humans are inherently temporal beings. As he expressed it in his seminal book, *Being and Time*, “‘to be’ is always ‘to be temporal.’”<sup>14</sup> Unlike the subject matter of some natural sciences, humans—as social agents—dwell more in the realm of the possible and the particular than in the realm of the necessary and the universal. Humans are inherently contextual and changeable, and thus they require explanations that reflect this contextuality and changeability. As a consequence, temporal explanations are *full* of time, rather than *timeless*.<sup>15</sup> Temporal explanations are reflective of the era and context of their construction and interpretation. In this sense, they are embedded in context and culture. They claim no special transcendent status beyond their cultural and contextual embeddedness.

This temporality also implies a kind of *temporariness*, or a general readiness of one practical explanation to give way to another practical explanation.<sup>16</sup> That is, human explanations and understandings are inherently inadequate, incomplete, and potentially inappropriate to the context at hand. Each explanation is a “humble” explanation, containing within itself the possibility of its own negation. Unlike atemporal understandings that presume objective contact with and representation of a permanent reality, understandings from a temporal perspective make no such presumption. Temporality thus allows an openness to and an expectation of change.

In contrast, atemporal approaches disallow meaningful change and possibility. Because the atemporal laws and truths of modernism are themselves unchanging, and because these laws and truths are thought to control and govern all natural and social events, the possibility of these events being other than they are is ruled out. Natural and social events may *seem* to change, but in modernist “reality,” they are dictated by unseen and unchanging laws and truths that reside outside the events and contexts themselves. People, for instance, may appear to change—to make different choices, to direct themselves toward various goals in a semblance of agency. However, these changes, choices, and goals are themselves determined by the atemporal laws and truths that govern these events and, thus, these people.

To the temporal relationalist, on the other hand, the determinism of

atemporality excludes morality. Because people and their families have no means of being other than they are, they have no way to be moral. People who do good, for instance, should receive no credit, because some set of psychological or biological laws presumably determine these actions. These people cannot have acted otherwise. Similarly, if people behave badly or even criminally, they cannot be held responsible for their actions. Such criminals were programmed by their past environment, governed by their genetic endowment, or shaped by some lawful interaction of the two. They therefore have no capacity for moral decision making, because no such decision making is possible in a truly atemporal world.

A temporal world, by contrast, is filled with possibility. Because the relationalist does not postulate an unchanging, metaphysical world that governs all contexts, contexts can be taken for what they are—sometimes shifting, sometimes changeable, and often other than any law would determine them to be. In this temporal world, persons and families are constantly confronted with possibilities, must constantly choose from among them, and thus must constantly judge which possibilities are good and which are bad. Judgments of goodness and badness are irrelevant in a modernist world, because that world is *amoral*. Things and events are neither moral nor immoral—they just are what they are naturally, as dictated by atemporal laws. In a temporal world, however, some things are good and some things are bad, depending upon the context. Choices and changes must therefore be made in light of these moral and contextual evaluations.

*Distinguishing Temporality from Relativity.* At this point, temporality may appear to be similar to relativity. Certainly, both attempt to take into account context, time, and human agency. However, unlike the relativist, the relationalist assumes that morality and values are themselves grounded in truth—temporal truth. From the perspective of the relationalist, relativism supposes incorrectly that the changing nature of contexts—both across time and across place—rules out the possibility of truth. Because values are relative to changing societies and cultures, the relativist concludes that there can be no truth. This conclusion, however, draws an important, though unacknowledged, assumption from modernism that truth is atemporal. In other words, it assumes that truth has to be transcendent to and outside of the various cultures and contexts in order to *be* truth. Because cultures are pivotal and because values do not seem to be transcendent across cultures, there can be no atemporal truth.

The relationalist, on the other hand, asserts that truth is temporal. Truth is manifested in *how* things are, rather than in *what* things are.<sup>17</sup> The “what” of things leads to a focus on static, transcendent properties, whereas the “how” of things leads to a focus on action, articulation, and change—temporality. With this latter focus, one can legitimately ask questions and

discern true and false answers. Still, the truth of an answer is found, not in its correspondence to an unchanging, static reality *outside* the context in which the question is asked, but *inside* the context itself.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, a relational center for family values grounds its values and morals in a truth that is contextual and possibly changing, rather than transcendent and immutable.<sup>19</sup>

The difficulty is that this contextual truth may appear to make truth itself relative, leaving only “local” truths with no unity or connection to each other. From the relationalist perspective, this apparent problem is due to a misconception of the context of truth. In relativist thought, this context is a bounded, self-contained “object” that is essentially independent of other self-contained, objective contexts.<sup>20</sup> A Chinese culture, for instance, is thought to be essentially independent of an American culture, having different languages, customs, traditions, and meanings. Although some “translation” between cultures can occur, all contexts and cultures are viewed as incomparable in many core respects. Furthermore, each context is viewed as containing its own qualities. One understands a culture not by understanding other cultures but by studying the qualities of the culture itself. This independence and qualitative difference among cultures implies that local truths must remain local and have no universality or essential relationship to each other.

The relationalist disputes this implication. Postmodernism’s temporality considers contexts and cultures to be parts of wholes that acquire at least some of their qualities from their relation to other contexts and cultures—past, present, and future. Temporality assumes that the “moment” of any context is inextricably woven into the tapestry of all contextual moments across time—that all contexts (or cultures) overflow their presumed boundaries and participate significantly in other contexts. This participation allows a unity or comparability among contexts, because any context (or culture) is itself part of the whole of contexts—past and future, far and near. How could we know that Chinese culture was different from American culture unless there was some common ground to allow comparison between the two cultures? The very idea of a separate “culture” requires a contrasting relation to other cultures to show that it is separate. This contextuality of context prevents temporal truth from being merely a “local” truth, since any truth garners many of its qualities from the context of other “local” truths.

The analogy of a novice player in the middle of a chess game demonstrates the importance of context to temporal truth.<sup>21</sup> If this player turns to a chess master and asks for the best next move, the chess master cannot appeal to an atemporal game. That is, no timeless or transcendent game will be of much help in arriving at the best next move for this particular

game. There is, of course, a set of universally accepted rules for playing chess, but an appeal to these rules alone will not provide a suitable answer to the question of the best next move for this specific context. In addition, the chess master should not necessarily assume that these players are using universally accepted rules. It is common, for instance, for novices to play chess without a time clock, though this is a universally accepted requirement of tournament chess. The point is that the specific rules used are themselves part of the context, rather than a transcendent truth. A truthful answer to the novice's question, then, cannot be an atemporal answer.

A truthful answer has to take into account the specific context of the question and the questioner: Does the novice want to win? Are the players using accepted rules? And, of course, what is the context of this particular game? Laid out before the chess master is the past, present, and future of the game—its temporality. The present configuration of the board includes the prior movements of the pieces (the givenness of the past) and the possibilities for movements (the opportunities of the future). A truthful answer must consider the past, present, and future contexts of this particular game, as well as other related games. In this sense, a truthful answer is more than a local truth, because inherent in it is a type of temporal “transcendence” of the local context of the particular move. Unlike atemporality—which posits a bounded and self-contained present context that is independent of other contexts, past and future—temporality assumes that the context of the “now,” to use Heidegger's term, is significantly related to all the other contexts, past and future, that have shaped and will be shaped by the present.<sup>22</sup> A truthful answer must take into account this temporal context of the game.

A truthful answer by the chess master must also acknowledge that the game's context—and its nonlocal relation to other games and other moves—can shift, even within the particular game. In this sense, the best move can itself change, because it is necessarily sensitive to its context. For the relativist, this contextual changeability implies that the notion of truth must be abandoned altogether. Because the truth can change from game to game (or context to context) and because truth is assumed to be atemporal, there can be no truth. People should be equally respectful and tolerant of all values for the very reason that they cannot claim to have the truth.

The problem with relativism—from a relational perspective—is that it has given up on the existence of truth too easily. The true, the right, and the moral still exist, according to the relationist, but they are implicit in the context itself. In fact, the morality of a context cannot be avoided: even the relativists' assertion that there is no objective morality implies a very specific list of moral rights and wrongs (for example, tolerance, nonjudgmentalness). In the case of the chess game, there are also right moves and wrong

moves. Provided, say, that the novice wants to win, plays by the rules, and is engaging a Sicilian chess defense, there are good moves and bad moves. There may be many rights and many wrongs, many truths and many falsities. Nevertheless, the truth in this case is a temporal truth. Because all cases are always *specific* cases (that is, all people in all places are embedded in a specific context), all truths are necessarily temporal truths.

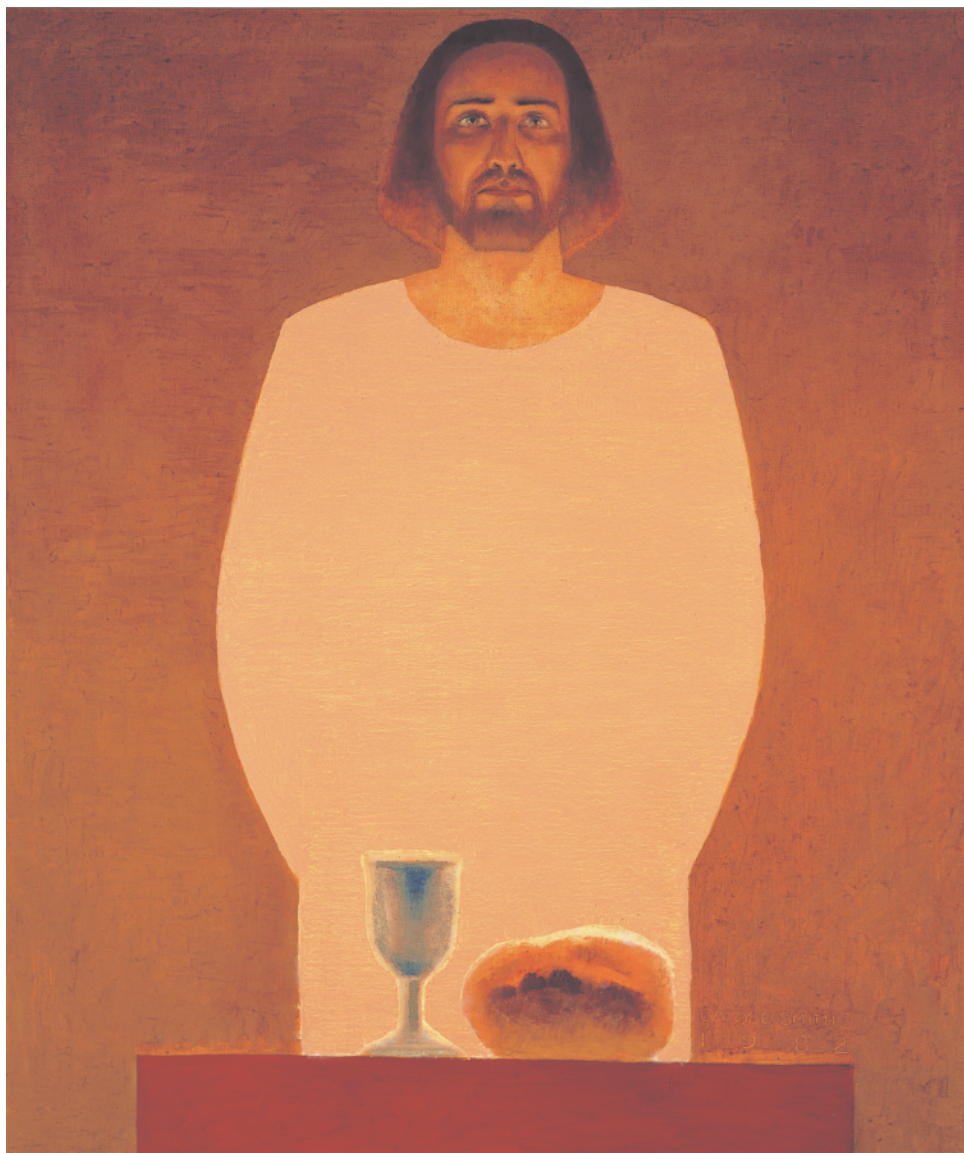
*Temporality in the Christian Family.* Temporality might seem to make some sense in a chess game, but how can it be understood in the context of a religious family? As noted above, many religious people have understood their morality from a modernist, atemporal perspective. However, a relational perspective can and does pertain to the dominant religion of America, Christianity. Because the relationalist assumes that morality is implicit in the context itself, family values—or *any* practical values, for that matter—are found by centering the family on this contextual morality. In the case of the Christian family, God is assumed to be an essential part of the context. Christians understand him to communicate proper values to them through the Holy Spirit and intervene morally in their lives.

God, then, is the Christian's "chess master." He is believed to be continually involved in the "game" of living and always available for consultation through the Holy Spirit and prayer. This heavenly master can advise the family on the "best next move" for moral action and can intervene on behalf of what is right or good in the specific context of the family.

Because God is believed by Christians to be intimately involved in every person's life, the heavenly master—like the chess master—must take into account the temporality of the game of living. A God-centered family, then, requires a temporal or relational value center. This type of center puts the emphasis squarely upon one's *relationship* with this Master rather than upon moral principles (as in moralism), tolerance (as in relativism), or happiness (as in hedonism). Indeed, a Christian family should include this divine being as the central member of their family.

This Christian relationship is temporal both in the sense of being "full of time," rather than without time, and in the sense of being "temporary," rather than immutable. God is full of time because he participates in a family's particular context through the Holy Spirit. If he were entirely outside this particular context, as an atemporal being, he could not truly minister to a family's unique needs or intervene in its members' unique circumstances. As a contextual being—at least in part—God is involved in all people's contexts, whether they know him or not (or believe him or not). This Christian temporality allows him to become a guide for one's values. No translation or application of abstract moral principles is necessary in this relational understanding of Christianity. God knows his people and their world intimately, perceives their own special circumstances, and can





Courtesy Gary Smith/Bookcraft

*The Last Supper*, by Gary Smith. Oil on canvas, 36" x 48", 1984.

God is the central member of the Christian family with relational values. Such a family puts its emphasis squarely upon its *relationship* with God rather than upon tolerance, moral principles, or happiness. Because of the family's relationship with God, it can and does receive inspiration in applying moral principles to everyday situations. The family recognizes that God knows his people and their world intimately, perceives their own special and collective circumstances, and can and does intervene accordingly. The relationship gives them perspective and fills them with love. And only through a true relationship with God through Christ can sinners truly repent and become new creatures who accept God's revealed will as their own.



intervene accordingly.

As with the chess master, this intimate knowledge requires continual adjustment, depending on the context and family. In other words, if God lives and participates in a family's context, he must have the capacity to make situational adjustments to meet the ongoing and changing demands of ministering to the needs of a vast and diverse range of people. Of course, as the family responds or does not respond to these adjustments, its relationship with God also changes, possibly requiring further relational adjustments, and so on.

God's ability to make changes does not preclude consistency and unity. In fact, a relational, temporal center *requires* some unity among past, present, and future contexts, as described above. For this reason, it is not unexpected that God would bind himself to certain covenants with his people, such as his promises to love them and provide a means for them to overcome sin. However, this binding and these promises are distinct from the modernist notion of atemporality. As noted above, atemporality ultimately precludes possibility and thus morality itself, because unchangeable laws and truths govern all things—including, presumably, God himself. There would be no reason to praise God, because he would *have* to do what he does as a result of atemporal laws.

A divine being that is temporal, on the other hand, can *truly* love because he does not *have* to love. He may have to love in a sense—because as a perfect being he loves completely—but he does not have to love because he is forced by natural law to do so. He may have to keep his covenants with us because he chooses not to lie or go back on his word, but he has real choices and possibilities that allow him to be a truly moral being. He can thus be praised for his choices, sacrifices, and continuing efforts on our behalf. This is part of the wonder of his continual love for us as sinners—he does not have to love us. Another part of the wonder of this love is its contextuality. He knows every hair of our heads and can thus minister to each of us uniquely, changing how his love is manifested depending on the circumstances.

This temporality of Christianity may explain the seeming inconsistencies of certain deity-human relationships. In the Old Testament, for example, God utters the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” (Deut. 5:17) and then commands the Israelites a few years later to kill whole populations, including women and children: “[The Israelites] utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded” (Josh. 10:40).

This apparent inconsistency is inconsistent only from a modernist, atemporal understanding of Christianity. From a postmodern, temporal understanding, a Christian's obedience to God takes precedence over any atemporal notion of a commandment. One should first obey the Lawgiver

and, in so doing, obey the (temporal) law. Some contexts may require a person to act inconsistently with the law, as understood atemporally, and yet consistently with the Lawgiver. Who can know better, from a Christian perspective, what is needed in a particular context than God? Who can know better what is truth for a specific family than God? Therefore, the primary thrust of a truly Christian family should be on developing a relationship with this contextual “Truth Teller” so that the family can be inspired to act morally in each of life’s situations.

### Comparing the Four Centers of Family Values

The importance of a relational value center for Christianity may become clearer when it is compared to the other value centers. Specifically, with a relational center a family can be truly God-centered, while the other three centers ultimately direct the family to idols, which draw people away from God.

**Moralism and Relationalism.** First, a relationship with God, or even an obedience to him, does not mean simply that one should discern God’s moral principles and then live by them. This moralistic approach would imply that once this discernment has occurred, the Christian no longer needs God. Christian families could just center themselves on the moral principles. Further, if the principles of this morality were at least implicit in the Old Testament, as Christ himself indicated, and if moral living were sufficient for salvation from sin, then a correct discernment of these principles would mean that the advent of a Savior was unnecessary. Given, however, that Christians do consider Christ to be necessary—in New Testament times and now—the discernment of God’s moral principles must not be the correct source or center for Christian family values.

Perhaps the Christian family should *model* Christ. One could attempt to discover the pattern of Christ’s conduct in the various moral situations recorded in scripture and then try to duplicate his actions in similar situations. Unfortunately, this modeling process has the same problem as conventional moralism—it can become an idol, a type of Phariseism. The Pharisees whom Jesus criticized acted according to patterns or principles without consideration of the spirit of the principles (see Matt. 23). Christ, however, took pains in scripture to say that even correct action cannot be the center of a Christian’s life. Christ came into the world, in part, to write God’s laws in people’s hearts. From a Christian perspective, it is never sufficient merely to duplicate his actions. Christians must also *want* to do God’s will—in their unique circumstances and situations.

Of course, a Christian family may *want* to model Christ in these circumstances. Still, the unique nature of a family’s circumstances raises

another problem for a moralistic centering of the family: to model the pattern or follow the principles of Christ's actions, one must translate the pattern or principle into the special context of a family. Principles and patterns, by their very nature, apply to many or all families and must therefore be tailored to the specific family and situation at hand. Parents who have tried to model a "perfect" parent or apply a principle of parenting to a particular situation know that this tailoring is not always a straightforward task. Even if parents know the correct rules, they are often not sure how to apply these rules. How can Christians be assured they have applied the rules correctly?

Some moralists may say that the scriptural record of Christ provides us with guidelines. Unfortunately, many family situations are different from the situations in which we see Christ in scripture. For example, marital problems are a topic which Christ does not explore in scripture on a first-hand, experiential basis. This gap does not mean that Christians are left entirely without scriptural guidance for marital problems. Still, from a moralist perspective, it does mean that this scriptural guidance must be applied—that is, a vital and influential translation process must come into play before obedience to this guidance is possible. Sometimes this translation process can make all the difference in what is considered right and wrong in a particular instance. Are Christians left to their own devices for this important application process?

From a postmodern relational perspective, the answer to this question is no. If God is able to minister to people through the Holy Spirit, then he, as a loving being, knows the special situations of his people and can advise them accordingly or even intervene on their behalf. Christians also believe that God invites and desires a personal relationship with them through Christ. Abstract principles and patterns of conduct can be distractions from this personal loving relationship. They can lead Christians to focus too much on the historical Christ of scripture—where Christians are supposedly to discern God's moral code—and not enough on the living Christ, who was sent to minister to people *in their context*, and who continues to minister to them in their everyday situations.

Christian moralists are constantly tempted to focus on their own discernment of the proper rules. As evidenced by the Pharisees whom Jesus criticized, this focus leads to a set of human-crafted principles of behavior—with contributions from other, sometimes unrecognized sources—instead of a relationship with a living, divine being. Although some form of discernment of this relationship is surely necessary as Christian families attempt to understand God's will in their lives, this discernment can never be reduced to a set of moral principles. It is never once-and-for-all or even once-and-for-a-little-while; temporality requires a *continual* dependence on God for stability and guidance, rather than a dependence on a behav-

ioral pattern or moral principle.

Moreover, a moralist discernment cannot compensate for those times when Christian families fail to follow moral principles, as no family is perfect in their implementation. Even moralists who follow the principle that they must repent of their sins cannot bring about salvation by adherence to this moral code alone. Only through a relationship with God can sinners truly repent and become new creatures who accept God's will as their own.

**Hedonism and Relationism.** Can this continual dependence on God produce happiness? Why is a hedonistic family center so divorced from a God-centered family? Use of the word *can* in this first question is tricky, because happiness is, of course, possible with God. From a Christian viewpoint, almost anything is possible with God. The important question is Should a Christian seek God as a means to happiness? If Christ's life reveals nothing else, it reveals that a Christian family is likely to experience suffering as well as happiness. The book of Job describes another devoutly religious person who suffered considerably. It is only the modernist foundation of hedonism that leads many to assume that a Christian family *should* experience mainly joy and happiness. Why else, from a hedonistic perspective, would anyone want to be a Christian?

It is true that those who have lived a God-centered life report an inner peace from doing God's will. Even so, it is quite debatable—if not unlikely—that this peace is anything like the personal fulfillment that is acclaimed and pursued in our popular culture. Indeed, from a Christian perspective, this peace can never be *pursued*; it can only *ensue*. That is, if Christians pursue this peace for their own sake or try to build a relationship with God for the sake of this peace, then their “Christianity” is self-centered rather than God-centered, and a relational center cannot be effected. God and his will must be both the means and the end for the truly Christian. Happiness and peace may ensue, but these are really irrelevant to what Christian families must truly be seeking: obedience to their Lord. They may be promised a type of peace from this obedience, but this peace must be distinguished from the popular definitions of peace as freedom from conflict and suffering (John 14:27). The “peace . . . which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7) finds meaning in the course of many forms of suffering and conflict.

American culture is, unfortunately, so heavily hedonistic that it has given all suffering and conflict a bad name. As mentioned earlier, all sorts of suffering—depression, anxiety, insecurity, blows to the ego, and pain of all types—are automatically viewed as evils of which to rid ourselves. A whole class of drugs and a whole set of psychotherapies have been formulated to this end. Consequently, suffering is rarely thought to be meaningful or good—if you *feel* bad, then it must *be* bad. A God-centered family,



however, cannot so easily equate adversity with evil. Suffering can hold significant meaning, educate, and signal important family problems. Recognizing God as a central member of the family can temper the suffering and give insight into the problems.

With a relational center, then, a Christian family should never automatically rid itself of suffering without first understanding the possible function of that suffering in the family's relationship to God. For example, this understanding of suffering could be an important feature of a family's attempts to heal broken relationships if it leads family members to assess, humbly and honestly, the value of those relationships. This is not to say that suffering always means something is wrong with relationships or wrong with anything else. Such a concept would be a subtle hedonism again. In fact, there is much of benefit in suffering, both physical and emotional. It may have all sorts of divine purposes and meanings, from refining one's Christianity to understanding more fully Christ's Atonement. Eliminating this type of suffering would mean, in effect, eliminating a crucial part of God's relationship with Christian families, preventing vital experience that allows human beings to draw closer to him, rely on him, and trust his judgment in dealing with their problems. Suffering, then, can be necessary and good in a relational center for family values.

**Relativism and Relationism.** A family centered on relativism may be the easiest to distinguish from a God-centered family. Because God stands for particular moral actions, which Christ clearly expressed and exemplified, God would not, as relativism implies, consider all actions to be morally equivalent. Identifying the moral ground for these actions becomes complicated, though, when one can no longer refer to a set of principles for answers to all moral questions. If God did not intend Christians to center their families on moral principles, how can Christians stand against relativism?

From a relational perspective, Christian families are to stand against relativism by making God their moral ground. Moral principles are always one step removed from God, because they are not God himself. Why center one's life on commandments when the Commander is available for consultation? As Christians make decisions about their families and formulate important relationships, they do not ultimately have to consult a code, a principle, or even a hypothetical consideration of "what Christ would have done." Such actions may invite and help people to move toward God, but Christians miss the mark if they substitute these codes, principles, or hypotheticals for a direct relationship with him. Christians can consult God himself—through prayer that facilitates "direct conversation" with him, through study of the light he sheds in scripture, and through observation of his continuing activity in the Christian commu-

nity.

Christians fight relativism, not with a moral system, but with a relationship. This relationship is not a romantic one in which a family “falls in love” with God. It is best understood as a family relationship with God as the head of the family. Such a relationship can give families perspective, provide them with inspiration, fill them with love, and help them to know the truth in any given moment or circumstance. Martin Buber’s “I-Thou” and Emmanuel Levinas’s “authentic relationship with the Other” are examples of conceptions that have some consonance with relationism.<sup>23</sup>

This relational center must surely be good news for Christian parents, who are saddled with a difficult responsibility in today’s society. It is perhaps this kind of burden that led Christ to say, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). With a relationship to God, parents are no longer solely responsible for their children’s happiness or obedience to a set of moral principles—including those of the relativist. The good news is that Christian parents are not alone in leading their families. In fact, part of being a Christian parent is pointing consistently and continually to the real family Leader. Parents still have responsibilities and must lead, to be sure, but their leadership and responsibilities lie with their responsiveness to God’s leadership and their facilitation of their children’s *relationship* to their Lord. Christian parents love, for example, not because they are tolerant (as in relativism) or because a moral principle says they should (as in moralism), or because love provides them a reward (as in hedonism). Christian parents love because they are responsive to their own loving relationship with God (1 John 3:16).

There is a type of relativism implicit in this responsiveness, though it contrasts sharply with the relativist center described above. Because God is available to families in their unique and changing situations, he takes the current situation into account when he answers people’s queries and intervenes on their behalf. In other words, the moral grounding of God is always *relative to the context* in which Christian families find themselves. God is *part* of this context. With his help, the Christian family can know—without need of translation or application—what is right and what is wrong. This type of relativism, then, is more in the category of relationalism, since it implies that all actions are not morally equivalent. Contrary to the value center of relativism, there *is* a right and a wrong—or several rights and wrongs, given a particular history, context, and relationship. Further, a relational center also means that a judgment *is* required and that some things—the wrong things—should *not* be tolerated.

What do Christians do, then, with the ideas of tolerance and judgment? Actually, these are not atemporal concepts in themselves. Rather, the crucial point is who is to decide what is tolerated and how judgments are to be rendered. Put this way, the “who” is obvious for the Christian—

ultimately God is to decide. However, it is easy, as all Christians know, to insert themselves into this decision-making process and either eliminate God's contribution or assign it a secondary status. In this sense, charity and humility are necessary in all relationships with others, because God may give different guidance to different individuals, even within a particular community. Again, this does not mean that there is no right or wrong, but rather that different parts of a community may complement one another in becoming the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27).

## Summary

I have described four centers for family values, both in general terms and in the context of Christianity, a religion that has historically been highly attendant to the family values issue. Even in this latter religious context, however, where the Judeo-Christian moral tradition would seem to be especially strong, two secular philosophies—modernism and postmodernism—figure prominently in core family values.<sup>24</sup> Each of these two philosophies has lent its own particular meaning to the moral systems involved, and each has influenced a surprising number of Christian families. Consequently, the important political and religious debate that is now occurring in regard to family values requires some knowledge of both philosophies. Christians in this debate may need to pay particular attention to the possibility that only a relational center for family values creates the space necessary for a specifically God-centered outcome. The other three—hedonism, moralism, and relativism—lead to an unrecognized idolatry where Christians are drawn away from God, who should be the source of their values.

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1. William Bevin, "Contemporary Psychology: A Tour inside the Onion," *American Psychologist* 46 (1991): 475–83; James E. Faulconer and Richard N. Williams, *Reconsidering Psychology: Perspectives from Continental Philosophy* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Press, 1990), especially Faulconer and Williams, "Reconsidering Psychology," 9–60 and Donald Polkinghorne, "Psychology after Psychology," 92–115; Brent D. Slife, "Are the Different Discourse Communities in Psychology Incommensurable?" *Journal of Mind and Behavior* (forthcoming); Brent D. Slife and Richard N. Williams, *What's Behind the Research? Discovering Hidden Assumptions in the Behavioral Sciences* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1995).

2. Polkinghorne, "Psychology after Philosophy," 92.

3. Although hedonism is connected here to modernist understandings of science and nature (and thus the Enlightenment), the doctrine of hedonism can be discerned in numerous sources—from ancient to medieval—that precede these understandings.

4. See, for example, W. D. Hamilton, "The Genetical Evolution of Social Behav-

ior," *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 7 July (1964): 1–16.

5. R. A. Epstein, "The Varieties of Self-Interest," *Social Philosophy and Policy* 8, no. 1 (1990): 102–20.

6. James W. Ceaser, *Liberal Democracy and Political Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990).

7. Edwin E. Gantt, "Social Constructionism and the Ethics of Hedonism," *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 16, no. 2 (1996): 123–40.

8. Joseph F. Rychlak, *The Psychology of Rigorous Humanism* (New York: New York University Press, 1988).

9. Blaine J. Fowers, "Psychology as Public Philosophy: An Illustration of the Moral Dimension of Psychology with Marital Research," *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 13 (1993): 124–36.

10. Blaine J. Fowers and Frank C. Richardson, "Why Is Multiculturalism Good?" *American Psychologist* 51 June (1996): 609–29; Brent D. Slife, "Problems and Perils of Eclecticism in Psychotherapy: A Hermeneutic Alternative" (paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada, August 1996).

11. There is some debate about whether the relativism described here is truly post-modern. Some researchers would consider the acceptance of the atemporality of truth inherent in this relativistic position to be making essentially the same foundational assumptions as the modernist position (for example, James E. Faulconer and Richard N. Williams, "Temporality in Human Action: An Alternative to Positivism and Historicism," *American Psychologist* 40 no. 11 [1985]: 1182–83). Although I basically agree with this view, I adopt the more conventional tack of considering this form of relativism and historicism to be a conceptual branch of postmodernism.

12. Kenneth J. Gergen, "The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology," *American Psychologist* 40 March (1985): 266–75; K. J. Gergen, "Exploring the Postmodern: Perils or Potentials?" *American Psychologist* 49 May (1994): 412–16.

13. Fowers and Richardson, "Why Is Multiculturalism Good?" 609–29.

14. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. S. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), quoted in Michael Gelven, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, rev. ed. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1989), 169.

15. Brent D. Slife, *Time and Psychological Explanation* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993): 239–70; Slife, "Different Discourse Communities"; Faulconer and Williams, "Temporality in Human Action," 1179–88; Brent D. Slife, Carolen Hope, and Scott Nebeker, "Examining the Relationship between Religious Spirituality and Psychological Science," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* (in press).

16. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2d ed. (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1993): 121–29, 257–58; Slife, "Different Discourse Communities"; Slife, "Problems and Perils of Eclecticism."

17. Faulconer and Williams, "Temporality in Human Action," 1184–86.

18. Most postmodernists avoid the inside/outside distinction altogether. If there is no metaphysical realm of truth or laws outside of context, then there is no need to designate an inside. I use this language here only to distinguish the postmodern concept of the contextual from the modernist concept of the metaphysical.

19. To Latter-day Saint Christians, the concept of temporal truth may seem to conflict with scriptural descriptions of truth as abiding forever (D&C 1:39, 88:66). However, the discussion of truth in D&C 93 is instructive. Immediately following the definition of truth in verse 24 as "knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come," verses 26–28 speak of receiving "a fulness of truth" over time, imply-

ing the Lord's recognition that a single understanding of God's rules cannot apply through the entire course of an individual's life and progression; as context changes, so does one's "knowledge of things as they are, . . . were, and . . . are to come." Hence the need for continuous revelation, daily scripture study, and regular attention to the oracles of the Lord. Then, in verse 30, it is pointed out that "all truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also." This accords nicely with the relational view of a world full of possibilities, within varying but interconnecting contexts, about which moral decisions must constantly be made. Also, it is useful for Latter-day Saints to recognize that the term temporal is not intended to mean "carnal" or "physical," as in Doctrine and Covenants 29:34–35 or 77:2; it is used strictly as the opposite of atemporal and refers only to truth's relationship to a time context.

20. Slife, "Different Discourse Communities."

21. Faulconer and Williams, "Temporality in Human Action," 1185–86; Slife, *Time and Psychological Explanation*.

22. Brent D. Slife, "Information and Time," *Theory and Psychology* 5, no. 4 (November 1995): 533–50.

23. Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988); Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985): 88.

24. Latter-day Saint Christians may be interested to note that although these centers of family values are linked to philosophies that have become influential in recent times—modernism and postmodernism—they have long been anticipated in Latter-day Saint scripture. The descriptions in 2 Nephi 28:3–10 of churches contending over moral interpretations of scripture, encouraging the pursuit of pleasure, and teaching that God is tolerant of "flexible morality" recall certain characteristics of moralism, hedonism, and relativism, respectively.

In contrast, the classic example of relationalism in Latter-day Saint scripture may be the account in 1 Nephi 4 of Nephi obtaining the brass plates. After observing in verse 6 that he "was led by the spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do," Nephi recorded that he killed Laban, stole his sword and armor, gained access to the plates by impersonating him, deceived and abducted Zoram, and stole the plates—all actions which under normal circumstances would be considered wrong and which Nephi at first resisted (verse 10). The exigencies of the context and the higher purposes of the Lord made them necessary in this instance, although they were forbidden in others.

## Being There

Right now, this August night,  
It seems as if you're lying on the lawn  
Watching falling stars named by the paper  
As fragments of the comet Perseus,  
But here's the real scoop:  
You are standing on the sides of grass,  
Which make a very narrow ledge  
On the leading edge of the planet  
As it races toward 2:00 A.M.,  
For you are like snow, unable to cling  
To outcroppings of perpendicular,  
Needing at least a sliver of not too far  
From horizontal to hold your white feet.  
Remember the centripetal winds that fasten  
You to the earth, or, like Peter,  
You may come unglued and sink.  
Cast your eyes about like a net  
To gather the stars that are yours.  
Keep your hands free to brush  
The others from your hair;  
They'll scorch if they stay too long  
Staining the fragrance of the night.

—Kathryn R. Ashworth



# Microlending: Toward a Poverty-Free World

Muhammad Yunus

*By trusting small, impoverished borrowers, Professor of Economics Muhammad Yunus found a way to bridge the gap between economic theory and human reality.*

President Bateman, ladies, and gentlemen: Some years back at a conference in Michigan I met a group of students led by a professor from Brigham Young University. They struck me as a very unusual group of young people. Their deep interest in our work and their commitment to the issue of eliminating poverty and hunger made me curious about the university they came from. The group invited me to visit their campus. Although I had hoped to visit BYU someday, I did not expect it to happen soon. But it did happen. I came to BYU last year and became more impressed by the young people I met on the campus. I realized that the group I met in Michigan was not a special group—they represented the general student body.

I am back here again. This time I am here to become a part of BYU myself. Not only do I feel greatly honored to receive an honorary degree from BYU, I also feel lucky that you allow me to join a group of very special people as you are. Thank you for allowing me in.

A university campus always excites me. This is where dreams are born. This is where untoward assumptions and unfounded beliefs are smashed into unrecognizable debris. This is where young minds find their shapes.

I always enjoyed the process of shaping young minds, both as a student, being at the receiving end of it, and as a teacher, playing the role of giving shapes. When I left campus to seek answers to the questions I was grappling with, I gradually got worried about the risk involved in shaping young people's minds, particularly in the areas of social and economic issues. I started getting the feeling that the world's worst social and economic problems are unwittingly created in the classrooms because they shape young people's minds too rigidly, or without enough warning that our knowledge in social sciences is only tentative and that students should not take it as absolute truth.

## **The Influence of Economics**

I faced the conflict between my mind-set and the reality around me when I was teaching economics at Chittagong University in Bangladesh in the early seventies. Soon my enthusiasm for the elegant theories I was teaching started wearing off. Although I enjoyed teaching my students all the brilliant solutions to economic problems, I felt absolutely incapable of dealing with the massive poverty and hunger that existed in the villages around the campus. I soon realized that there was a great distance between the real life of the poor and the hungry people and the make-believe world of economic theory.

In a major way economics is responsible for creating the world that we live in. Interrelationships among individuals, nations, and institutions and the day-to-day activities of all people are shaped in a large way by the role assigned to them by economics.

Economics as a discipline not only attempts to explain what goes on in the sphere of economic activities of people and organizations, but it has also vastly influenced these activities by making people believe in what economics says about who they are and what they should do. Economics textbooks create the mind-sets; mind-sets create the world.

## **Human Beings in Economics**

Economics has committed a strategic mistake in conceptualizing a human being. It has abstracted away from the very essence of a human being. All human beings are creative beings. Each human being has great potential buried in him or her. Economics has reduced human beings to lesser beings than what they are, and consequently still lesser beings than what they could be.

Economics has paid no attention to this creative aspect of human beings. It has created a category called “labor” and put all human beings, except the few entrepreneurs, under this category. As they appear in the textbooks, those in the category called labor look more like draft animals than human beings. They have no creativity, no ambition, no sense of sacrifice, pride, or accomplishment. Worst of all, they have no gender. If you have to squeeze out the very essence of a human being to build a social science theory, who needs that social science? By not incorporating the difference between man and woman and also the basic institution they come from—the family—economics also misses out on important analytical opportunities as a social science.

Economics has assigned creativity only to a select, rather rare category of people called “entrepreneurs.” Entrepreneurs are treated as royalty in economics. Economics has persuaded the world that all other human



Courtesy Mark Philbrick

**Muhammed Yunus at BYU.** President James E. Faust, left, and Dean of Marriott School Ned C. Hill, center, visit with Muhammed Yunus at BYU graduation ceremonies in August 1998. Mr. Yunus was awarded an honorary doctorate from BYU.

beings are born to serve under entrepreneurs. This idea was introduced in economics as an innocent piece of abstraction. Yet it has done very serious damage to the human society by making an individual believe that he or she is fated to serve others. It has influenced the design of institutions, the framing of legislation and policies, and the shaping of politics. Because of this misconstrued vision of human beings, wage employment emerged as the only legitimate source of employment.

Today we would live in a different kind of world if economics had started out with the premise that all human beings are potential entrepreneurs, which they are. All that an individual needs is an opportunity. With this premise in place, the world would pay attention to creating those opportunities because textbooks would have required them.

### **Another Kind of Economics: Grameen Bank**

I decided to learn real-life economics from the people who lived around the campus. The village next door became my university. The poor in the village became my professors. I learned another kind of economics. But this time it was real.

I was trained to believe that all people, as they grow up, should prepare themselves to get jobs in the job market. But, for the poor people I met, the

job market practically did not exist. For survival they carried on economic activities of their own. The economic institutions designed on the basis of textbook knowledge had no intention of supporting them. Through no fault of their own, they were rejected by these institutions.

I was shocked to see how people suffer for lack of access to tiny amounts of money—as small as one dollar. I was surprised to see how much hard work each poor person is putting in just for mere survival. Even then, he or she finds it difficult to stay alive.

People see what they are trained to see. It takes a serious attempt on one's part to take off the glasses one has been fitted with during student days. I was lucky I could start seeing things differently than I had been trained to see. Problems started looking easier to solve than they had appeared to me previously.

Seeing how the poor people were exploited by moneylenders, I made a list of people who needed the money. I got forty-two people on my list. In total they needed \$27. I gave them the money as loans from my pocket.

The people who received my money were very happy. Seeing how easy it was to make so many people so happy with such a small amount of money, I thought I should loan to more people. I wanted to arrange loans for them from the local bank. When I approached the bank, the bank manager said they could not give loans to the poor because they were not creditworthy.

This triggered an action from my side. I wanted to find out whether the banker was right. I gave more loans to more poor people in the village. The loans worked. Every penny was paid back. But the mind-set of the banker was still not dented. I was asked to demonstrate more and more. I continued to do so—from one village to two villages, five villages, twenty villages, one hundred villages, and more. But the mind-set was not shaken loose.

I finally gave up on changing the minds of the bankers. I went ahead and founded a bank myself to continue doing what I was doing. Today that bank, Grameen Bank, lends money to 2.3 million poor borrowers in 39,000 villages of Bangladesh. And 94 percent of our borrowers are women. To date, more than 2.4 billion dollars were given out as loans over the years. The repayment rate is more than 97 percent. Last year alone we lent out nearly \$400 million.

Credit plays such an important role in the lives of poor people that I have been suggesting that credit should be accepted as a human right. Credit opens up the locked-in potential of human beings. All human beings are endowed with unlimited potential. Because of barriers created by our societies, individual people never get the full opportunity to bring out their potential.

## **Credit**

It is very surprising that economics never understood the social power of credit. The fact that credit creates entitlement to resources could have immediately triggered the thought that in a social context it could surely play a very significant and sensitive role. Amazingly, economics failed to grasp it.

Since credit creates economic and, hence, social power, the institution responsible for deciding who should and should not get credit, who should get how much credit, and at what terms becomes very important socially.

That's exactly what has happened. The banking institutions, by deciding that they can do business only with the rich, literally have created financial apartheid. When they announced that the poor were not creditworthy, it was almost pronouncing a death sentence on the poor for no fault of their own. Economics went along with it.

As a social science, economics should have recognized credit as a human right and should have promoted creative efforts to deliver credit to all. If we can redesign economics as a genuine social science, we can be firmly on our way to creating a poverty-free world.

## **Enterprises Driven by Social Consciousness**

Somehow we have persuaded ourselves that the capitalist economy must be fueled only by greed. Since economics persuaded us that way, we all believed that way. As a result, it became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Only seekers of personal gain go into the marketplace and try their talent. Those who are not interested in accumulating personal wealth and income do not find the marketplace very attractive. They use their talents elsewhere.

The marketplace is open for everyone, even for those who are not interested in personal gain—such as people who get inspired by the prospect of social change for betterment. Social goals can replace greed as a powerful motivational force. Social-consciousness-driven enterprises can be formidable competitors to greed-based enterprises. An individual's social consciousness and the urge to do good things for people on this planet can be as burning and even a more burning desire than personal gain. Why not encourage socially motivated people to come and play in the marketplace? Instead of grumbling about how a pharmaceutical company makes filthy money by charging unreasonable prices, why don't we create our own companies and sell good quality medicine at profit-free prices or at prices with low profits? I think social-consciousness-driven entrepreneurs can be an effective force in the marketplace.

Before the world surrenders itself to the current interpretation of the free market—that is, recognizing the market as the playground of only

greedy business people—we must seriously engage in examining the strength of social-consciousness-driven enterprises as players in the same market. Social consciousness does exist in people. But it can be further promoted through creating supportive legislation and a social reward system. If we leave no room for this human quality in our theoretical framework, as we have done in present-day economics, we'll be transforming ourselves into the human beings that we have conjured up—in other words, human beings without social values.

Economics must incorporate within itself a marketplace that is not an exclusive playground for bloodthirsty profit-seekers; instead, it is a challenging field for all good people who want to set the world on the right course.

### **The World Created by Mind-Sets**

In my work I have seen repeatedly how difficult it is to change people's mind-sets once they are formed.

We have created the present world in this particular manner because our minds were trained to behave in a particular set of ways that led to this formulation of the world. If we train our minds to think differently, we can create another kind of world.

For example, we accept the fact that we'll always have poor people around us. So we have poor people around us. If we had believed that poverty should not belong in a civilized human society, we would have created appropriate institutions and policies to create a poverty-free world. We wanted to go to the moon—so we went there. If we are not achieving something, my first suspicion will fall on the intensity of our desire to achieve it.

### **Creating a Poverty-Free World**

I strongly believe that we can create a poverty-free world—if we want to. We can create a world where there won't be a single human being who may be described as a poor person. In that kind of a world, the only place you could see poverty would be in the museums. School children on tour in the poverty museums would be horrified to see the misery and indignity of human beings in the past. They would blame their ancestors in a massive way for allowing this inhuman condition to continue.

My work in Grameen has given me a faith—an unshakable faith in the creativity of human beings. That leads me to believe that human beings are not born to suffer the misery of hunger and poverty. They have much more important things to do than struggle for physical survival. They suffer from miseries and indignities of poverty because we trained our



minds to accept the fact that nobody can do anything about poverty except by offering charity.

Before I conclude my remarks, I simply wish to encourage all of you to remember: irrespective of what you learn in school, always be ready to unlearn and relearn.

Don't give up dreaming. Be a dreamer. And keep on trying to make the dream come true. Dream about the world you would like to have. If we all dream about a better world, I can guarantee you that we will create a better world.

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Muhammad Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank, received an honorary doctorate and presented this address at the BYU commencement ceremony on August 13, 1998.

149 - Star Office (Laham)  
Beloved wife. I have Manchester March 1, 1841  
but a few minutes to spend  
in writing to you this evening. I am now  
at Dr. Pratt. came from Liverpool last Saturday  
I shall stay here a few days. Dr. Pratt's family are  
very well at present and in joy then as usual well  
and I think they shall stay in this country some time  
the rest of the 12 have but a little more than one  
month to stay here before they start for home  
I am perfectly willing to stay here till it is  
the will of the Lord for to start home &  
when that time comes I shall rejoice for I  
want to see my family one more. The Brothers  
are all well as far as I know Dr. Woodruff has  
been unwell in London but is now better and  
about his business. Dr. Kimball & Woodruff will  
soon be here to prepare for home Dr. Hadlock will  
come with us. I have sent some letters to you  
by the Company that has gone over lately. Dr.  
Clark started on the 7 of Feb with a cargo  
of 2344 shoes on the ship Sheffield Capt  
Porter. on the 16 of the same month another  
Company started for that place by the Orleans

Letter from Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young. "I am perfectly willing to stay here till it is the the [sic] will of the Lord for [me] to start home," wrote Brigham on March 1, 1841, about two weeks before he set sail for the United States.

# Letters of a Missionary Apostle to His Wife: Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 1839–1841

Ronald O. Barney

*The Quorum of the Twelve's mission to the British Isles impacted not only the Church, but also the personal lives of the missionaries. Brigham Young creates a tender personal portrait in nine never-before-published letters to his wife.*

For members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the first six months of 1838 gave reason for hope despite challenging setbacks. Joseph Smith and other Church leaders had moved from Kirtland, Ohio, to the Mormon communities in northern Missouri where community building accelerated among the Saints. But also during this period, a number of formerly important players on the Restoration stage severed their association with the Church, including several of the Church's Apostles. During this volatile time of paradox, the Prophet Joseph Smith implored heaven to "show us thy will, O Lord, concerning the Twelve."<sup>1</sup> The answer came on July 8, 1838: "Next spring let them depart to go over the great waters, and there promulgate my gospel, the fulness thereof, and bear record of my name" (D&C 118:4). The place designated for this mission "over the great waters" was Great Britain, whose green hills and vales had been partially opened to the message of the restored gospel the previous year by Apostles Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde. Now the call was to the Quorum of the Twelve as a body.

In the several years after their call to the apostleship in February 1835 in Kirtland, Ohio,<sup>2</sup> members of the Quorum of the Twelve participated in activities that mostly kept them near the Church's center in Kirtland. A lack of focus under Quorum President Thomas B. Marsh also limited the Twelve to a portfolio without a plan. At the time of their departure for England in the late summer of 1839, only six of the original Twelve were still in the Quorum. David W. Patten had been killed in Missouri. Five others were excommunicated from the Church. Four men—John E. Page, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith—had been called to fill the vacancies in the Quorum, making ten members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1839.

Three of the group chose not to go to England: Orson Hyde, William B. Smith, and John E. Page. The names and ages of the seven who accepted the call were: Brigham Young (38), Heber C. Kimball (38), Parley P. Pratt (32), Orson Pratt (28), John Taylor (30), Wilford Woodruff (32), and George A. Smith (22). They were relatively young men, averaging 31 years of age. Willard Richards, age 35, who accompanied the Apostles as a missionary, would be added to their quorum in April 1840, bringing the total of those who ministered in England at this time to eight of the Twelve. Orson Hyde, called by Joseph Smith in April 1840 to a mission in Palestine, joined his quorum members in England for a short time in April 1841 en route to his assignment.

When Brigham Young finally became Quorum President, coincident to his arrival in England in April 1840, his leadership and the Twelve's concerted objectives and efforts transformed the role of the Quorum. The effect was remarkable. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland has stated, "Neither this group of men, the British Isles, nor the Church would ever be the same again."<sup>3</sup>

The months between the Quorum's call and their arrival in England were marked by sacrifice and hard work. Preparations for their departure began in the spring of 1839. The revelation to the Apostles stipulated that to initiate their mission they were to "take leave of my saints in the city of Far West [Missouri], on the twenty-sixth day of April next [1839], on the building-spot of my house" (D&C 118:5). At the temple site, early in the morning on the day required, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, John E. Page, and John Taylor assembled and, pleading to the Lord for divine assistance regarding their mission, ordained Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith to their quorum. This important event was accomplished in secrecy because of the hostile feelings toward the Saints held by the citizens of Caldwell County, Missouri, at the time.

Joining their young families in the newly inhabited Mormon settlements of Montrose, Iowa, and Commerce (later Nauvoo), Illinois, Quorum members worked for several months to provide for their wives and children.<sup>4</sup> Finally on September 14, 1839, Brigham Young, nearly incapacitated from sickness, bid Mary Ann and his six children farewell and headed east for New York. The plight of his family, still in crude and inadequate housing, weighed heavily on his mind. Despite the family's pathetic condition, Young soberly concluded to his wife Mary Ann that he "would goe and perfo[r]m my mision or die in the attempt."<sup>5</sup>

Brigham was nearly five months preaching and visiting Church members on the way to New York City, where he preached and baptized for five more weeks. He departed New York on March 9 and landed in Liverpool, England, twenty-eight days later on April 6, 1840. For one year and two weeks on English soil he did his utmost to further the establishment of the

kingdom of God among the citizens of Great Britain. Twenty-two months after leaving his family, he arrived home in Nauvoo, on July 1, 1841.

Brigham Young (1801–1877) was born in Whitingham, Vermont, the son of John and Abigail Howe Young. Mary Ann Angell (1808–1882) was born in Seneca, New York, the daughter of James William and Phoebe Ann Morton Angell. At the time of Brigham's mission to Great Britain, Mary Ann was his only wife. His first wife, Miriam Works, died in 1832, leaving him a widower with two children. He married Mary Ann on February 18, 1834, in Kirtland, Ohio. (He entered plural marriage in 1842.) Six children comprised Brigham's household at the time he left for England: two children he had with Miriam and four more he had with Mary Ann, including a baby daughter born only ten days before his departure from Commerce.

The correspondence edited here is preponderantly personal. The letters uniformly demonstrate Brigham's concern about the condition of his family left behind in meager circumstances.<sup>6</sup> Despite her situation, Mary Ann, even a year after his departure for England, showed support for her husband by telling him she would exist under any circumstance rather "than have you come home [before] you have done the will of God."<sup>7</sup> While Brigham's correspondence does not reveal the broad scope of his work and business in England, his zeal for building the kingdom of God and his love for his family are evident.<sup>8</sup>

The nine letters edited here are part of a collection of family materials comprising several dozen documents and artifacts recently donated by Greta Fairzina Barker Blair to the LDS Church Historical Department. Greta Blair is the wife of the late George Washington Thatcher Blair, a great-grandson of Brigham and Mary Ann Angell Young. Merian Murphy, a friend of Greta Blair's, assisted in the donation of the collection to the Church and prepared an early typescript of the letters that was useful in the preparation of the letters printed here. The Historical Department and BYU Studies express gratitude to Greta Blair and Merian Murphy for making the publication of these letters possible.<sup>9</sup>

Each of the letters in this compilation were written either during Brigham Young's transit to England or during his last few months of missionary service there. Other missionary letters to Mary Ann have been previously published in *BYU Studies*.<sup>10</sup> With the publication of the nine letters below, all of Brigham's known extant missionary correspondence to his wife is now published, with the exception of a letter in the Philip Blair Collection at the University of Utah, perhaps the first letter Brigham wrote to Mary Ann after leaving Commerce, Illinois.<sup>11</sup> He apparently sent three letters to her between October 1839 and January 1840, sent another letter written September 7, 1840, and likely sent several other items of correspondence about which nothing is presently known.<sup>12</sup>



Courtesy LDS Church Archives

Mary Ann Angell Young, ca. 1850. Daguerreotype, Marsena Cannon. This image and the letters are part of the recently acquired George Washington Thatcher Blair Collection.





Courtesy LDS Church Archives

Brigham Young, December 12, 1850. Daguerreotype, Marsena Cannon.

The letters edited here are Brigham Young holographs, with the exception of the letter dated October 1, 1839, which he apparently dictated to Harriet Decker. Although he was at one end or the other of thousands of items of correspondence throughout his church career, extant holographic correspondence is not common.<sup>13</sup> These nine letters vary in size between 38 cm x 23 cm and 41 cm x 26 cm, though most are of the smaller dimensions. The letters, folded once with writing on each side, are in black and blue ink (though most of the black ink has rusted to a brown color). Several letters evidence franking and sealing wax. While there is some foxing of the paper and several places where small portions of the paper have been worn or torn away, the contrast between ink and paper is excellent, rendering the letters legible.

The idiosyncracies of Brigham Young's writing have been preserved. Spelling and capitalization reflect that found in the original letters. His spelling phonetically follows the manner in which he spoke. He publicly acknowledged that had only a few days of formal schooling. Sensitive to his limited literary skills, he repeatedly pled with those to whom he wrote to "excuse all mistakes and errors."<sup>14</sup> He did not organize his letters by paragraphs, and, while he included some punctuation in his writing, he often placed dashes, commas, colons, and semicolons where, by modern standards, commas or periods are required. In order to make the letters more readable, therefore, I have added some light punctuation. Where Brigham quotes himself or others or includes the words of his own prayers, quotation marks have been added. Abbreviations such as Br and Wm have been standardized to Br. and Wm. I have combined broken words, and I have used brackets [ ] to clarify and explain information not in the actual text. Long explanatory sentences are bracketed and italicized. I have used angle brackets < > to signify textual insertions. Words crossed through or erased I have rendered as ~~strikeouts~~, although single letters or incomplete words crossed through or erased I have eliminated. In several instances I have lowered superscripts to the line. Several of the letters were written over a period of days, and when these dates are known, I have noted them in brackets. The addresses are written in various places on the folded paper, usually on the fourth side of the writing surface. I have included these addresses at the end of each letter.

The biographical information supplied in the endnotes comes from a variety of sources, including Susan Easton Black, *Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1848* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984); Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Provo, Utah: Seventies Mission Bookstore, 1981); and Dean C. Jessee, "Biographical Register," in *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989, 1992).

*In this letter, perhaps the second one Brigham Young wrote to Mary Ann after leaving home, Brigham expresses interest in having his financial affairs settled while serving his mission.*

**October 1, 1839<sup>15</sup>**

Winchester, Scott County [Illinois], Oct. 1th 1839

my dear companion, we are now at Brothers [Isaac] Deckers.<sup>16</sup> we are comfortable in helth. we have ben blest apon our journey. our prospect are good. I can wright but little so I must say to you what I want to say con-cirning buisness. Brother [Theodore] Turley over took ous in Quincy [Adams County, Illinois].<sup>17</sup> he told me he saw Brother [Alanson] Ripley and Brother [Vinson] Knights a day or two before he started and he spoke to him about the money I owed Br. Turley.<sup>18</sup> Br. Ripley replied that he did not know anything about what he owed me. we had no settlement. I want you should ask Br. Ripley if he does not recollect of setting down in his own house, opening his big account book, and showing me his Charges against me and making a settlement and the balance due me was twenty three dollars, twenty two cents and he agreed to pay Br. Turley twelve dollars for me which he may now pay to you for I will pay Br. Turley as he is with us. does not Br. Ripley remember well that I took a suit of clothes off my back that I never wore an hour and sold him for George A. Smith for twenty nine dollars and a half and a fine coat pattern for fourteen dollars for Br. Wilford Woodruff, all of which I requested Br. Ripley and Br. Nights to prize [appraise] or get them prized [appraised] but they were satisfied?<sup>19</sup> Mary, you may read this to Br. Ripley but if he does not choose to settle the affair say nothing to him for I have had such perfect confidenc in Br. Ripley I do not wish it destroyed. let all thing remain as they are and trust in the Lord. he alone will sustain and clothe [and] feed us. yours in the bonds of love. B. Y. to M. Y. [*A postscript from Harriet Decker to Mary Ann Young, discussing family and friends, appears here.*] I enclose a dollar bill in this letter on the state bank of Ill. B. Y. to M. Y.

Mrs. Mary Ann Young  
Montrose, Iaway  
to the Care of <Mr.> Davis the ferryman

*Begun while Brigham Young was visiting the Richards family in western Massachusetts, this letter recapitulates his journey across western New York, through New England, and to New York City, where he finished the letter. He reports his dreams of family (the first of several letters in which he reports such dreams). He also reports his intention to return to his family that summer (1840) if he can sail for England immediately.*

**January 14 [January 16, February 5], 1840**

Richmond [Berkshire County, Massachusetts], January th[e]14, 1840

to You my companion & Wife in tribulation & patience, this is the six letter that I have wreten to you sence I left home. I supose you will think I mean you <shall> [k]now all my travels, & I mean you shall [k]now in the mane, for this will be a comfort to you. for when I think how it wold feast my sole to here from my wife & children, then whith a r<e>[j]oiceing hart set down to tell you all abought my traveles. as to my fair [fare] sence I left, in food & lodgen & traveling, I doe not thin[k] I <cold> wish better, & as to frends, I doe not think that Paul or Peater ever had better. I doe rejoice in the god & rock of my salvation for he is merciful to all. I have som things to try my faith as well as others and it is right that I should & my prair is that the Lord will keep my feet from sliping & my tong from speaking gile. but my gratest troble is abought my famely, whether they have a comfortble house & comfotble food or not. doe they enjoy helth? if so & I [k]now it, all is well with me. if I could onley here from my <famely>. often it appears to me that I should not think it a task in <the> least to goe to the Nations to preach the everlasting gospel. it is my theam to <Preach>: my theam [is] to tell the riches of Emanuel.<sup>20</sup> I have injoyed my self well sence I left home concidirn my helth has ben so poor. I have found the best of frends sence I left home. I have nont wanted for a meal of vitles and a good bed sence I left Illinoice. when [I] get to New York I expect to here from you. I often dr[e]am of seeing you & the children. I dreamed the other night of seeing Elizabeth verry sick with the quick consupion.<sup>21</sup> it was not thought she could live but a short time. I dream of seeing my famely & that is <the> news that I get from home. how grate our triels are here & how grate will be our joy if we are faithful to our Hevenly Fathers command. "O Lord, Keep me. keep my famely. bl[e]ss them. bless my Brother & their famelies, more especile the Elders that <are> pr[e]aching the gospel. I pray, my Hevenley Father, to keep ous humbel & faithful that the Kingdom of Heven may goe forth to the Ends of the Earth, that the glory of god may com dow[n] from a bove & the knoledge of the Lord cover the Earth. I long to see the day when mobs will seace to drive the saints. role on the happy day, O Lord, when Jesus shal reign on Earth insted of the a mob spirit." I am now at cosons P[hinehas] Richards. we have ben here 8 days. cosons Rhoda & na[n]cy send their best Love & respects to you. they seam to be well a quanted with you & the

children. Hepsabeth thought so mutch of you & the children & wrote about you.<sup>22</sup> thirsday the 16 [January 1840]. I will now commence my journal as I desire my letters to be my history.<sup>23</sup> I wrote to you from Hamilton [Madison County, New York, and] maled the letter at WatterVile [Madison County, New York]. Brother [George A.] Smith & my self left Hamilton the first <day> of Janury 1840. Brother [Joseph] Murdock sent his team to waterville with ous.<sup>24</sup> we left the Brotherin in the best of feeling. (our feelings ware united to gether as thogh we had all ways lived to gegher. I recolect now we are nomore strangers & ferners but fel<low> sitizens & of the house hold of God. in faith we are made ni [new?] by the blood of Christ.) we left waterVile the 2 [January 1840]. Brother James Gifford brought ous to Utica [Oneida County, New York].<sup>25</sup> while in Madison [Madison County, New York] I <had> the Plashier of visiting the Brotherin in som number of towns. they ware in <good> faith & are verry ancious to be with the saints in the west. meny of the saints wished them selves in the Mosuria difficulties. I have no dought but they will be satsfide ~~if~~ before the woinding up seenes <are over>. we left Utica <the> 3 [January 1840], took the cars & came to Abana [Albany, Albany County, New York] about 6 in the evening. [We] put up at the railrode House. saterday the 4 [January 1840] I went out in to the Citty to find som of the Brotherin as we had hered that their ware som their. I soon found them. I will give you the names of som: Jonathon Duke, Robert Campbel, Brother Boys. in Troy [Rensselaer County, New York, we found] P. Bridggs [Briggs ?] & Br. [David] Sloan.<sup>26</sup> on saterday I went to Troy then to Lancinburge [Lansingburg, Rensselaer County, New York, and] herd P[hinehas] Richards Preach in the evening. he Preached well [and] was much liked. I Preached their the next day [then] returned to Troy. [We] held a meting on Monday <6> [then] returned to Albana. [I] Preached in the Evenin to the Brotherin. the next morning we took the stage for West stockbride [West Stockbridge, Berkshire County, Massachusetts]. [We] arived at Unkel [Joseph] Richards about 1 o.c. P.M. [and] found them well.<sup>27</sup> their are afue in that place that are strong in the faith of the Ever lasting Covenant that God has Esablished in our day. we staid their about ten days. Edwin Persons [Pearson or Pierson] braught ous to Canon [Canaan, Litchfield County], Connecticut, whare we now are.<sup>28</sup> thir ar som fue in this place that are striving to serve the Lord. we are here & when we shall get to New York I [k] now not. the snow is about 5 or 6 feet deep here & the ro[a]ds blocked up. I should not wright so often to you ware it not that I relise how much you want to here from me. I shal pay the postge on this letter. if I pay all my letters to you before I cross, I supose you will not care how meny I send. I hope I shal here from you when I get to New York. [*Brigham Young's cousin, Rhoda Richards, here pens ten lines of greeting to "Cousin Mary."*] Coson Rhoda has writen afue lines to you. Sunday 19 [January 1840]. I preached in Sheffield [Mills, Berkshire, Massachusetts]. 26 [January 1840] Sunday. G. A. Smith preached at Brothers <French> & I spoak after him.<sup>29</sup>

on monday 27 [January 1840] Brother French braut ous on our jorney one day tord New Haven [New Haven County, Connecticut] then sent another man with ous. we had to stay in N. haven from tusday till frida[y]. then we took the steam Boat New Haven for new York. we had to plow through the Ice for severl miles but we suceeded in our jorny till we arived at frogs Point, 18 miles from New York. but the Lord provided for ous. we left the Boat, went to shore on the ice, loded our trunks on to a dirt cart, [and] went a bout a mile. a gentleman asked ous if we wished to take a seet with him in a caredge that he had hired. we did so & arived in New York that night. we found Brother [Parley P.] Pratts House. he was not at home. sister [Mary Ann Frost] Pratt & children ware well.<sup>30</sup> Brother Taylor, Woodrouf, & Turley are gon over to Englan.<sup>31</sup> I understand Brothers Joseph [Smith] & S[idney] Rigdon are in Phelidelphe [Pennsylvania].<sup>32</sup> I recived a letter from You, the firs[page torn] you rote. I was rejoiced to here from You. I red the same things in your letter that I antisapated with regard to Your location. I wrote to you from Kirtland [Lake County, Ohio] ab[o]ut Father [James William] Angel, that he wanted you & your mother [Phoebe Ann Morton Angell] to com to Kirtland.<sup>33</sup> concirning Brother [Reynolds] Cahoon & the house, if we did not let him have the house, I was to pay for the factory that I had of him.<sup>34</sup> that was the bargan. I hope You have recived the letters I have sent to You. if you have, I thin[k] you will find that you & I have felt alike about our travels. I am in New York. when I shall crooss the water I no not. if you can com to Kirtland with Brother [Oliver] Granger & he will get you a house, I shall beg[l]ad.<sup>35</sup> I want you should get the house that Father [Isaac Gates] Bishop ocipied.<sup>36</sup> if you should be in Kirtland in the spring, I think I should see you before I croos the water. you wrote in your letter that your helth was very poor & you a wasting away. this hirts my feelings. I drempt the other nights you was ded. I waked my self up a weeping and lay awak[e] a while metetaing upon our life sast [past] & present. sister [Mary Ann] Pratt sendes hir best lov to you. she expets to be [in] your company in Kirtland. Febury 5 [1840]. I am at Brothers [Parley P.] Pratts [in New York City]. whare this letter will find you I no not. the Brothers P. P. Pratt & orson Pratt thinks of going acros the water within a fue days.<sup>37</sup> if I doe not goe with them I think I shall not goe till summer & if so I shall want to see you in Kirtland # before I cross the water. if I goe now I shall return in the summer. I think I have recived a letter from H[eber] C. Kimbale. he is in the west part of [New] York state.<sup>38</sup> he has Baptized Wm. Murry & wife. he is Violats [Vilate Kimball's] Brother.<sup>39</sup> fair well. the Lord bless you & children. B. Young [to] M. A. Y. I shall pay the Postege of this letter. Brigham Young To Mary A. Young

Mrs. Mary A. Young  
Commers, Hancock Co., Ill.



*This seventh letter from Brigham to Mary Ann since he left Commerce six months earlier was also his last letter prior to departing for England on March 9, 1840. Brigham's longing to hear from his wife and his frustration at the difficulties in long-distance communication are evident in the letter. When Brigham penned the first part of the letter, it was his intention to return to the United States that summer or fall. By the end of the letter, perhaps after visualizing the potential for widely establishing the Church in England, he has reconsidered the length of his stay, which he speculates might now be for a year.*

**February 14 [February 29, March 5, 7, 8 or 9], 1840**

New York, Feb. 14, 1840

this is the seventh letter I have written to you sence I left home. it is five months to day sence I left my house & famely. I have seen a grate menny sick [h]ours sence I left. but through the mercy of god I am here ammong frends & brethern. I have in joyed my self verry well a conciderble part of the time. I have preached almost every night sence I have ben here. Brother O[rson] Pratt & my self are now wating till the 25 of this month when the ship Garick will sale & we expect to goe to Englan & accomplish our mision & returne & in joy our families & frends for a while.<sup>40</sup> whare as if I should returne & meet mi famely, I should hav<e> but a short time to stay with them [and] I should not feele satesfide till I had performed the mision that is a pon me. I promised the Lord that if he would open the way I would goe. he has provided for me thus far & has prepared the way for me to goe across the watter. I feele as though I had better goe now & returne the latter part of summer. Brother [Reuben] Hadlock arived here last night & is going with ous.<sup>41</sup> I expected he had gon home. Brother [Heber C.] Kimball we left. he has wreten to this place [that] he has Baptized Wm. Murrey & wife, Violat<s> Brother. I have wreten to him to have him com in time to goe with ous. 29 [February 1840]. I ad afue words to mi letter. Brother Kimball has arived & is going with ous. Br. P[arley] P. P[ratt] is going & G[eorge] A. Smith. their is 6 of ous now wa[i]ting fore the ship Patrick Henrie. she is a large, new, fine Packet.<sup>42</sup> the ship Garic would not take Pasengers. so by O[rson] P[ratt] & mi self not going on heir we now have more compiny which will render our jorney more plesent, I beleve. (I wish you to take a dead [deed] of the land Even Greene has in his hands, of that Levi Richards has in his hands, & that Soloman has all in Your ~~one~~ name.)<sup>43</sup> March the 5 [1840]. I have jest returned from a short mision on long Island in compena[y] with Elder Hadlock. we was gon one week. we found the people verry much beleving. their was 9 Baptized [and] meny more about reddy to be Baptized.<sup>44</sup> the work is going on in these parts. twenty four has ben recive<d> in to the church in this citty [New York] with in ten days.

Brother Kimball has jest recived a letter from his wife but Brother Brigham has received but <one> sence he left home. I wish you would wright a fue lines to him to comfort his poore hart. I supose his wif has soe much to doe <&> so menny babes to takcare of that she has not time to wright. but still I think that if his wife [k]new jest how much he wants to here from hir ~~wife~~, I beleve she wold wright a fue lines to him to let him [k]now how she is & hir children. I am perswaded that he loves his wife & children as well as enny other man [even] if he dos not make quite so much fus about it. I often ketch him all most thinking out loud & exclaming "O, that I could here from my famely. how I doe want a letter from my wife" & so on. but a nuph of that. I doe not wish to be childeish but I must say this is a world of triels & fertuge [fatigue].<sup>45</sup> Sister Violate Kimball says you was preparing to com to Kirtland & that Brother Hiram [Smith] <advised> you not to goe but to stay there.<sup>46</sup> if it is best for you to stay there, stay. I am willing & especiley till I retorne home. still if <I> could com & find you in Ohio insted of going to Ioway I should be glad, as my mision is to the Eastern world. but I can say the will of the Lord be don. I hope & trust that I shall never feale to rebel or goe contr[ar]y to councel or the spirit of the Lord. as to your going to the Ohio, I have told you how I felt about it. I wish you to doe the will of the Lord. there fore I shall not say enny thing with regard to advice. doe as you think best.<sup>47</sup> I wish to doe right & keep humble for their is sliprey pathes that Elders travel in in this Church. I think it would be better for me to be in humble submission to the powers that <be> & to [ad]here to councel even if it costs me mutch labor. may the Lord keep ous humbel & faithful. Mary, I am all most a mind to wright you a love letter & see if that will not bring a nancer as Brother orson [Pratt] has has received 6 or 8 from his wife. this keep to your self for I am all most ashamed [about] it a[l]reddy. Brother [Francis] Benidick [Benedict], that was up their last spring, sends his best respects to you & the children [and] wishes to see you & all the Brotherin.<sup>48</sup> Sisters [Mary Ann] Pratt & others send their love to you. When I think of you & the children I feele verry ancious to here from you & how you are. I doe not [k]now whare you are nore how you are but I trust to see you agan in the faul. still I doe not [k]now but what it would be best fore me to stay till a nother yere if you still remane in that contry. I shall doe acording to circumstances. when I find whare you are I shall wright agan but not before if I here from you soon. soon after I arive in England I shall provible [probably] wright to you. the ship that we goe in is afine craft. when she is loded hir quarter decks will be provible eightin feet out of water. 7 [March 1840]. we doe not sale till monday the 9 [March 1840]. I understand the steam boat Grate Western has jest arived from Liverpool. we shall have the newes in a fue [h]ours in the papers. mary, I want to see you & talk with you. I trust I shall when the Lord shall signefy by his spirit.

if I could doe sumthing for your comfort I should be glad but I doe not see enney way that I can. thank the good Lord I can pray for you. my feelings are pecular. if I had faith enuf & faithfulness <to> have mi famely rother nirer then a six months jorney, I think it would be agreable to boath of ous. but if we are faithful we shall not all our lives time be subject to so menney inconvniene in this life. sunday & to morrow w[e] exspet to goe on bord the ship. she sales at twelve o.c. I shall not close mi letter but lev[*ink smear*] it for sister [Mary Ann] Pratt [to] wright a fue word & let you [k]now that I am gon. when you wright to me wright to the same place whare sister [Vilate] Kimball dos to hir husban. I [am] quite unwell to day. geting our things on board was too much for me. we are well provided for: beds & beding & provision epenty [aplenty]. our pas<e>dg [passage] [is] paid. we shall be in small places. we shall not be so comfortable as we could wish. I supose their will be 50 or 60 pasingers in one small cabin. a word to the children: I [wish] Elisabeth to prctes [practice] wrighting & Violate [Vilate] to[o] so they can wright to me one of these days.<sup>49</sup> be good girles, good to your mother & the little Children. little Joseph, mi first born son, be a good Boy & lern your book.<sup>50</sup> mind your mother. tell little Brigham to be a good Boy & he shall goe with me in the ship one of these days. tell little Mary ann she must lern to soe so to hem me a hankerchief when I com home.<sup>51</sup> Kiss little Emma for me & tell her I will kiss hir when I com home.<sup>52</sup> You & the Children must pray fore me. so I say fair well. give my love to the Brotherin. Mary A. Young [from] Brigham Young

this is the Last day [March 8 or 9, 1840] with ous in New York for a fue months.<sup>53</sup> I have not wretten but a fue things that I wantterd [wanted] to say. when I returne I will tell you more then I can wright. You must for give my erores & joking a gradel [great deal] of the time. I doe not hardley [know] what I doe wright or what I doe say. I will say fair well. I Bless you in the name of jesus Christ our Lord a cording to all the athority that I have. the Lord bless the children & preserve you all. M. A. Y. [from] B. Y.

Direct your leters to Preston, Pole Street no. 21, Lankershire, England.

*[Mary Ann Pratt, Parley P. Pratt's wife, apparently posted this letter to Mary Ann Angell and at this point in the text penned several lines describing the departure of the missionaries for England.]*

Mrs. Mary A. Young  
Commerce, Hancock County, Ill.

Leave Pool April The 6 - 1840 the first day of the eleventh year  
 my dear wife I now attempt to write to you again having just landed here after a  
 long and tedious journey of 28 days on the boat secure, we left New York the 9 of march and this  
 morning found the vessel anchored in the river in front of the City Brothers H. C. H. and P. P. P.  
 and my self took a small boat and came to shore we soon found a rooming house and got soon  
 breakfast about 3 o'clock in the afternoon the other Brother came ashore we have a day of  
 rejoicing and thanks giving this evening in prayer thanks and blessing each other by prayer  
 and laying on hands. I laid in prayer Brother H. C. Kimball for I see we then arose and commenced  
 blessing each other I laid my hands on Brother H. C. and blessed him the other ~~Brother~~ Brother  
 laid on hands with me H. C. then arose laid his hands on Brother P. P. P. in company with the  
 rest of us and blessed him then P. P. P. arose laid his hands on Brother Haddock's head with the rest and  
 blessed him then Mr Haddock arose and blessed B. C. Pratt then B. C. Pratt arose and blessed  
 Brothers J. C. Smith then B. C. H. arose and laid his hands on my head and blessed  
 me we have had a good day our assembly had been small but solemn and yet cheerful  
 our hearts rejoice in the Lord and I pray that we may see much good in this land. I began to  
 feel like entering in to the field of labor my health is improving my appetite is very good I think  
 I shall soon get my health. The people in this city are very much like the Americans in manners  
 and looks but they cook their vittles with out salt and calculate for me to eat the bread and  
 spread the butter so as to not use but two knives so I am told; however I shall now move about than

Letter from Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young. Brigham began writing this letter on April 6, 1840, the day he arrived in England. He continued the letter over the next several weeks.

*Brigham began writing this letter to Mary Ann on the day he arrived in Liverpool. He describes his ocean voyage to England and characterizes his new social milieu. He also includes a lengthy rehearsal of another dream.*

**April 6 [April 12, 15, 16, 24], 1840** <sup>54</sup>

Lever Pool [Lancashire, England], Apriel the 6, 1840, the first day of the eleventh year [of the organization of the Church].

my dear wife, I now attempt to wright to you agan haveing jest landed here after a long and tedeas jorny of 28 days on the brod ocean. we left N[ew] York the 9 of march [1840] and this morning found the vesel ancantered in the river in front of the <this> citty. Brothers H[eber] C. K[imball] and P[arley] P. P[ratt] and my self took a small Boat and ~~went~~ <came> to <the> shore. we soon found aboarding house and got som breckfast. about 3 oclock in the afternoone the other Brotherin came a shore. we have [had] a day of rejoiceing and thanks giveing. this evening [we joined] in prayer, thanks, and ble[ss]ing eachother by prayer and laing on hands. I led in prayer. Brother H. C. Kimbell fol[low]ed me. we then arose and commencd blesing eachother. I lad mi hands on Brother H. C. and blesed him. the other ~~Brother~~ Brotherin lad on hands with me. H. C. then arose, lade his hands on Brother P. P. P. in company with the <rest> of ous and blest him. then P. P. P. arose, lade his hands on Brother [Reuben] Hadlocks head with the rest, and blest him. then Br. Hadlock arose and blest Br. O[rson] Pratt. then Br. O. Pratt arose and blest Brothere G[eorge] A. Smith. Then B[rother] G. A. S. arose and lade his hands on my head and blest me. we have had a good day. our ascmble has ben small but solom and yet cherful. our harts rejoice in the Lord and I Pray that we may doe much good on this land. I began to feele like entring in to the field of labor. my helth is improving. my ap<e>tite is verry good. I think I shall soon get my helth. the People in this citty are verry much lik the americans in mannars and looks. but they cook their vitles with out salt and cal[c]ulate for one to cut the bread and spred the butter so as to not use but two knives, so I am told. however I shal [k]now more about them here after. I feele verry well here. we expect to goe to Preston [Lancashire, England] to morrow where we shall <see> our brothirn, we hope. tuesday. 7 oclock. fresh knews. Elder P. P. P. has ben out in to the strets. he got on track of Elder [John] Talor. we found him and Brother [John] Moon.<sup>55</sup> Brother Taylor has commencd the work of the Lord in this place.<sup>56</sup> the Lord is to work in Englan as well as in Americk. there is about 30 [Church members] in this Citty. Brother [Wilford] Woodroof is in a grate fiel[d] of labor.<sup>57</sup> we understand the work has commenced in Scotland.<sup>58</sup> I will leve this part of the subject for the present. you will want to [k]now somthing about our voige

on <the> water. monday morning, March the 11 [1840]. I went from Brother Allbrights (whare I loged.<sup>59</sup> I slept alone. when I layed down upon my bed I endevered to look to the Lord with all my sole and asked my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus to give me som ~~way som~~ manifestation concerning my jorney across the water. I fel asleep and dreamed a dreamed that ~~was~~ satesfisd my feeling in agrate mas<h>ere. I will relate it to you. I found my self traveling with som persons, hoo I doe not [k]now, but found my self decending apresipest [precipice] of grate hight, as I looked from the botom after I had saftley arived theire. when desending, the first I relized, I was about half way down it. this first part of the way was not perpendicular. I then looked down the rest of the way. it was grate, som haundred of feet. ameditley I found my self in a snow bank jentley desending down the remander part of the way. the snow soon sunk awaue and <I> found my self safe at the foot of the mounten on a large body of water covered with ice and snow which was werry week. I had to pase over this water. I looked to the <right hand>. I cold not see acrooss. I looked strate forard. I could see to the other side verry plane. I then stepped on to the ice beleiving I should goe safe across. the ice looked like honney comb but I was not afrade. I had [not] proseded far before som person asked me if I was not a frade. I ansered I was not. at that moment [I] saw menny peple on the ice pas[s]ing and repas[s]ing. I also said to the one hoo asked me if I was not afraid, "doe you not see that cord that I have hold of?" at which moment I saw in my hand [a cord] reching to the top of the mounten that I had jst desended. I then looked to the east shore to which I had to goe and the ice was coverd with water but their was a grate menney people pasing over it and I past one with out geting wet at all. I ~~ayed I send~~ then spoak and said I would send the cord back for others to take hold of when they came over, which I did. thus ended my dreme) and came up to Brother P. P. Pratt. the Brotherin and sisters had commenced getherin to gether to see ous start. we went down to the wharfe. the Brotherin and sisters flocked around ous whose faces I shall never forget, for there faces looked like Angels. about 11 oclock we left them. I jumped down in to the small Boat which caried ous out to the ship. my Brothen folied [followed] me. we began to shake hands. we to took leave of fifty or thir [there] about, I should think. we then went on board about 1 o.c. P.M. the vesel reasd ancar and she was toed out of harbor by a steam Boat. we had aplesent breze and the sun sunk behind the plesent land, Staten Iland. the vesel began to tost [toss] which made me feel bad at my stumuck. I did not set up but verry little for severel days. there came on a severe storm which lasted for som days. we ware all sick. our situation was verry disagreeable [with] a bout 50 or 60 pasingers in one small Cabben and all of them sick. we had not the privledge of going on deck with out geting drenched with salt water, the waves continula dashing



over the deck, the water poring down in to the cabben where we was. sum-times it was lik som river thundrin dow[n] som catric [cataract]. the mate of the vesel sead he had not seene suchatime fore fiftee years.<sup>60</sup> yet we felt calm and cerene. I constenly looked to the Lord bel[ie]ving we should arive safe on the other side of the water as I had seene in my dreme. we had 16 days of head wind which kept ous on the water longer then we should have ben. but through the mersy of our hevenly Father we arived in liverpool after being on the water 28 days. Brothers H. C. K. & P. P. P. and my self got into a small boat and went a shore (as the vesel lay at ancor in the river), the six day of Apriel, the firs day of the eleventh eri [year]. we spent the time in liverpool till wensday with Brother [John] Tailor and som of the Brothererin there. <Sunday the 12 [April 1840, marginalia in this general vicinity within the letter]>. on wensday Brothers H. C. K., R. Hadlock, Or. Pratt, G. A. Smith and my self came to Preston [Lancashire] in the cares [railroad cars]. I did not find coson W[illard] Richards as I had expected. he came home the next day.<sup>61</sup> we found Brothererin that are verry kind to ous so the word of the Lord is verified in providing Fathers and mothers and sisters and brothers for ous. I take much satsfaction in visiting the brotherin in this place, though the Brohern are poor here, yet verry free acording to their circumstances. when I look at the difrents betwene poore People here and in America I rejoice that you and the children are there. every meal [is] waed [weighed] <to> the people here. if they have two pence to lay out for a meal they then can eat two pence worth. but if they have but one copper they can not have but one coppers worth to eat. The Poor Peopel are rich in that contry for they have the privledge of borrowing. there they have the privledg of bagen and asking for somthing to eat if hungry. but they have not that pr[i]veledg here. let there circumstances be what they may they must not aske for food. if the[y] doe and they are reported they are taken up and sent to the work house to recive the due demerit of their crime. last fridia I was seting here in Br. W[illard] R[ichards's] room. I hered som person singin. the sound came up aganst the window. I saw as smart looking ~~young~~ young man well drest for laboring. he continued singin and looking first one way and then the other. I asked why he should be in such bisness. the ancer was, "I supose he is out of imploy lik agratemenny others and cannot get enny thing to doe and he is hungray and wants a peace of bread." I had two penneys left in my pocket. I started to give him one but while I was making the inquire he had gon out of my reach. if you could but see and have a knolidge of the inhabtence of this contry and the world your hart would be pained with in you. I cannot say you would be wiling to beseprated from me for there sakes. for I doe not know that it is in the powr of enny women to doe more then you due to have me go and the Lord will bless you for it and I bless you with

all the Power that I have to bless. I wish I had it in my Power to bless you with something to make you and the children comfortble for food and a litle clothing. this would doe my sole good. but I will pray for you continule that your life may be spard and helth and the children untel I shall see you all agan and then till the savior coms. then we shall in joy each others company and I trust I shall enjoy ~~my~~ the society of my famely som concideable part of the time before. how much of the time I shall have to spend abroad I know not but now I am here I pray the Lord to enable me to lay a foundation for agrate and glories work. the worke is roling on in this contry. I hope that I may be nable to accomplish my mision in rightousnes and then return home. if I could onley relize that you and the children ware comfortble, in helth, and had food and rament and ahouse, I should feele contented. I remember the Lord will p[r]ovide and he can doe it better than I can. in the letter you rote to me you thought that we should see each other before I crost the water. I had som such feeling my self, but you will reculect that when I left home I thaught and said that I would goe and perform my mision or die in the attempt. I came from place to place as the Lord opened the way and through the mercy of god I am here and I think the enchantment is broke and the Lord will bring me of concoror [off conqueror]. I feele well and happy that the Lord has called me to such a glories work in these last days and you as a help meet for me. the Lord bless you and my lovei[n]g children. dear Mary, when I see the sitution of the Brother here and there I an rejoiced that my fanely [family] is in that contry. I see feamales [families] of our church, som young and som older, come, som five, som ten, som twenty miles. if they want to be here at 10 o.c. a.m., they start the night before hand and walk most of the night, as they have no other wae of conve[ya]nce, stay to meeting all day and then till evening meeting is out and then walk back agan. and perhaps while conversing with them they will burst in to tears in conciquence of being apposed by Parence or companions. it makes my hart ake and could ~~in~~ ~~good~~ wish them in som good sitution on som of the western P<r>iarie. Apriel the 15 [1840]. this day we met in Confrence with the church [in Preston, Lancashire]. we have had a verry good meeting.<sup>62</sup> the Brotherin are verry kind. 16 [April 1840]. I have jest herd from commerce by way of sisters [Leonora] Taylor dated Jan. the 9 [1840].<sup>63</sup> I think I have reson to be thankful that I am a live. it apares to me that the devel has tried his best to destroy me. I will tel you a little about a faul I had in N. York. Brothers O. Pratt, R. Hadlock, and my self was agoing to from Brocklan<d> [Brooklyn, New York] to N. York city. the ferry Boat had started from the wharf. I had to spring with all mi might to reach the Boat. I entended to have caut hold of a post that was on the Boat but mist it [and] fell my hole length upon my left side with my left hand exstended up which throd mi left sholder out. I

cried out to Brother orson to take hold of mi left hand. he did so and puled it down to mi side and put mi right hand up under mi left sholder at the same time and sliped mi shoelder joint in to its place agan. in mi faul mi left arm stuck aniron ring that was on the deck of the Boat. I <have> born agreat dele of pain in mi sholder and arm. I have poor turnes, verry often unabl to indure much fotuge [fatigue].<sup>64</sup> this moming I am sompthing nigh two hundred miles south of Liverpool in Worsestershere.<sup>65</sup> Close by [are] the Milvern [Malvern] mountins, the highest mountins in England. the Quen and Lords com here for devershion. we have preaching places all through this part of the contry.<sup>66</sup> I am now with Brother [Wilford] Woodruff. the work is spreiding verry fast in England.<sup>67</sup> how long I shall stay I [k]now not, but the will of the Lord be don[e]. I have verry exsist feelings about my famely when thaughts flud apon me. pehaps they are sufering for the comforts of life. but I have this to comfort me; the Lord said he would provide for our families if we would doe our duty.<sup>68</sup> when I was in N. York I thought that I should returne this faul but I doe not [k]now wether I shall or not. I want to doe that which is for the best. it is a grate jorney to this contry. I should have written before this time had I have none [known] whare to drict mi letter. I visited I verry butiful garden in Liverpool with Brother Taylor and som of the rest of the Brotheren. it was a verry beautiful sight. the meny tombs walkes under the ground cut out of soled rock and som on the side of the hil with tombs along each walk. When on my jorney to this place we visited the Cathedreal in worcester. one part of it, about one hundred and fifty feet, was built about six hundred years sence or a little more. the other part no[body] [*obscured text*] [k]nowes eneything about it. its age and constucters is not none [known]. it is about 3 or 4 hundred feet long. its archetector is verry curieas [with] agrate menmy butiful stone and marble monuments. one Pulpit [is] cut out of one soled rock. the workmanship can not be equeled by enny in our part of the world.<sup>69</sup> at the present time there are menmy ancent looking buyldens. every thing looks ancent. the Peuple looke verry helthy here. there maner of liveng is verry plane and simple. what the Lord has for me to doe or what is before me I cannot tel. I continualey look to the Lord for to direct me in mi duty. every night when I retire to mi rest I aske my hevenly Father to manifest unto me something concerning my labors. then as soon as I drop into sleep I will find my self in that Contry with my famely and frends doing bisness or Preaching or teaching the church, and what it means I [k]now not. nether doe I [k]now whether it menes ennething or not. I dremp last night of handing this letter to you my self. this of corse will not be. I hope you will have the plsure of p[e]rusing this before agrate while. as soon as I find out whare you are I shall wright often.<sup>70</sup> if I was agoing to stay in this contry menmy years, I should want my famely with me.

still if it is the Lord[’s] mind fore me to doe other wise I hope I shall feele to say amen. I shall send a letter to Kirtland to find out whether you are there or not. I shall send a letter to Brother Joseph Young at the same time.<sup>71</sup> mary, you must excuse mi bad wrighting and speling and recive my love, for I love the Lord with all my hart and so I doe my wife and children. I bless you and the children in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am yours for ever.<sup>72</sup> Brigham Young.

*[At this point, Wilford Woodruff penned a number of lines to his wife, Phoebe. “Bptizsed 160 in a month,” he related. He also pled for correspondence on behalf of his fellow apostles: “When you write speak of all of the families of the 12 & others that are in the country & in this way we can all hear from our families.”]*

Mrs. Mary Ann Young  
Commerce, Hancock County, State of Illenoice, United States  
to the <care> of E. Roberson [Robinson] and D. C. Smith  
Manchester, England, No. 9 Chapel Cort, Jersey Street to the Care of  
P. P. Pratt

*Brigham recounts a Church member's vision concerning the work of salvation in the postmortal world. He remains ambivalent regarding the length of his missionary service in England.*

**May 26 [May 27] 1840**

Manchester, Lancashire, England, May 26, 1840

once more, my Dear Mary ann, I attempt to wright to you to let you know how and whare I am. I have ben here three days along with Brother P[arley] P. Pratt preparing a hym Book. Br. [John] Taylor came from Liverpool last night. we expect to have our hym Book out reddy for use by the firs of July next.<sup>73</sup> I have ben with Br. [Wilford] Woodruff & [Willard] Richards in herefordshire.<sup>74</sup> there has ben 350 Baptized in that regon of contry. the work is spreding fast in this contry. the Brotherin of the twelve are all well and doing well. I have jest heard that you are in Comarce or in that regon of contry. I have heard that Elder [Heber C.] Kimball has recived a letter from his wife. what the knews is I doe not know yet I shall as soon as I can wright to him and get an ancer. but I can not wate for that now for I have an opertunity of sending [a letter to you] by som of the Brotherin that is going to america with in a fue days and I must send what I can now. I shall send you our paper [*Millennial Star*] and som little present of monney if I doe not get disepointed. I heard you was not going to Kirtland. I am willing and I am rejoiced to think you are willing to szacrefise everithing for the council of our Brotherin that the Lord has given ous for Councelas [counselors] in these las<t> days. it is my feelings to goe right strate ahead if it takes all the hare of my head. I want to live in that way that the Lord will say by in by to me when he comes, "you have well don. now you mad [may] enjoin the socity of your famely and be though. <I will mak you a> ruler over much." I som expect to get a letter from you before July confrence and them [then] I shall be able to wright to you, I think, whether I come home this fall or not. some times I am led to think this will be the time that you saw that I was gone three years. it will be perty hard for me to stay two years. yet I think it would not be best for me to travel so far for one years labor as to retorne to Commerce. while I think of it, I want you should tell Brother Joseph Smith whare to direct a letter. I wrote to him but afue weeks <sence> and did not tell him whare to Direct a letter I requested him to wright to me.<sup>75</sup> thursday morning, 27 [May 1840]. last night Brother Kimball came to manchester. he had a letter that he had jest recived from his wife. she gave us som knews about our fameles. she stated that you had given up going to Kirtland and Brother Joseph [Smith] was agoing to have you and sister [Leonora] Taylor and sister [Sarah] Pratt som houses built nere the temple lot.<sup>76</sup> I would <rather> you would have a house on my lot

that Br. Joseph set apart for me near his own house. I am desposed to wright you a vision in this or som other letter <that> I shall send. it is concerning David W. Patten's minestry in the world whare he has gon. it gives my hart joy inexpressable. O my Dear mary, how I long to see you and the children, yeas, my loving children and affectnate wife. I am most perfectly satsfyde the Lord braught ous to gether and could wish he would so order it that we might live to gegher [together]. when I begen to think about my famely and think perhaps they are in kneed of food and rament it gives me hart rendings feelangs. I find I can not reseat my feelings as I used to. I often think of what I have hered you say about feeling like a whiped Child. I would not have you understand by this that I am descoredg<d> in the lest; I am not. som times I think it matters not how soon my poor old Boddy is worn out for I have but little or no rest in this contry. my labors are verry hard, som times a little better, and then again quite down. this day I am verry feble [with] som fever. the are [air] dos not agree with mee. it gives me a verry dul feeling. Br. [Hiram] Clark has ject com in.<sup>77</sup> he has ject got over a chill of the ague and fever.<sup>78</sup> I have ben out to a brothers house to dinner. I for get how menmy bagers I saw but enuph to take all the pennies and copers I can get. ennyhow it is verry destresig times in England. the Brotherin want to goe to america. as menmy as can will goe this seson. I think that I shall tarey here ore in the old contrys till a nother seyson. but I shall doe as the Lord shall direct about it. Br. W. Richards recived a letter not long sen [since?]. it sopke of the affares in the west. it also bore the knews of the deth of his father.<sup>79</sup> Sister Violate [Vilate Kimball] says Israel Barlow is mared [married] to Elizabeth Havens.<sup>80</sup> also that Abanna [Abby Ann] Greene is mared.<sup>81</sup> Mary ann, harken to my counsel. if you want enny thing due you aske for it? make your self comfortble as you can and the children. I will in devor to send som cloth in the faul for the little Boys by the Brotherin that will goe over then. I am not Prepared to due it now for I have not got it for my self. my old coat is pirty raged but I think I shall be able to makit stick on my back som time yet and if I can get enny thing I shall send it to you.<sup>82</sup> all my concern is about you and the children. if you get a house in that contry built for yourself I hope it will be in a good place whare we can have water and a garden. build small but have it devided in to different apartments so when I doe com home I may have a place to rest for I expect but little till [I] get home. I will now give you the vision, [insertion from top of letter] <Sister Booth sayes she heard a voice saying she must goe to Paridice. then she was cared away in the vision.> "I Ann Booth, Wife of Robert Booth of the Town of Manchester, England, had the following vision of the 12 day of march in the year of our Lord one thousand and forty <1840>.<sup>83</sup> Being caried away in a vision to the Place of departed spir-its I saw 12 Prisons, one abova nother, verry large, and builded of soled



stone. on ariveing at the <dore of the> upermost Prison I behe[l]d one of the 12 apostles of the Lamb who had ben martered in America, standing at the dore of the Prison holding a key in his hand with which he ~~opened~~ unlocked the dore and went in and I fol[low]ed him. he appeard to be of a large sise, thick set, darke hare, darke eyes, and eyebrows of a smiling count[e]nan[c]e, and on <his> head was a crown of gold or somthing brighter. he was dresed in a long, white robe, with the sleeves plated from the sholder down to the hand. upon his brest ware fore [four] stares [stars] apparently like gold <or briter> and a golden girdle about his Loins. his feet was bare from above the Ancles down<w>ard and his hands were also bare. as he entred the prison he seemed to stand about 3 feet from the floor (which was of Marble) as if the place was not worthy for him to stand upon. a verry brilient and glorie<u>s light surounded him, while the res[t] of the prison was dark. but his light was peculiar to him self and did not reflect upon others who was in the prison who ware surounded with a gloom of darkness. on the right hand of the dore stood Jhon Wesley, who on seing the glories personage, rased his hands and shouted 'glory, honer, praise, and Power be ascribed unto God and the Lamb forever and ever. Deliverance has Com.'<sup>84</sup> the Apostle then commeced to preach the Baptism of repentence for the remision of sins and the gift of the Holy Gost by the laing of hands when the hundreds of prisners gave a shout with aloud voice saying 'Glory be to God for ever and ever.' the marble floor was then removed and a River of watter clere as Cristall seemed to f[l]ow in it place. the Apostle then called to John Wesley by name who came fawrd quickley and both went down in to [fold in paper worn, obscuring the text] and the Apostle Baptized him and coming up out of the water he lade his hands upon him for the gift of the Holy Gost, at the same time ordaining him to the Preasthood of Aaron. the Apostle then retired to the place whare he first stod and John Wesley then proseded to Baptize a man by the [name] of Kilbham and next John Madison and Wm. Scott and John Tongue <who> ware Methodest Prachers with whome I had ben a quanted personly. the next he Baptized was my grand father Edmond Whitehead. the next was my unkel Johon [John] Whitehead and the nxt was my sister Elizabeth Oland. the <next> was Joseph Lancashere. next Samuel ~~Robinson~~ Robinson and the next was my own Mother. all these had lived and died Metho-dest and I ~~had~~ had ben personly aquanted with them all. and after this he Baptized all the Prisoners amounting to menny hundreds. after they ware all Baptized, the Apostle Lade his hands on them all and confermed them. then instantly the Darkeness dispersed and they ware all surounded and envelopd in a Brilint light, such as surround'd the Apostle at the first. and they all lifted up theyr voices with one accord giving glory to God for deliverence. My gra<n>d father then came to me and Blest me saying 'the

Lord bless [you] forever and ever. art thou com to see us deliverd?' my mother then came to me and clasped me in hir arms and kissed me three times and said 'the Lord Almighty Bless the for ever and ever.' I then awoke out of my vision and felt so happy and rejoiced that I could not lay in bed. I awaked my husben. we got up. I then tooke the Bible [and] opened it to 3 different places: first to Isah 24, Chap. 22 v.<sup>85</sup> the next was John C. 1, v. 5.<sup>86</sup> the third time I opned [the] bible was <first> Peater 3 C. 18, 19, 20 ver.<sup>87</sup> not being aquanted with these texts of Cripture and opening to each of them provedencily, I was asstonished beyend measure. I would futher state that at the time I had the vission I had never hered of the deth of David Patten whome I have sence lerned was one of the twelve Apostles of the Later day saynts in America and was martered in the late percutioun in the fall of 1838. but in <the> vision I knew that it was an Apostle who had ben slane in America.<sup>88</sup> I here by sollemly testfy that I actually saw and hered in the vision what I have related and I give my name and set my seal in witness to same, well know[ing] that I must stand before the Judment seet of Christ and ancer to this testimony, amen & amen."<sup>89</sup> I must come to a close with this letter. I shall wright more and send it this time. I long to [see] you and the children. they must be good children and pray the Lord to preserve our lives and helth till we shall meet again which I hope will be before menny years. tell Sister [Phoebe] Woodruff I saw [Wilford Woodruff] but afue day sence.<sup>90</sup> he was well. he would be glad of the oppertunity of sending [a letter] home but he dos not know enny thng about the Brotherin going over now. he will send [a letter] by the next compey that goes over. he doe[s] not get enny knews from his wife. give my love to all the Brotherin that enquire after me. if Brother [William] Benbow has arived there tell him his little Boy is well and the frends are all perty well.<sup>91</sup> you may shoe [show] this letter to Brothers E[benezer] Roberson [Robinson] and D[on] C[arlos] Smith. if they want a part of it let them have it.<sup>92</sup> I shall send you apaper for fere the papers that was sett [sent] to Brother Joseph Smith will not get there. we have sent 50 coppes [of the *Millennial Star*] so that the Brotherin Could be Served. B. Young. the sister that had this vision I [heard] in compny with Brothers Kimball, P. P. Pratt, and J. Taylor. She told much that I can not wright in this letter. it gives me joy to here from our Quorum and find they are to work for the salvation of the Nations of the Earth. I <think> Brother David [W. Patten] has as much to doe as thou[gh] he had steded [stayed] here along with us. it is glorious to me to think that our fore Fathers who have lived acording to the light they had. I think I shall see my Dear Mother ther and my sister that died about 1808 for they boath lived and died in full faith of a glorous rescercescion in and thrue the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>93</sup> ther is menny things that causes me to rejoy<ce> in the last days. I want you to let sister Ann

Bently see this vision as soon as you can conventy [conveniently] can.<sup>94</sup> it will rejoice hir hart and I feel to give Glory over Power and might to [the] Lord most holy for his goodness to the children of men in the grate salvation of Jesus Christ. give my love to sister Ann. tell her I rejoice with her. I will now Close my letter and my hart is [that] the Lord Bres [bless you], yea, Bles you and the Children. I Bles you. I mene to Bles you with something to help you to live.

Once we live on Zion land  
The Lord then Bles my Mary ann  
Preserve her life in his own hand  
my children dere and I whose I am

Brigham Young  
Mary Ann Young  
and our children  
farewell

Mrs. Mary A. Young  
Commerce, Hanck County, the State of Illinoys

*The September 15, 1839, letter from Brigham to Mary Ann found in the Philip Blair Collection at the University of Utah has not yet been published. Chronologically, that letter is followed by the six letters printed above. Three letters written between October 1839 and January 1840 have not been found. Five letters written between June 1840 and January 1841 survive and have been previously excerpted or published in BYU Studies.<sup>95</sup> Printed below are apparently the last three letters Brigham wrote from England to Mary Ann before his return to the United States. The letters primarily concern his family's health and welfare.*

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*Brigham describes emigration plans for the British Saints, expresses family concerns, and makes observations concerning God's intervention in his life.*

### **February 11 [February 13], 1841**

72 Burlington street, Feeb. 11, Liverpool, 1841

my Beloved companyan in tribulation and the Kingdom of Patiance, it is with feelings of sorrow and gladness mingled to gether that I attempt<t> to communicate my thoughts to [you] at this time. as I aproach nearer to the time of my departure from this land to my own native contray, the more my mind is ingrosted with thoughts of the injoyment of my famely and frends. I look foreward to the time of my arivel at home and with egarness antisipate the pleasing meeting I shall have when I can be seeted in my own house and look upon my wife and children and realise my self in there society agan. last sabath the 7 of Feb., a bout 5 minitus before 12 o. c., Br. Hiram Clark with his company concisting of 235 soles, left the dock gate. they was on the ship sheffield, [with] Capt. [Richard K.] Porter.<sup>96</sup> they was well accomedated. they had as good a time on the account of the wind as they could ask. Br. Clark felt well. he forgot to hand me the Book of doctrien and Covenants as he cal[c]ulated to. I paid him 5/s English Shilings for it. you may get it of him and keep it till I come home. when they had left the dock Brothers [Willard] Richards and [John] Taylor and my self went to our lodgens. I found severel letters for me that the postman had jest left, one from Br. [Heber C.] Kimball in London. I opened it [and] found in it one inclosed from you. this made my hart leep for joy. I opened it with out delay and perused the contents there of and I read in [it] that you and the children was well and you had a comfortble house and enuph to eat and you was in the society of your frends and you had recived the things that I sent you. I thank my hevenly Father that he dus here and answer prayer, for surely he has heard our prayers and suplied our wants. there is one thing I

forgot to menshen in my letter that I sent by Br. Clark. I told you in that letter I sent a little more than [text obscured, possibly 5] dallars in gold. I also sent 40 yards of Jackenet [jaconet] for white hancachiefts and for white dreses for females.<sup>97</sup> I want you and the girles to use it for your selves. I shall want some hancachief of it. I baught this cloth of Elder Ahston from Ribchester [Lancashire]. this letter I expect will not be read by enny but your self. the last letters it seemes there is nothing sa[i]d about the masorians trubeling the Brotherin at this time. I hope the fus is over for the present. the talk is in this contry that England has or will, with out doubt, declare ware with america.<sup>98</sup> I due not feele trubeled about it my self in the least. I hope the masorians will have som thing elce to attend to be sidese mobing the Saints be fore long. and I say in the name of the Lord in as much as the goverment or the presedent and other officers have refused to let the Laws of the land have there proper demand in the protections of the Saints they shall see the time that they will caul upon the Saints to protect them, when there shall be non to help them. I want you to wright to me to New york to the care of Lucian R. Foster, No. 13 Oliver Street, and if you want me to by enny thing there, I will try and due it.<sup>99</sup> I hope to be in a situation to help my famely a little. I shall send a nother letter the 11 ~~of~~ march [1841] by the steamer that sales to halafacks [Nova Scotia] and to Boston [Massachusetts]. we think of fiting out a nother company about the 10 of march that will goe by New orleans.<sup>100</sup> Feb. 13 [1841]. this day the Bretherin have gon on bord the ship. the[y] expect to leve to morrow. I hope and trust they will have a good passeg.<sup>101</sup> I can truly say the Lord is good to me. he gives all I ask for. I never have witnessd the hand of the Lord so viseble in all my life as I have sence I left home this time. my hart is like the charit[y] of aminidab.<sup>102</sup> [There] is glory in my sole and peace all around, though I long for the society of my famely. I love them dearly. there society is pressious to me when I can have the priveleg of injoying it. I thought before I left home this this time that if I staed much longer it would be verry hard for me to start and goe to feren lands. I am all most dreding to come home. I shall have the privelig of staying so little time. when I am with my family I enjoy my self in there company and hate to leve them but as it is my duty so to due I say goe ahead. I hope and trust I shall never forsake the field [until] the harvest is don and the wheat is all gethered in to the garner of the Lord. [There is] one blesing I feele to ask of my hevenly Father: that my wife and children may live long on the Earth even till the winding up seene of all this wecked world and enter in to the millinem glory. I have jest recived a letter from Elder Lorenzo Snow. he is well [and] is going to London to spend the seson as the work is now started there.<sup>103</sup> we want it to goe on for we shall want to maket our home there when we return to England a gane. Br. Snow is a fine young man. I think

much of him. he is a useful man in the vinyard. Br. H[enry] G. Sherewood gave him a recemend and I beleve ~~h~~ he will prove himself worthy of the confidence of all his acquaintence in this contry.<sup>104</sup> the Lord is still roleing on his work in this contry as rapedly as ever. they are building up churches in evry direction; in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and in the Ile of Man. Br. [James] Burn[h]am is duing well.<sup>105</sup> I have hered from all the Bretherin with in a fue days. they are all well and all expect to returne home to america in the Spring a bout the firs of Apriel. it is geting late and Br. Taylor and my self want to goe to bed. it is now 12 o.c. we have not got to rest earler then this for som time. I shall send this letter by the hand of Elder [James] Lavender. he has a wife and one daughter. they are anise [marginalia] <famely. I will intriduse them to you as such.<sup>106</sup> may the Lord Bless you & the children.> Sundeay morning. we are all well. So I say faren well. the Lord bles you. take as much love to your self as you plese and to the children [and] to all the Saints. I send by Br. [Daniel] Brewett [Browett] one Box of rasons, a bout 28 pounds.<sup>107</sup> sister [Leonora] Taylor says in hir letter that John Boyington [Boynton] is Baptised a gan.<sup>108</sup> my hart leeps for joy to see those men coming back. [*An apparent postscript in the margin of the first page*] <I will subscribe my self your companyan in life. to M. A. Y. [from] Brigham Young.>

Mrs. Mary A. Young

Nawvoo, Hancock County, Illinoice, United States of america [*three underlines*]

[*side note*] Ship Echo via New Orlenes by the hand of James Lavender.



*An expression of Brigham's concerns for his family, his appreciation for Mary Ann's support, and his joy in the prospect of returning home the following month, this letter also makes reference to emigration matters and the status of the Church in London.*

### March 1, 1841

149 [*Millennial*] Star office, Oldham, Manchester, March 1, 1841

Beloved wife, I have but a fue minitis to spend in wrighting to you this evening. I am now at Br. [Parley P.] Pratts.<sup>109</sup> [I] came from Liverpool last saterday. I shall stay here a fue days. Br. Pratts famely are verry well at present and in joy them selvs well and think they shall stay in this contry som time. the rest of the 12 have but a little more then one month to stay here before they start for home. I am perfectly willing to stay here till it is the the will of the Lord for [me] to start home & when that time comes I shall rejoice, for I want to see my famely on[c]e more. the Brothern are all well as far as I know. Br. [Wilford] Woodruff has ben unwell in London but is now better and a bout his buisness. Br. [Heber C.] Kimball & Woodruff will soon be here to prepare for home. Br. [Reuben] Hadlock will come with us. I have sent som letters to you by the companes that has gon over lately. Br. H[iram] Clark started on the 7 of Feb. with a com[pany] of 234 soles on the ship Sheffield [with] Capt. [Richard K.] Porter.<sup>110</sup> on the 16 of the Same month another Com[pany] Started for that place by New orlenes on the Ship Echo [with] Capt. [Alfred A.] Wood. there was 109 Soles led by Elder Daniel Browett. they all left in good spirits. you will have the priveleg of seeing menny of the English Brotheren in that place. I have recived a letter from you Stating that you had recived the things that I had sent you. this I am glad of and hope you have recived som comfort from the us[e] of them as I have indevered to due what I could for you thou[gh] you are far from me. yet I would be glad to help a little in suporting my famely. I feele thankful to my Henvenly Father for such a help meet in life, one that is so will[ing] to due for me and my children so I can goe and attend to the gr[e]at work of the Lord in gethering up the Richous, that Zion may be free. be of good cheere, mary, and let your hart be comforted. I pray for you and the children continually that you may injoy good he[al]th. I shall see [you] agan soon and we will rjoyce together agan. I hope Br. [Theodore] Turley will pay you what he owes you before you suffer.<sup>111</sup> you must make yourself comfortble in as much as you can. I know a[n]d feele that you have a hard time in life but the Lord will reward you for your labor. we have recived the times and sesons up to Jan. 15. it came in one month & 4 days from Nauvoo to England. it gives us grate satisfactions when when we red it [in] the knew [news] concerning the saints. I hope the saints will be

humble and faithful and merit the Blesings of god and all peple. it apears that Br. Joseph [Smith] think[s] it to be the will of the Lord for us to come home and you may be shure I am glad. I due not see enny thing in his apistle to us that intimates that the Lord is displeed with what we have don sence we have ben in England.<sup>112</sup> we have not hered one word from Elders [Orson] Hyde & [John E.] Page for a bout 5 months, onley a little note in the 15 no. of the times and sesons.<sup>113</sup> the Lord was not well plesed with the delay of their mision. I sho<u>ld be glad to here from [you]; I think I shall before long e[i]ther in this contry or that. I am thankful to here of the returne of J[ohn F.] Boying [Boynton] & L[uke S.] Jo[h]nson returne to the church.<sup>114</sup> give my love to them and [their] famelies and to all the Saints. [Give] my best feelings to Joab, Jan. [General] in Israel.<sup>115</sup> the [work, portion of page missing] of the Lord is going on rapedly in this contry. Sa[i]nts [portion of page, with one or two words missing] incresing day in meny parts of the contry. Br. [Lorenzo] Snow is in London [and] will stay their till we com back if nessery. he is one of the choice ones.<sup>116</sup> there is a bout 50 Saints [in] London and a good prospect [exists for more], so [say] the Brothers H[eber] C. K[imball] & W[ilford] W[oodruff].<sup>117</sup> if you will wright to me to new york I think I shall get it. we shall start from here as so[o]n as we can after the 6 of Apriel.<sup>118</sup> you have Br. [Lucian R.] Foster[‘s] directions so you can direct [your letter] to his care. if you want I should get you ennything there, wright what and I will get it if I can.<sup>119</sup> Sister [Mary Ann] Pratt and hir sister [Olive Grey Frost] Sends there love.<sup>120</sup> they now set soing [sewing], one on the right hand of the table & the other on the left. B. to m. a. young. Brigham Young. you must excuse all mestakes for I have had but a fue minits to wright and while wrighting the Brothers & Sister [are] talking to me every minits of the time. may the Lord Bles you and preserve you, amen and amen. Mary ann [Pratt] sends hir best love to Joseph & also to Vilate. I must bid you fair well for the present. kiss the children for me. I shall not kneed to send my love to my wife and children for it is there as much as you want or can due ennything with.

Mrs. Mary Ann Young  
 Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinoice, United States  
 Via Seme packet to Boston

*This letter may have been Brigham Young's last communication to Mary Ann before his departure from England on March 17, 1841. He includes his characterization of British life after having lived in England for a year. He also makes an inventory of materials he is sending home to America.*

### March 13, 1841

72 Burlington street, Liverpool, March 13/41

Beloved Mary ann, this evening I have a fue moments to converge in [a] lonley way. I am thankful that I have the priveleg of this but I want to be whare I can speeke to you face to face and the time is neere at hand when we shall start for home. I dream verry often of being in my own native land. I dreaned last night of being almost home. it is now about nine oclocke in the evening. Br. [Heber C.] Kimball has jest comin to the room to wright a little. I am at a bording house whare the Bretherin put up that [are] going to america. Brother [Thomas] Smith or [William] Morse [Moss] will hand this to you.<sup>121</sup> if we have good lock [luck] we shall be there soon oftere this letter reaches you. Elder [Reuben] Hadlock has com from Scotland to get redly to goe with us.<sup>122</sup> we shall leve as soon as we can after the 6 of Ap[ril]. there is a grate dele of talk in this contry a bout ware [war] with america, concerning the Burning [of] the Careoline by McLeod. I feele as thou we should get away firs at enny rate. Elder [Orson] Hyde and [George J.] Adams arived here last weak, wensday the 3 of march, 18 days from New York.<sup>123</sup> he [probably referring to Orson Hyde] is in good helth and Spirits I understand. I have not seene him yet [as] I was in Manchester when he arived. he went to Preston before I returned. Elder [John E.] Page has not yet arived. ~~yet~~ I hope for his Sake he will be here to goe with Elder Hyde. I have recivd a letter from <14> you lately. it gave me good kewes [news] as far as it went. I should liked to have had more paticklers but was thankful for what I did recive and you know they that gladly recive little, to them more shall be given. So I expect to recive a grate dele yet when we get to talking a bout home. I all most dread to goe home for I feele as though it would be harder then ever to leve home, which no doubt we shal have to due a grate menny times.<sup>124</sup> I have got so I feele almost like a child a bout such things in consequence of my ill helth I suppose. I feele that the Lord [is] able to strengh [strengthen] me to due all things that he requireth of me. I recived a letter from Br. G[eorge] W. Roberson [Robinson] which was thankfuley recived.<sup>125</sup> [It] gave som knews a bout the state of afares in that contry. I am thankful that the saints have a little rest. I trust we shall have the priveleg of staying with our famelies a while in peace. I shall try and ansure Br. Robersons letter soon. I [am] truley thankful to here that Br. [Sidney] Rigdons heth is improving.<sup>126</sup> I hope to spend menny, y[e]a,

menny happy days with him on this Earth and see all mobbers reciv there jest due from the hand of there Judge. you must give my love and thanks to Br. Roberson for his letter. you must kis the Children for me. tel them I want to see them and will soon come home and have a good viset with them, for I feele as though it would be a grate plasure to me to get out of so much tuemult and noys [noise] and let my eys be closed upon the rchedness [wretchedness], poverty, destress, and wickedness that there is in this contry. there is the gratest unequalety in this contry that I ever saw in my life and the feelings of the people are such, in conciquence of there apresion and poverty, ware it not for for Stricktness of the Law and police men at every corner of the streets, the hole contry and towns would be in one mase of confusion, and it would be kill and destroy until redused to one generall destruction, which provible [probably] will be ~~masherable~~ <measurably> fullfild here after. Sunday evening. I am now seted at Br. Richard Haresons [Harrison] table.<sup>127</sup> Elders Kimball and W[illard] Richards set wrighting. the rest of the famely are at meeting. I shall finish my letter and seele it for I shall have no time after to night. we expect the vessel to goe out tomorrow.<sup>128</sup> I pray for you and the children continuly and you must for me. give my love to all the saints. take a good share for your self and the children. we are all well and in good sperits. Brs. Kimball [and] Richards joine in Sending love to you and the children. so I will Bid you good night. may the Lord bles you, amen. to M. A. Young [from] B. Young. you must excuse all mes-takes and errous. this is your own side of the sheet. I send by Brothers Thomas Smith and Wm. Morce [Moss] my trunk that I braught from home. I shall give you a bill of what I send in the trunk. I did not give a perfect bill of what I sent last fall in every poticklar and you did not tell me much a bout it. but I will give you a bill of this trunk that I now send. I will commence on the Books: Butterworths concordance, large Book of mormon, 2 d[itt]o marked M. A. young, 1 d[itt]o E. Young, 1 d[itt]o V. young, 1 doctrenand covenant marked M. A. Young, Bucks theologacal dickenary, Book on the provicies, large Bible, 1 d[itt]o small Bible, prespeteren [Presbyterian] disipline, Moremons unvaled,<sup>129</sup> 1 Bible doctren, John Wesley life, the evening and morning Star, Mesenger & advocate, 1 slide lock. this ends [the inventory of] Books. Clothing: 1 Blue Broad Cloth Clo[a]k [with] fir collar, 1 pare Black caresimere [cashmere] pants, 1 d[itt]o dark [suit?], 1 pare flanel sheets, 1 pare of flanel shirts, 2 pare neet wohlen drawers, 2 d[itt]o neet rappers [wrappers], 2 pare neet coton drawers, 1 Black Silk velvet vest, 1 yellow Silk hancacheft, 1 pare carpet slippers, 1 long night [shirt?], 1 pare read [red] slippers, 5 pare of long wohlen stockings, 1 pare Buck skins gloves, my snupf Colard Coat that I wore from home,<sup>130</sup> 1 read [red] marena [merino] hancachief,<sup>131</sup> one hare Brush, Shoes, 1 pare of Boots, 1 pare Boxes or over shoes, 2 pare of Patens [patent leather shoes?]

for women, 5 pare of Cloggs for the children. I beleve this is pirty much all [with] perhaps som more Book than what I have menchned. 1 pece of Inden Ruber [india rubber], 4 little pin or neadle Boxes the [that] will plesse the little girles. this is monday morning and I am in a hurrey so I must come to a close. I have to goe to [the] Binders and to the vessel and menny others. I subscribe my self your frend and husben and companion in the Kingdom of Patiance. to M.A. Young [from] Brigham Young. I have not time to correct.

Mrs. Mary A. Young

Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinoice, North America

Ship Alesto, N[ew] orlenes, By the hand of Thomas smith & Wm. Moss

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1. Joseph Smith Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 3:46–47 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*).

2. *History of the Church*, 2:187.

3. Jeffrey R. Holland, as quoted in Ronald K. Esplin, “Brigham Young and the Transformation of the ‘First’ Quorum of the Twelve,” in *Lion of the Lord: Essays on the Life and Service of Brigham Young*, ed. Susan Easton Black and Larry C. Porter (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 70.

4. James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission, 1837–1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 57–58.

5. Brigham Young to Mary Ann Young, April 6, 1840 (see page 174 of this issue).

6. Lorenzo Snow, prior to his departure for England in May 1840, visited Mary Ann Young in Nauvoo. He wrote, “I found Sister Young occupying an unfinished log hut, with a loose floor, and no chinking between the logs; consequently the sides and the ends of the hut were open, leaving the inmates exposed to wind and storms. . . . On my asking her what she wished me to say to her husband, she replied, ‘You see my situation, but tell him not to trouble, or worry in the least about me—I wish him to remain in his field of labor until honorably released.’ Her apparent poverty-stricken, destitute condition deeply stirred my sympathy.” Eliza R. Snow Smith, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company, 1884), 47.

7. Mary Ann Young, as quoted in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 292–93.

8. A parallel account of a portion of Brigham Young’s mission to England is found in his journals for the period. See Brigham Young Papers, Archives Division, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). A short biography of Brigham’s life, including the period of his mission to England, based on his journals and other material, was prepared in the 1850s by the Church Historian’s Office. Three drafts of this biography are located in Historian’s Office, Histories of the Twelve [ca. 1830–80], LDS Church Archives. A version was published as “The History of Brigham Young,” in the *Deseret*

*News Weekly* from February 24, 1858, to March 10, 1858, was published again in the *Millennial Star* from October 10, 1863, to January 30, 1864, and was later published in *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844*, comp. Eldon Jay Watson (Salt Lake City: Smith Secretarial Service, 1968).

A record of Brigham Young's mission to England as seen through the eyes of his friends and associates is found in the journals of Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith. See Wilford Woodruff, *Journal*, LDS Church Archives, published as *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983–1985); and George A. Smith, "History of George Smith by Himself," Historian's Office, LDS Church Archives. This account is based on Smith's journals located in George A. Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives. Elder Smith's account of the mission was serialized in the *Instructor* from June to September 1947. Brigham Young's other apostolic contemporaries—Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, and Willard Richards—kept record of their own service but left no appreciable documentation of Brigham's experience.

A splendid account of Brigham Young's apostolic mission to Great Britain is found in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*. Other accounts of this mission that discuss Brigham Young's role include Richard L. Evans, *A Century of "Mormonism" in Great Britain* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1937), 85–200; Dean C. Jessee, "The Writings of Brigham Young," *Western Historical Quarterly* 4 (July 1973): 277–81; James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Class," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 4 (1975): 499–526; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 74–97; V. Ben Bloxham, "The Call of the Apostles to the British Isles," and "The Apostolic Foundations, 1840–41," in V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1987* (Solihull, Eng.: Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), 104–62; and Ronald K. Esplin, "The 1840–41 Mission to England and the Development of the Quorum of the Twelve," in *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain*, ed. Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorp (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), 70–91.

9. George Washington Thatcher Blair Collection, 1830–1988, LDS Church Archives.

10. Excerpts of letters written on June 2, 1840; June 12, 1840; November 12, 1840; and January 15, 1841, are found in Dean C. Jessee, "Brigham Young's Family: Part 1, 1824–1845," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 3 (1978): 317–21. The complete letter written on October 16, 1840, is published in Ronald K. Esplin, "Inside Brigham Young: Abrahamic Tests as Preparation for Leadership," *BYU Studies* 20, no. 3 (1980): 300–306.

11. Leonard Arrington dates the letter as September 15, 1839, though the register of the Philip Blair Collection at the University of Utah states no known time or place of origin. Compare Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 447 n. 57, and Dorothy Rasmussen, comp., "Register of the Papers of the Philip Blair Family, 1836–1968," 12, Special Collections, Manuscripts Division, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

12. Two letters from Mary Ann to Brigham are known to be extant. These letters are dated March 21, 1840, and April 15, 1841. The earlier letter is part of the Church Historical Department's recently acquired George Washington Thatcher Blair Collection, while the later letter is excerpted in Jessee, "Brigham Young's Family," 317–21.

13. According to Dean Jessee, "Of an estimated 70,000 pages authored by Brigham Young in the church archives, fewer than 425 were written in his own hand." Jessee, "The Writings of Brigham Young," 274. In addition to the letters edited here, an August 9, 1835, holograph communication from Brigham to Mary Ann is also a part of the



G. W. T. Blair Collection, LDS Church Archives. This letter is probably the earliest extant letter of Brigham to Mary Ann.

14. Dean Jessee writes, "Had Brigham Young been speaking and writing a phonetically spelled language such as German, his autograph writings would have appeared to the reader then and now as literate as those of any intelligent man with a solid education. As it is, the inconsistencies of English orthography evaded him throughout his life." Jessee, "The Writings of Brigham Young," 275.

15. This letter is in the handwriting of Harriet Amelia Decker (1826–1917). She was the daughter of Isaac and Harriet Decker. She married Edwin S. Little in 1842 and, two years after Little's death in 1846, married Ephraim K. Hanks. Her two sisters, Lucy Ann and Clara, became wives of Brigham Young. Harriet's mother, after separating from her husband Isaac, married Brigham Young's brother Lorenzo. See Teton Hanks Jackson, "She Came in 1847," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 2:308–10.

16. Isaac Decker (1799–1873), who lived in Winchester, Scott County, Illinois, in 1840, later became Brigham Young's father-in-law.

17. Theodore Turley (1800–72) was with the Twelve at Far West, Missouri, on April 26, 1839. Also called to serve as a missionary to England, he accompanied the Apostles to the British Isles.

18. Alanson Ripley (1798–?), who was soon to become a bishop in Iowa, was a Nauvoo city surveyor and later a sergeant major in the Nauvoo Legion. Vinson Knight (1804–42) later became a bishop in Nauvoo.

19. George A. Smith (1817–75), cousin to Joseph Smith Jr. and the youngest Apostle called to the mission to England, later served as a counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency of the Church. Wilford Woodruff (1807–98), called to the Twelve on July 8, 1838, later became the fourth President of the Church.

20. The reference to the "riches of Emanuel" is likely an allusion to the blessings available from the Lord Jesus Christ.

21. Elizabeth Young (1825–1903), the oldest child of Brigham Young and his first wife Miriam Works, married Edmund L. Ellsworth in 1842 in Nauvoo.

22. Brigham Young's mother, Abigail Howe, was a sister to Rhoda Howe, mother of the four Richardses mentioned here: Phinehas (sometimes spelled Phineas) Richards (1788–1874), Rhoda Richards (1784–1879), Nancy Richards (1792–?), and Hepzibah Richards (1795–1838). The youngest of the Richards children was Willard Richards (1804–54), who accompanied his cousin Brigham Young on this missionary journey. The Richards family was living at this time in western Massachusetts in Richmond, where they had moved in 1815. Rhoda Richards, *Journal and Letters of Rhoda Richards* [ca. 1936], typescript, 3, LDS Church Archives. (The Richards home is incorrectly placed in Richmond, Schoharie, New York, in *History of The Church*, 4:75.) For an overview of the Richards family's contribution to the Church, see D. Michael Quinn, "They Served: The Richards Legacy in the Church," *Ensign* 10 (January 1980): 24–29.

23. Here Brigham Young shows his interest in preserving the record of his life and his unstated expectation that his letters would be preserved. From 1832 to 1837, he had periodically kept a diary, and he maintained a sporadic diary while on his mission in Great Britain. Jessee, "The Writings of Brigham Young," 277.

24. Joseph Murdock (1783–1844) lived in Hamilton, New York.

25. Information about Brigham Young's involvement with Gifford is found in "History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News Weekly*, February 24, March 3, 1858, 402, 409. Little is known about Gifford, although he was later a participant in a conference held in Utica, New York, in July 1843. E. P. Maginn, "General Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons* 4 (August 15, 1843): 300, 301.

26. Jonathan O. Duke (1807–68) was performing missionary service in the area at the time. See “History of Brigham Young,” *Millennial Star* 25 (October 31, 1863): 695. Robert Campbell (1810–1890) and his mother hosted Brigham Young on January 4, 1840, at their home in Albany, New York. “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409. Information about “Brother Boys,” “P. Bridges” [or Briggs], and “Br. Sloan” is not available.

27. Joseph Richards (1762–1840) was married to Brigham Young’s mother’s sister, Rhoda Howe.

28. The “History of Brigham Young” includes this information about this trip: “17 [January 1840]. Edwin Pearson took his horse and cutter, and brought us to Canaan, Litchfield Co., Connecticut: in some places the snow was fifteen feet deep.” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409. Brigham Young’s brief association with Person (Pearson or Pierson) is found in *History of the Church*, 4:76.

29. Brigham Young’s brief association with French is described in “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409; and *History of the Church*, 4:77.

30. Parley Parker Pratt (1807–57) was one of the original Twelve Apostles ordained in February 1835. After his first wife died, he married Mary Ann Frost Pratt (1807–91) on May 9, 1837. At the time Brigham wrote this letter, Parley and Mary Ann had two children: Parley Jr., nearly three, from Pratt’s first marriage, and Nathan, about a year and a half old.

31. John Taylor (1808–87), ordained an Apostle on December 19, 1838, was born in Milnthorpe, England. He, Wilford Woodruff, and Theodore Turley left New York for Great Britain on December 20, 1839. They arrived in Liverpool on January 11, 1840.

32. At the time Brigham wrote this letter, Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–44) was President of the Church and Sidney Rigdon (1793–1876) was First Counselor in the First Presidency. En route to Washington, D.C., Joseph Smith was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, several times between December 21, 1839, and January 27, 1840. See *History of the Church*, 4:47–77.

33. Mary Ann Angell was the daughter of James William Angell (1776–1850) and Phoebe Ann Morton Angell (1786–1854).

34. After the expulsion of the Saints from Missouri, Reynolds Cahoon (1790–1862) moved to Iowa, where he was called to the stake presidency on October 19, 1839.

35. Oliver Granger (1794–1841) had been a member of the Kirtland high council and a missionary in Ohio, New Jersey, and New York. In July 1838, Joseph Smith received a revelation for Granger counselling him to “contend earnestly for the redemption of the First Presidency of my Church.” Doctrine and Covenants 117:12–15.

36. This is possibly Isaac Gates Bishop (1779–1845), who had lived in Kirtland and had worked on the Kirtland Temple.

37. Orson Pratt (1811–81), younger brother of Parley P. Pratt, was one of the original Twelve Apostles ordained in February 1835.

38. Heber Chase Kimball (1801–68), Brigham Young’s close friend and later his counselor, was one of the original Twelve Apostles ordained in February 1835. After visiting Mendon and Victor, New York, in early 1840, Elder Kimball departed for New York City on February 10. See Heber C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, February 19, 1840, Heber Chase Kimball, Letters, 1839–1854, photograph of holograph, LDS Church Archives.

39. William Ellis Murray (1802–47) and his wife Helen E. Sarvis Murray (1805?–?) were baptized on January 1, 1840, by Heber C. Kimball. See Heber C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, December 27, 1839–ca. February 7–9, 1840, typescript, Heber C. Kimball Family Organization, compilation of Heber C. Kimball correspondence, 1983, LDS Church Archives. Vilate Murray Kimball (1806–67) and Heber C. Kimball were married in 1822.

Heber's and Vilate's correspondence during the apostolic mission to England is an important source of information for that period.

40. The *Garrick*, a ship whose speed was highly reputed, had carried Apostles Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde to England in 1837 to open missionary work in the British Isles. These Apostles also returned to the United States in 1838 aboard the *Garrick*. See Conway B. Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners: A Maritime Encyclopedia of Mormon Migration, 1830–1890* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 81.

41. Reuben Hedlock (1801–?), whom Brigham and others referred to as Hadlock, served as elders quorum president in Kirtland and later as president of the British Mission, 1843–45.

42. The 159-foot-long *Patrick Henry*, built in New York City in 1839, was a packet ship—a passenger vessel that also carried mail and cargo on a regular schedule. The apostolic passengers “paid \$18 each for steerage passage, furnished our own provisions and bedding, and paid the cook \$1 each for cooking.” Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 165. See also “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409.

43. Evan Melbourne Greene (1814–82), a nephew of Brigham Young, had served several Church missions in the United States in the 1830s. Levi Richards (1799–1876), a cousin of Brigham Young, later became a doctor in Nauvoo and Utah. Solomon Angell (1806–81), Mary Ann Young's brother, is perhaps the Solomon mentioned here. He had served as a member of Zion's Camp and in 1836 became one of the First Quorum of Seventy.

44. The entry in the “History of Brigham Young” for February 23, 1840, reads:

I visited Long Island, and preached in the counties of King and Suffolk, at Hempstead, Rockaway, Brooklyn and other places. At the last meeting I held, I told the people I was on a mission to England with my brethren; I had never asked for a dime in all my preaching, but we had not sufficient means to proceed, and if any one wished to contribute to help us, I would thankfully take it. After meeting, \$19.50 was put in my hands. We baptized nine, and returned to New York. (*Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409.)

Brigham Young's journal entry for February 25/March 4, 1840, reads: “R. Hadlock & myself went to Hemstead. Preached in Rockway and in the naberhoods about till wensday the 4 of March. there was 9 Baptized.” Brigham Young, Journal, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

45. Mary Ann Young replied to Brigham's request for a letter by writing from Montrose, Iowa, on March 11, 1840: “I recieved your letter Night before last from New york With much joy. I regret you have herd so litle from your family the winter past. I have had many cares to provide for my children as they were So destitute for every thing and my health [has been] feeble. my health is improving Since the Weather is warmer.” Mary Ann Young to Brigham Young, March 11, 1840, G. W. T. Blair Collection, LDS Church Archives.

46. Hyrum Smith (1800–1844), Joseph Smith's brother, was Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church.

47. Kirtland, Ohio, was abandoned by the Saints as a center of gathering in 1837–1838. When Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball passed through Kirtland on their way to New York in November 1839, they found just a few Church members living there. However, by early 1840, the Church's population in Kirtland had grown again to 125. After a year that number had tripled. The number of Saints living in Kirtland may have numbered as many as 700 when many of these Saints moved to Nauvoo

in 1843. Thereafter, small pockets of Saints or former Church members settled in Kirtland. See Milton V. Backman, *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 368–72.

48. Probably Francis Benedict, at whose house near Canaan, Connecticut, Brigham Young preached on January 17, 1840. See “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409. This is probably also the Benedict mentioned in Parley P. Pratt’s letter to Joseph Smith in November 1839 as one of the elders who attended a conference in New York City on November 19–20, 1839. See *History of the Church*, 4:22.

49. Elizabeth Young (1825–1903) and Vilate Young (1830–1902) were Brigham’s only children with his first wife, Miriam Works.

50. Joseph Angell Young (1834–75) was the oldest child of Brigham and Mary Ann.

51. Brigham Young Jr. (1836–1903) and Mary Ann Young (1836–43) were twins. They were named after their parents.

52. Emma Alice Young (1839–74) was born September 4, 1839, ten days prior to Young’s departure for his mission to England.

53. Brigham Young and his traveling companions left New York on March 9, 1840, on the ship *Patrick Henry*.

54. The last part of this letter may have been written on April 24, 1840, when Brigham was with Wilford Woodruff and wrote a letter to Mary Ann. The letter was mailed on May 1, 1840. See “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 410.

55. John Moon (1809–50), who had joined the Church during the first apostolic mission to Great Britain, led the first group of British Saints to emigrate from England to America. They sailed on the ship *Britannia* on June 1, 1840.

56. John Taylor had been working in Liverpool since the latter part of January, after arriving in England on January 11, 1840. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 106–18.

57. Wilford Woodruff arrived in England on January 11, 1840. Later that month, he located himself near the Staffordshire potteries, where he stayed until March 3, 1840. From there he moved south to Herefordshire, where he found himself the catalyst for one of the most remarkable of all missionary ventures in Church history. See Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 87–92.

58. Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner, both Scots who had emigrated to Canada in the 1830s, were called in 1839 to return to their homeland to there open the latter-day work. They arrived in late December 1839. By the time Brigham Young arrived in England, nearly five dozen had joined the Church due to their efforts. See Frederick S. Buchanan, “The Ebb and Flow of the Church in Scotland,” in Bloxham, Moss, and Porter, *Truth Will Prevail*, 268–70.

59. Information about “Brother Allbrights” is not available.

60. Parley P. Pratt, Brigham Young’s fellow traveler, wrote that “the sea Looked like mountains and vallies. Sometimes the ship would be on the top of a wave as high as a three story building, and the next moment it would plunge into a yawning gulf, where the water would be perhaps thirty feet higher than the vessel on every side.” The ship tossed, and “no one could stand or walk with out holding on, and the dish would frequently run a way with the spoon.” Parley P. Pratt, as quoted in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 380. The Pratt and Heber C. Kimball accounts of the voyage are reproduced in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 376–83.

61. Four days after Brigham Young’s arrival in England, he met his cousin, Willard Richards. “I was so emaciated from my long journey and sickness that he did

not know me,” Brigham said. “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409.

62. Wilford Woodruff told the Saints in Nauvoo that this conference was “the first council and general conference we had ever held in a foreign nation.” The tally to date, he reported, “was 1671 saints, 34 elders, 52 priests, 38 teachers, and 8 deacons represented.” Wilford Woodruff to Elders Robinson and Smith, October 7, 1840, in *Times and Seasons* 2 (March 1, 1841): 330.

63. Leonora Cannon Taylor (1796–1868), born on the Isle of Man, married John Taylor in Toronto, Canada, in 1833.

64. The “History of Brigham Young” describes the immediate effect of this injury. After his companions wound a handkerchief around his shoulder and helped him up, Brigham was taken to a fire for warmth. He soon fainted. “[I] was not able to dress myself for several days,” he described. *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 409. Brigham Young’s “turnes” may be the noun form of *turn* associated with dizziness.

65. The county of Worcestershire was melded with Herefordshire in 1974 and the combined county on modern maps is now called Hereford and Worcester.

66. For a description of Malvern Hills and the Apostles’ missionary efforts in the area at this time, see Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 147–55.

67. Of a conference held on July 6, 1840, in Manchester, Wilford Woodruff wrote: “We heard 71 churches and conferences represented, containing 2513 members, 56 elders, 126 priests, 61 teachers, 13 deacons, making an increase since April 15th, of 840 members.” Woodruff to Robinson and Smith, in *Times and Seasons* 2 (March 1, 1841): 330.

68. In the revelation received by Joseph Smith on July 8, 1838, calling the Twelve “to go over the great waters, and there promulgate my gospel,” the Elders were told that if they were faithful in their assignment, the Lord would “provide for their families.” Doctrine and Covenants 118:3–4.

69. Worcester Cathedral was begun in 1084. Undergoing many alterations through the years, the remarkable nave and tower were completed in the fourteenth century. A comprehensive restoration of the cathedral was conducted 1857–74. The “History of Brigham Young” states that Young visited the cathedral on April 21, 1840. *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 410.

70. As mentioned earlier, there was a possibility that Mary Ann Young would move with her children to Kirtland. On March 21, 1840, Mary Ann wrote to Brigham to say that Joseph Smith had counseled her “to not go to Kirtland. he Says tis not the Will of Lord.” Obviously, Brigham had not received her letter at this time. Mary Ann Young to Brigham Young, March 21, 1840, G. W. T. Blair Collection, LDS Church Archives.

71. Joseph Young (1797–1881), elder brother of Brigham Young, was one of the seven Presidents of the Seventy, 1835–81.

72. This phrase may be a reference to the doctrine of eternal marriage, which had not been widely popularized among Church members at this time. While Joseph Smith was in Philadelphia in December 1839 and January 1840, he met with Parley P. Pratt, an Apostle, who wrote that the Prophet “taught me many great and glorious principles concerning God and the heavenly order of eternity. It was at this time that I received from him the first idea of eternal family organization, and the eternal union of the sexes in those inexpressibly endearing relationships. . . . It was from him that I learned that the wife of my bosom might be secured to me for time and all eternity.” Parley P. Pratt Jr., ed., *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 259, 260. The teachings about eternal marriage and the sealing ordinance were more widely implemented by Joseph Smith later in Nauvoo, Illinois. See M. Guy Bishop, “Eternal

Marriage in Early Mormon Marital Beliefs," *Historian* 52 (autumn 1990): 76–88; T. Edgar Lyon, "Doctrinal Development of the Church during the Nauvoo Sojourn, 1839–1846," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 4 (1975): 443–45. It is not clear when Brigham Young first learned of the doctrine of eternal marriage. He closed his letter to Mary Ann of February 11, 1841, with the expression, "I will subscribe my self your companyan in life."

73. The deadline for publication was met. A discussion of the hymnal preparation and publication, including Brigham Young's involvement, is found in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 246–49. See also Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 26–27.

74. On May 20, 1840, Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Willard Richards made final decisions concerning publication of the hymnal and Book of Mormon. They met near the crest of the Herefordshire Beacon, in the picturesque Malvern Hills. After prayer, Brigham recounted, "We held a council and agreed . . . I should repair immediately to Manchester, and join the brethren appointed with me as a committee, and publish 300[0] copies of the Hymn Book without delay. It was also voted that the same committee publish 5000 copies of the Book of Mormon." The committee finished the collection of hymns on June 28, 1840. "History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News Weekly*, March 3, 1858, 410.

75. Brigham Young's letter to Joseph Smith is found under the date of April 17, 1840, in *History of the Church*, 4:119–20.

76. "Sister Pratt" probably refers to Orson Pratt's wife, Sarah Marinda Bates Pratt (1817–88), to whom Pratt was married in 1836. They had one living child, Orson Jr., age two, when Orson Sr. left for England in the spring of 1840.

77. Hiram Clark (1795–1853) arrived in England for missionary service in December 1839. He served in the British Mission on several assignments including appointment to mission leadership positions before being called to preside over the Sandwich Islands Mission in 1850.

78. Ague is a debilitating and often deadly malaria-like disease with wide effect in the nineteenth century.

79. Seventy-eight-year-old Joseph Richards died March 29, 1840, in Richmond, Massachusetts.

80. Israel Barlow (1806–83) married Elizabeth Haven (1811–92) on February 23, 1840, in Nauvoo, Illinois. Barlow was one of the first to identify the Montrose/Commerce area as a potential gathering spot for the Saints.

81. Abby Ann Greene (1817–47/48), Brigham Young's niece, the daughter of John P. Greene and Rhoda Young Green, was married to Henry B. Gibbs in 1840 in Nauvoo, Illinois.

82. See the description of Brigham's coat in note 131.

83. Ann Eastwood Booth (1793–?) and Robert Booth (1793–1846) were married in Manchester, England, in 1817. They had joined the Church as the result of William Clayton's missionary work. See James B. Allen, *Trials of Discipleship: The Story of William Clayton, a Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 21. Wilford Woodruff may have become aware of Booth's vision from Brigham Young the day after Woodruff's arrival in Manchester, England. Woodruff was sufficiently impressed with the vision that he too copied Ann Booth's account in his journal on July 2, 1840. His entry for that day reads, "I was informed of a remarkable vision of Sister Ann Booth which I have written on the following page." The text of the vision, very similar to that found in Young's letter, followed. Wilford Woodruff, Journal, July 2, 1840, LDS Church Archives.

84. John Wesley (1703–91), an English religious reformer, was one of the founders of Methodism.



85. Isaiah 24:22. "And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited."

86. John 1:5. "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

87. 1 Peter 3:18–20. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

88. David W. Patten (1799–1838), one of the original Twelve Apostles, was killed incident to the Saints' difficulties in Missouri at the Battle of Crooked River on October 25, 1838.

89. The concept of the work of salvation beyond the grave was introduced by Joseph Smith in revelations received in 1832 (D&C 76:73) and 1836 (D&C 137), though not popularized among Church members at the time. In November 1837, Joseph Smith published answers to questions "daily and hourly asked" him and other Church members. Joseph's answer to one of the questions ("If the Mormon doctrine is true[,] what has become of all those who have died since the days of the apostles?") pointed to the work of salvation beyond the grave: "All those who have not had an opportunity of hearing the gospel, and being administered to by an inspired man in the flesh, must have it hereafter before they can be finally judged." Untitled editorial, in *Elders' Journal* 1 (November 1837): 28.

At the funeral of Seymour Brunson on August 15, 1840, the Prophet Joseph taught the doctrine of baptism for the dead, an initial feature of the doctrine and practice of vicarious ordinance work for persons deceased. He informed Brigham Young and others of the Twelve in England of the doctrine in a letter written December 15, 1840, surmising that word of the teaching "has ere this reached your ears." See Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives. A portion of the letter, omitting mention of baptism for the dead, was published in [Joseph Smith Jr.,] "Extract from an Epistle to the Elders in England," *Times and Seasons* 2 (January 1, 1841): 258–61. Subsequent particulars of baptism for the dead were revealed to the Prophet on January 19, 1841 (D&C 124), and September 6, 1842 (D&C 128). The first baptism for the dead was performed on September 12, 1840, in the Mississippi River. It was not until November 21, 1841, that baptisms for the dead were performed in the font of the not-yet-completed Nauvoo Temple. See Smith, "Extract from an Epistle," 258–61; M. Guy Bishop, "'What Has Become of Our Fathers?' Baptism for the Dead at Nauvoo," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23 (summer 1990): 87; Gordon Irving, "The Law of Adoption: One Phase of the Development of the Mormon Concept of Salvation, 1830–1900," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 3 (1974): 291–95; *History of the Church*, 4:454.

90. Phoebe Whitmore Carter Woodruff (1807–85) married Wilford Woodruff on April 13, 1837.

91. Brother Benbow is probably William Benbow, who independently emigrated from England the same day Brigham Young and his companion Apostles arrived in Liverpool. Benbow and his wife Ann joined the Church in January 1840 and later introduced Wilford Woodruff to John Benbow, William's brother, who became a significant benefactor to the Apostles and to emigrating British Saints. See Bloxham, "Apostolic Foundations," 132, 147.

92. Ebenezer Robinson (1816–91) and Joseph Smith's younger brother Don Carlos Smith (1816–41) were publishers and editors of the *Times and Seasons*, the Church's newspaper in Nauvoo. Their partnership began with the first issue in November 1839

and ended in December of 1840 when Robinson left. If they were shown Brigham Young's letter, they apparently chose not to publish it.

93. Brigham Young's mother, Abigail Howe Young, died in 1815 at age forty-nine. His sister Abigail died in 1807 at age fourteen. Both women were known by the nickname "Nabby."

94. Phoebe Ann Babcock Patten Bentley (1807?-41), known as Ann, married David W. Patten in 1828. After Patten's death in October 1838, she married Benjamin R. Bentley (also spelled Bently). Notice of her death on January 5, 1841, was printed in the issue of the *Times and Seasons* where she was described as having "suffered much from the power of disease." "Records of Early Church Families," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 27 (January 1936): 33-34; "Obituary," *Times and Seasons* 2 (February 15, 1841): 325.

95. See note 10.

96. The *Sheffield* was the fourth emigrant ship to sail from England with Mormon emigrants. The group of 235 led by Hiram Clark constituted the largest group to depart to that time. New Orleans, Louisiana, was the port of entry where they arrived on March 30, 1840, after which the passengers traveled by steamboat to Nauvoo. See Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 180-81.

97. Jaconet is a lightweight cotton cloth used for clothing and bandages.

98. Diplomatic relations between England and the United States had been strained since the American Revolution. At the time Brigham wrote this letter, relations were difficult primarily because of the arrest of Alexander McLeod. McLeod, a Canadian deputy sheriff, was arrested in New York in November 1840 on charges of murder and arson stemming from the December 1837 raid and sinking of the *Caroline*, an American steamship that had been transporting supplies to Canadian separatists stationed on the Canadian side of the Niagra River. The Americans and the Canadian separatists were outraged over the attack, while the British and the Canadian loyalists were outraged over McLeod's arrest. McLeod was eventually acquitted. Tensions between the two sides increased until this matter and a number of other irritations were resolved in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty (1842). See Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 9th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 198-220.

99. Lucian R. Foster (1806-?) was serving as a missionary in New York City at the time. Foster reported at a conference held April 6, 1841, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, that the Saints in New York numbered 155 and that "the work of God was in a prosperous condition in that city [New York]." Benjamin Winchester, "Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons* 2 (May 15, 1841): 412. Foster was later excommunicated.

100. The projected emigration company would leave Liverpool on May 17, 1841.

101. The *Echo*, captained by Alfred A. Wood, sailed from Liverpool on February 16, 1841, with 109 Latter-day Saints aboard led by Daniel Browett. It arrived in New Orleans on April 16, 1841, after fifty-nine days at sea. See Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 62.

102. This may have reference to God's intervention in behalf of Aminadab, a Nephite "who had once belonged to the church of God but had dissented from them." Later God "turned him about" and made him an instrument for converting many Lamanites. See Helaman 5:35-50.

103. Lorenzo Snow (1814-1901) arrived in England October 22, 1840, and began his assignment in London on February 11, 1841. Heber C. Kimball, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith opened the work in London in August 1840. See Allen, Esplin, and Whitaker, *Men with a Mission*, 181-82, 226.

104. Henry G. Sherwood (1785-1862) was a member of the Nauvoo high council and had previously served on the Kirtland high council. He was also Nauvoo city marshal at this time.

105. James Burnham (?–1843), who joined with the Saints in Kirtland, served as a missionary to England and Wales for about two years, arriving in Liverpool on October 22, 1840, with Lorenzo Snow. He later died in Richmond, Massachusetts, while performing missionary work. His death was noticed in Benjamin Andrew's letter to the editor, *Times and Seasons* 4 (May 1, 1843): 187–88.

106. James Lavender (1801–?) and Mary Ann Smith Lavender were baptized by Willard Richards on Christmas Day, 1837, and New Year's Day, 1838, respectively. After Richards departed Bedford, Bedfordshire, where the Lavenders lived, James was left in charge of the branch. He served as one of Daniel Browett's counselors for the emigrants who sailed aboard the *Echo* from Liverpool on February 16, 1841.

107. Daniel Browett (1810–48) served as leader of the 109 Mormons who emigrated on the voyage of the ship *Echo* that left Liverpool on February 16, 1841. A Mormon Battalion veteran, Browett was killed traveling to Utah from California after his discharge. See Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 62.

108. John F. Boynton (1811–90), one of the original Twelve Apostles, was excommunicated in 1837. The information passed to Brigham Young about Boynton returning to the Church was faulty. He did not rejoin the Saints.

109. Parley P. Pratt left England in July 1840 to retrieve from America his wife and children, whom he believed would be an asset to his publishing work in Britain. He returned with his family to Manchester, England, on October 19, 1840. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 169, 171, 205.

110. In an April 15, 1841, letter to Brigham, Mary Ann Young described Hiram Clark's return to Nauvoo: "Br. Clark has just come into the place [Nauvoo]. he has <had> Some trouble in getting along [with] so many. But it Seemed the chaff Blew out from among the compony on the way, <there has 200–3 come with him>, for those that rebelled against him have stoped on the way and there has not any come, he Says, but humble Soles. Br. C[lark] called the next morning after his arrival and gave <me> the two letters from you & the litle Box undistrubed as it was from your hand." Mary Ann Young to Brigham Young, April 15, 1841, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

111. Mary Ann Young's reply to her husband on April 15, 1841, described Theodore Turley after his return from England: "Br Turley was very poor when he came home and his appearane on the jorney from England was very disgusting to many respectable people. He Repented and come back into the church again. they Say he is very humble, I am thankful. I have I have [sic] not recieved <not> much from Br. Turley, yet he Says he is willing to do eny thing he can or turn work on that Account." Mary Ann Young to Brigham Young, April 15, 1841, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

112. Smith, "Extract from an Epistle," 258–61, contains a portion of Joseph Smith's instruction to the Twelve Apostles. For Joseph's approval of the return of the Twelve, see Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 295.

113. Orson Hyde (1805–78), one of the original Twelve Apostles, and John E. Page (1799–1867), ordained an Apostle in December 1838, did not accompany the Twelve to England in 1839. Subsequently the two were called on a mission to Palestine at the April 1840 general conference at Nauvoo. As they traveled east they became separated. Elder Page stayed behind in the United States, while Elder Hyde, who had opened missionary work in England with Heber C. Kimball in 1837, sailed for England again February 13, 1841. Elder Hyde's arrival on April 1, 1841, brought the number of Apostles in England to nine. He continued on to Jerusalem, and on October 24, 1841, dedicated Palestine for the return of the Jews, before returning to Nauvoo on December 7, 1842.

The issue of the *Times and Seasons* Brigham referred to was probably the issue dated November 15, 1840. A reference to Orson Hyde and John E. Page's mission is

found in that issue in George J. Adams's letter from New York, dated October 7, 1840. Elders Hyde and Page were not mentioned in the next issue of the *Times and Seasons*.

114. As mentioned previously, John F. Boynton did not return to the Church. Luke S. Johnson (1807–61), one of the original Twelve Apostles, was excommunicated in April 1838 but was rebaptized in 1846. He accompanied the Saints to Utah in 1847 as one of the pioneer vanguard.

115. "Joab, General in Israel," is the pseudonym employed by John C. Bennett (1804–67) in his letters published in the *Times and Seasons* from September 1840 through February 1841. Joab's correspondence argued in behalf of Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saints, no doubt ingratiating Bennett to his new church. When Bennett's scandalous motives and behavior were discovered, his identity as Joab was made known in the *Times and Seasons*. He was disfellowshipped and later excommunicated in 1842. See "Certificates of William and Henry Marks," *Times and Seasons* 3 (August 1, 1842): 875; Andrew F. Smith, *The Saintly Scoundrel: The Life and Times of Dr. John Cook Bennett* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 57, 59, 78–97.

116. Lorenzo Snow became president of the London Conference and a counselor to Parley P. Pratt, who presided over the mission. While in London, Elder Snow in 1842 presented Queen Victoria with a copy of the Book of Mormon published the previous year in Liverpool. After nearly three years in England, he returned to Nauvoo in April 1843. He became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1849.

117. Elders Heber C. Kimball, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith opened London to missionary work on August 18, 1840. While the work was sporadic, the London Conference was organized February 14, 1841, at which time there were 106 members in four branches. The Saints in the conference numbered more than two hundred in August 1841. For an overview of the Apostles' work in London, see Bloxham, "Apostolic Foundations," 150–59.

118. April 6, 1841, was the day appointed for a general conference to be held in Manchester for the British Saints prior to the departure of the missionaries. The Church in England at the time of the conference was composed of 5,864 members, an increase of over 4,300 since the April 1840 conference. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 300–302.

119. On April 15, 1841, Mary Ann responded to Brigham's offer to have Lucian R. Foster pick up goods for her on the way home to Nauvoo: "The litle Boys talk much abot their litle wagon that Father is going to bring them. Joseph [said], 'tell Father I send my best love to him.' E[lizabeth] Says She wants Some Light plain Silk to make her a Bonnet of Belt & Slide. She would like Some litle white Artificial flowers. She Says you may do as <you> are amind about geting them. You Said in your letter if there <were> eny thing I wanted to write and you would try to get it. I do not feel as though I wanted much. the things you have Sent me, I coul[d] not [have] Selected things that I more needed. I feel willing [that] the Spirit of the Lord Should direct in all things that concerns me. I can name a few things [that I need:] Misceto Barrs, Som Black Serving Silk by the oz. & Nutmeggs by the oz. if you had a fu [few] Dollars to Spend after you reched home ~~in goods~~ if you Should lay out a litle in Calaco & factory cloath it would be very prophetable as cloathing is so hard to get in this place. you can obtain any produce of the contry for cloathing and get a good price for it. we have no fire dogs or handirons. But you can do as you think best concerning every thing. I am Shure I shall be Suited if you are. I only Spoke of these things Because they would come very high in this place." Mary Ann Young to Brigham Young, April 15, 1841, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

120. Olive Grey Frost (1816–45) accompanied her sister Mary Ann Frost Pratt, who, with her husband Parley and their children, traveled to England in October 1840 for

Elder Pratt to resume his missionary labors. Olive and the Pratts left England in December 1842 to return to America. Because of illness within their company, Olive did not arrive in Nauvoo until April 1843. Later that year, Olive became a plural wife of Joseph Smith. See Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 586–92.

121. On March 11, 1841, Brigham Young appointed Thomas Smith and William Moss (1796–1872) to supervise the fifty-four Saints sailing from Liverpool on the *Alesto*. The ship departed March 17, 1841, and arrived in New Orleans two months later. See Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 8.

122. While Orson Pratt focused his energies during his apostolic mission in Edinburgh, Scotland, Hedlock, who had also served in England and Ireland, spread the gospel in Glasgow, Scotland, until his departure with the other missionaries in April 1841. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 85, 162, 213, 294.

123. George J. Adams (1811?–80) accompanied Orson Hyde, who was en route to Palestine, as far as England. Adams, after serving in England and returning to Nauvoo, was called in 1843 to accompany Elder Hyde to open missionary work in Russia. Their mission was aborted. Adams later became disaffected with the Church. He was finally excommunicated in 1845.

124. Shortly after his return to the United States from England, Brigham Young learned that the Lord had accepted his missionary service. A revelation dated July 9, 1841, given through the Prophet Joseph to Brigham, said, “It is no more required at your hand to leave your family as in times past. . . . Take especial care of your family from this time, henceforth and forever” (D&C 126:1–3).

125. George W. Robinson (1814–78) was a son-in-law of Sidney Rigdon. He served for a time as Joseph Smith’s clerk, general Church recorder, and postmaster of Nauvoo. He left the Church in 1842.

126. Sidney Rigdon (1793–1876), a Counselor in the First Presidency to Joseph Smith, had been very ill during 1840. According to his biographer, he suffered from recurrent ague (malaria) and a long season of depression. His weight dropped from 212 pounds to 165. By 1841 his health had improved some. See Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 279–85.

127. Brigham is probably referring to Richard Harrison (1808–82), a Church member since 1840, who was later ordained an elder by Brigham Young on March 31, 1841, just prior to Young’s return to America. Harrison emigrated from England in 1842.

128. The *Alesto* sailed from Liverpool for New Orleans on March 17, 1841. See also note 121.

129. This likely refers to either the anti-Mormon work by Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled: or, a Faithful Account of That Singular Imposition and Delusion, from Its Rise to the Present Time* (Painesville, Ohio: by the author, 1834) or Parley P. Pratt’s defense of the faith, *Mormonism Unveiled: Zion’s Watchman Unmasked, and Its Editor, Mr. L. R. Sunderland, Exposed*, 2d ed. (New York: Printed for the publisher, 1838).

130. Concerning the coat, the entry in the “History of Brigham Young” for December 6, 1839, reads, “The brethren [in Hamilton, New York] were very kind to us, bro. Benager Moon gave me satinette to make me an overcoat, sister Lucetta Murdock made it for me; this was a great blessing to me, as I had worn a quilt with a comforter run through it in lieu of an overcoat, all the way from Nauvoo, which had not much of a ministerial appearance.” *Deseret News Weekly*, February 24, 1858, 402.

131. Merino is a fabric of soft lamb’s wool or wool and cotton.

## Staying There

The trick is to remember  
That the world moves  
Without your help.  
This is particularly difficult  
On clear nights when light  
From a distant star pierces  
You through. As you stand  
Fixed and transfixed by the beam  
That has opened the black night  
Like a pomegranate, you,  
Now more than ever attached  
To the earth, deprived even  
Of your customary scurry-  
Ing on and scratching in the soil,  
You may be tempted  
To unwind earth's orbit  
That you may ride to the  
Star on the end of a thread.  
Don't. The spinning planet,  
All by itself, is hurtling  
Through space at a rate  
Great enough to satisfy  
Any reasonable desire  
For speed and, night  
And day, coils its  
Seasons around a star.

—Kathryn R. Ashworth



## Book Reviews

LEONARD J. ARRINGTON, *Adventures of a Church Historian: Leonard J. Arrington*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998. 249 pp. Index. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Richard E. Bennett, Professor of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University.

Once upon a time, a short generation ago, President Nathan Eldon Tanner, counselor under David O. McKay, then President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, invited Professor Leonard J. Arrington to serve as the first professional academic in the position of Church historian. President Tanner felt that it was past time and in line with the revealed will of God to tell anew and with professionalism the history of the Restoration. With that heady commission began an eight-year odyssey for this Idaho farm boy with a “will-to-truth” (70) to rediscover and open a treasured archive, to analyze the sources, and to rewrite Mormon history both for Latter-day Saint readers as well as for those not of the faith. Unfortunately, what started out positively ended in a measure of conflict and misunderstanding. Years after the fact and while he was declining in health, Leonard Arrington wrote a reminiscence of his years in “Camelot” (to borrow Davis Bitton’s phrase). This little book (249 pages) lies somewhere between confession and criticism, between frustration and fulfillment—a captivately forthright attempt to explain Arrington’s experiences as Church historian. Seldom has anyone given such an intimate snapshot of the inner workings of Church administration at the highest levels.

Without pretending to be a complete autobiography, the book cuts to the quick in short order. Arrington tells very little about his childhood and early education, stopping only long enough to credit George Tanner at the University of Idaho Institute of Religion and Richard T. Ely—“that grand old man of economics” (26)—at the University of North Carolina for emphasizing the compatibility of the sacred and the secular, the revealed and the researched. In the writing and subsequent publication of his dissertation into the classic work of Mormon economic history—*Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints 1830–1900*<sup>1</sup>—Arrington had to learn how to write solid, reputable Mormon history without “cheerleading” the Mormon faith (34).

In addition to explaining his academic preparation, Arrington, in one of the major contributions of the book, reveals a very personal spiritual experience he had while in graduate school, a life-changing conversion to the importance of Mormon history. “I knew that God expected me to carry

out a research program of his peoples' history" (28). Looking over his many books and scores of articles, one can only conclude that Arrington kept faith to that commission.

Committed, then, to writing Mormon history and to inspiring a beholden generation of younger scholars to do the same, Arrington spearheaded the formation of the Mormon History Association in 1966 and supported Eugene England and others in establishing *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Revered by many, criticized by others, Arrington admits that he had his share of detractors. Considered by some to be "too much of a humanist," "a little left of center," or "too liberal" (41), Arrington admits that no one was more surprised than he was when Elder Tanner asked him to serve as Church historian as part of a new library-history-archives team to work under the managing directorship of Elder Alvin R. Dyer.

Relying heavily upon his personal journals and other notes, Arrington tells his story as Church historian in remarkable detail, giving opinions on sensitive matters few have previously discussed, let alone published. Candid yet responsible, the author seems driven from very deep inside to tell his side of a difficult story for reasons which ultimately only he knows. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Arrington's interpretations of what happened and why, his comments make for fascinating reading.

Arrington tells of his appointment and his choice of James B. Allen, Davis Bitton, Richard Jensen, Dean Jessee, Edyth Romney, and others as his assistants. He explains their aspirations for publications that they hoped would include oral histories, a sixteen-volume sesquicentennial series on Church history, single volume histories, and much more. He explains, "What we tried to do was not just reconstruct a chronicle based on the facts we could uncover but also relive and recreate sympathetically the basic intentions and purposes of the prophets, their men and women associates, and their fellow members" (70). As he reflects, he adjudicates some of his own writings, freely admitting deficiencies in such works as the biography of Apostle Charles C. Rich<sup>2</sup>—it lacked "mind and soul" (125)—while believing that *Brigham Young: American Moses*<sup>3</sup> was his finest biography.

All went well in Salt Lake City under the direction of Elder Dyer and his successor, Joseph Anderson. But with the passage of time and the loss of Presidents David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and Spencer W. Kimball, there came "a new Pharaoh and new directions" (158) under President Ezra Taft Benson and G. Homer Durham, the new managing director. It was in the publication of James B. Allen and Glen Leonard's *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*<sup>4</sup> that the wheels began falling off the Mormon history express. Detailing misunderstandings and differences of opinions and priorities between the Church Historical Department and the Quorum of the Twelve, Arrington tells the story of how he gradually

lost the confidence, direction, and support of certain overseers. Eventually he and his associates were reassigned to form the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History at Brigham Young University in 1980.<sup>5</sup> At heart was a genuine difference of opinion in how Church history should be written and for what purpose—an argument between what he calls “pietistic history and professional history” (104). Furthermore, some felt that such interpretive works as Arrington and his research team were producing should be published outside of Church headquarters and not as an official publication of the Church written by people on the Church payroll, but from a research facility connected with the Church-owned Brigham Young University.

The book will surely raise eyebrows when Arrington suggests that he and his department were caught in a power struggle between a First Presidency weakened by President Kimball’s declining health and an anxious, emboldened Quorum of the Twelve. In his words, it “was like a mouse crossing the floor where elephants are dancing” (144), suggesting that differences of opinion were vigorously explored among the highest quorums of the Church. Arrington believed that in order to preserve the scripturally required unanimity among Church leaders (D&C 107:27), all would defer to the one or two who felt the strongest about a certain issue, individual, or publication. “If any particular person expresses a strong feeling about a particular matter, his views will normally prevail through the courtesy of others” (150).

Clearly Arrington felt a genuine hurt and profound disappointment in seeing plans, programs, and policies approved by one or more administrations overturned by a later one. Only eight of the sixteen sesquicentennial volumes have ever seen the light of day.<sup>6</sup> Arrington did, however, feel that *The Mormon Experience*, which he and Davis Bitton wrote mainly for the national reading audience, was one of their finest accomplishments.<sup>7</sup>

Even in his criticisms of others, however, Arrington tries to gauge his own faults. “We should have expected some readers to second-guess our approach,” he admits (150). “It would have helped me if I could have observed hurts and humiliations more impersonally, as points in a game between two very unequally matched opponents” (156). And “we would have done well to have published a regular newsletter or circular to inform general authorities of the work we were doing” (224).

In the end, the book is far more than mere story and reflection. It is one man’s plea to a rising generation of scholars that “research efforts [are] compatible with the divine restoration” (28); that in the spirit emphasized by David O. McKay, “the buildup of intellectuality is consistent with the strengthening of faith” (25); “that depth in learning will increase [one’s] attachment to the church and will build [one’s] testimony” (52); and as to

the writing of Church history, that there is nothing to hide or of which to be ashamed. In the final analysis, argues the father of modern Mormon history, “behind the personal decisions and the vast impersonal forces of history, we also saw divine purposes at work” (72).

However one interprets these events, it must be kept in mind that unlike the many excellent histories Arrington wrote over the years, *Adventures of a Church Historian* does not pretend to be history. Rather, it is one man’s opinion, a careful reminiscence. Uncomfortably negative for some, insufficiently critical for others, the book remains a valuable yet single viewpoint. Not found here are the journal entries of others, the minutes of administrative decisions at the highest levels, and the reflections and viewpoints of his contemporaries and assistants. Each new Church administration has not only the right but the duty to change policy, as anyone who has worked in a large and dynamic organization can attest. Some day, perhaps, the full story may be told.

In the meantime, we are left with the insights of a most remarkable, beloved man. Leonard Arrington, who passed away in early 1999,<sup>8</sup> has once again added flavor and interest to our unfolding understanding of Church history as the exciting, sometimes debatable, ever intriguing field we know it to be. His is a memory I will forever cherish.

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1. *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

2. *Charles C. Rich: Mormon General and Western Frontiersman* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1974).

3. *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Knopf, 1985).

4. *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976).

5. The institute is now named the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History.

6. As of 1997, the following volumes of the proposed history had been published: Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983); R. Lanier Britsch, *Mormonism in Hawaii* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990); R. Lanier Britsch, *Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986); Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Eugene Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847–1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988); Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985); F. LaMond Tullis, *Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987).

7. *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

8. Leonard J. Arrington passed away February 11, 1999, in Salt Lake City.

RICHARD E. BENNETT. *We'll Find the Place: The Mormon Exodus, 1846–1848*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1997. 428 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$19.95.

Reviewed by William G. Hartley, Associate Professor of History at the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University.

This fascinating book is a new interpretation of a major LDS history event by a prize-winning historian. It is published by an LDS press but aimed at the serious history reader, LDS or non-LDS. The author recently joined the BYU Religious Education faculty after nearly twenty years heading the University of Manitoba's Department of Archives and Special Collections. This book serves as a sequel to his noted Winter Quarters study, *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852: "And Should We Die."*<sup>1</sup>

Bennett's *We'll Find the Place* is one of a profusion of important history books generated by the Mormon pioneer sesquicentennials (1996–1997). Others include the *Iowa Mormon Trail* essays volume; edited diaries of Mary Richards, Patty Sessions, Louisa Pratt, and Thomas Bullock (1848); Carol Madsen's edited Mormon Trail accounts in *Journey to Zion*; a *BYU Studies* anthology of articles, *Coming to Zion*; two reissues: *111 Days to Zion* and the Daughters of Utah Pioneers' *Tales of a Triumphant People* (about settling sections of Great Salt Lake Valley); Norma Rickett's Mormon Battalion study; and several day-by-day documentaries and outstanding photograph/art books.

Before 1996, we had 1847-Mormon-pioneer histories by Cecil McGavin, Preston Nibley, and Wallace Stegner; excellent biographies of Brigham Young by Leonard Arrington and of Heber C. Kimball by Stan Kimball; several collected and individual biographies of the 1847 participants; day-by-day chronologies; and Mormon Trail site guides. So, why another study? The dust jacket asserts that the Mormon exodus story has never been fully told—implying this book finally does it. Not true. This work is not, as Leonard Arrington writes in the foreword, “a definitive new history” (xi). Readers must read other books for “trails and details” and “chronologies and genealogies” (xiii), personal human interest stories, and 1847 pioneers' biographies. Bennett's focus is instead to help us see how religious belief infused the Saints' home-seeking expedition to the unfamiliar West. He uses the participants' views, not his own commentary, to show why the move West took place.

“While so much has been written,” Bennett explains, “the surprise is that so much of the story has never been told” (xiii). His underlying theme is that the Church was not just looking for a new home, it was in jeopardy: “The exodus of the Latter-day Saints was for the survival of the Church” (360).

Leaders and members had “no practical certainty that their journey would be successful” (359). If the search in the West failed, the Church could have broken up because the gathering was halting and disaffection was likely if uncertainties about the Church’s mission lingered (xiv).

Bennett sees seven components (360–65) as essential for the success of the exodus and the survival of the Church: (1) a mass departure westward (moving the vast majority); (2) a safe and productive place (Utah) and new sense of mission (fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy regarding the Lord’s house in the mountains); (3) a reconstruction of Church government (establishing the Twelve’s leadership and reconstituting the First Presidency); (4) an acceptance that the exodus with its Winter Quarters deaths and other hardships was a refiner’s fire and a chastening (causing no mass defections); (5) a people committed to temple covenants; (6) a printing press to publish news of the new gathering place (assuring Saints still coming that the Church was surviving); (7) a deeply believing people who were “wont to be led”—the miracle of the exodus was that so many followed their leaders out to an uncertain nowhere (xv). Discussions of these essentials comprise major segments of the book’s twelve chapters.

Because of its theses, this study cannot end like most histories do with July 1847 but must extend to October 1848. It deals with the 1846 Nauvoo departures, James J. Strang’s sheep stealing, the “Word and Will of the Lord” revelation, the 1847 Pioneer Company’s trek (selectively), the fall 1847 arrival of the big Emigrant Company, the return of Brigham Young and many original pioneers to Winter Quarters, the Saints’ second winter in Winter Quarters, the reconstitution of the First Presidency in December 1847, Kanesville’s role as a Mormon outfitting post, the financial “begging missions,” Salt Lake Valley developments until the summer harvest, and the First Presidency–led 1848 big migration to the Valley.

New insights include the Church’s precarious condition; the Saints’ discovery they were fulfilling Isaiah’s prophesy and establishing the Lord’s house in the tops of the mountains—replacing their thwarted mission to build Zion in Missouri; and the urgency Brigham faced to reestablish the First Presidency not only for effective governance but to counter rival claimants. Thus the book concludes with the climatic sustaining of the First Presidency in the October 1848 conference in Salt Lake City. Bennett has much to say about Strang’s challenge to the Twelve’s position. He shows that the “Word and Will of the Lord” was more than instruction about how to travel West; it was an investment of authority in the Twelve and a sign that the Church had a revelator like Joseph Smith had been. Bennett looks hard at the “prairie council meetings” (278 n. 61) to show why Brigham chastised the leaders of the Emigration Company. Bennett discusses how the Council of Fifty, plural marriage, the law of adoption, and rebaptisms fit into the migration mission (71, 82, 92, 242).



New for most readers is information about “begging missions”—the 100 to 125 men sent East and South in the winter of 1847–1848 to solicit donations to help the LDS refugees (300–333). Also distinctive, this book draws on records by non-LDS trail travelers.

The book’s bibliography reflects Bennett’s extensive research. He draws from little-used sources such as the voluminous Brigham Young papers and high council minutes at the LDS Church Archives and from select non-LDS sources. Overall, his research is thorough and up-to-date.

The author has a gift for insightful and readable narration. Readers should enjoy, too, his creative chapter and section titles and quotes that open each chapter. What we have is a historian sharing with us understanding and perspectives based on thorough research and thoughtful analysis.

I would end the review here, but we LDS historians are accused of being too kind when critiquing colleagues and friends, so duty compels me to identify some errors, documentation slips, overlooked sources, and omitted information.

Blacksmith Burr Frost is mistakenly called Aaron Burr (185), and Reuben Hedlock’s joint-stock scheme somehow became “Reuben and Hedlock’s” (311). In discussing the month of November 1847, the book refers to an “imminent extension of Iowa Territory” (282) and calls the log tabernacle one of the largest buildings in “Iowa Territory” (298 n. 35)—but Iowa had been a *state* since December 1846. Bennett refers to men who went on money missions “from the dusty plains of Iowa” (302), a description hardly suited to that great prairie region. The late Conway Sonne would wince to see the twenty-six trans-Atlantic sailing ships Saints used between 1849 and 1852 referred to as “schooners” (313), because none were. That Emma Smith “would not believe her husband ever practiced” plural marriage (321) conflicts with what Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery show in their Emma biography (292). Sam Brannan did *not* pass through the Great Salt Lake Valley (194) on his journey from the Sierras via Fort Hall to the Pioneer Company, so he could not have already “compared the arid shores of the Salt Lake” with California, as the book states (194).

We lack and need documentation for several statements: that the Saints used Murphy wagons (51); that July 15 was “their intended date of arrival” (179); that most of the men had been told to keep a written record of their journey (257); and that two to three thousand Saints living around Nauvoo never made it across the Mississippi (317).

A major flaw for me is that key player Brigham Young is assumed but never portrayed. We receive no analysis of Brigham’s personality or prior experience relevant to this leadership story, including his directorship of the Twelve during their 1830s quorum missions and his warm-up role at people moving—leading Saints from Missouri in 1838–39. Relatedly, it

needs to be told that the Nauvoo Covenant to help the poor move West was a repeat of the covenant Saints took before fleeing from Missouri, with Brigham's guidance.

Bennett chooses to treat lightly trail routes and sites, preferring to steer "trail aficionados" (384) to Stan Kimball's trail guides. Unfortunately, this book contains only a Salt Lake City plat map (239) and a blurry image of S. Augustus Mitchell's 1846 map of territory west of the Mississippi (96–97). Readers deserve at least one good reference map showing trail routes and sites and such places mentioned in the narration as Garden Grove, Mt. Pisgah, Miller's Hollow, Kanesville, St. Joseph, St. Louis, Winter Quarters, Ponca, and Ft. Kearny (old and new).

*We'll Find the Place* contains samples of what non-LDS people in the 1840s read about the West, but slights what Nauvoo-area Saints read about it in Nauvoo and St. Louis papers. Although Anson Call's recording of the 1843 Rocky Mountain prophecy is debated, it is so well known that any review of westward thinking should deal with it. Similarly, in light of the book's "high risk" theme, why is Jim Bridger's legendary questioning if corn could grow in the Salt Lake Valley only hinted at in the narration but dealt with directly in an endnote (202 n. 77)? Newel Knight's journal shows that Bishop George Miller's decision to move the advance company to Ponca lands was not an act of rebellion but a pragmatic solution approved by a twelve-man high council that included spokesmen for Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. The discussion of Indian politics at Pawnee village sites (124) deserves a paragraph explaining what the Miller/Young/Kimball companies learned while there one year earlier.

In the safe and successful wagon companies of 1847 and 1848, children felt excitement and adventure, the book says, but not the adults—they were weighed down with responsibilities and heartaches (263–65). Why overemphasize the hardships? We need not think that our Mormon Trail pioneers must be portrayed as frowny-faced "woe is me" people. They were not!

I hasten to assert that the above "imperfections," with a few exceptions, are minor brushstroke slips on a vast panorama that is extremely well painted. This important book, containing as it does thorough research, insightful interpretations, skillful writing, and mastery of the vital role religious belief played in that epic migration, should become a standard work in LDS history, qualified to stand beside Bennett's Winter Quarters masterpiece.

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1. Richard E. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852: "And Should We Die"* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987).

JESSIE L. EMBRY. *"In His Own Language:" Mormon Spanish Speaking Congregations in the United States*. Provo, Utah: The Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Brigham Young University, 1997. x; 134 pp. Index. \$14.95.

Reviewed by Mark L. Grover, Senior Librarian and Latin American Bibliographer, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

A history of Spanish-speaking language- and ethnic-based units in the Church is presented in this book by Jessie L. Embry, associate director of the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies and supervisor of its oral history program. Few concerns in contemporary Mormonism elicit more emotion and feeling than the issue of ethnic and language branches and wards. In a church in which unity and equality is emphasized, the concept of dividing into units based on something other than geography seems incongruent. Yet the reality of language and cultural differences among the members has resulted in the organization of various types of language-based meetings from the time non-English-speaking converts first immigrated to the United States.<sup>1</sup> The issue is not solely a concern in the United States, since language-based units exist in many parts of the world and elicit mixed feelings from local leaders.

Embry has explored many of the issues that are essential to gaining an understanding of the Spanish-speaking congregations. To see the organization of these units as the result of only language differences is to fail to understand the significant social issues connected to them. These branches and wards often are as distinct ethnically and culturally as linguistically. Embry and those interviewed point out that "understanding the language [is] 'just the tip of the iceberg'" (80).

*"In His Own Language"* is divided into essentially two sections. The first discusses the evolution of the Church's position on ethnic unit organization by describing the history of organizations that have served the Latino population. Embry outlines the evolution of missions from a separate Spanish-American Mission to the current missionary organization, which places English-speaking and foreign-language missionaries together under the supervision of the same geographically based mission. The volume also highlights the role of Elder Spencer W. Kimball in establishing separate units and focusing attention on ethnic minority members. Some of the larger Spanish-speaking branches and wards are given brief but separate historical treatments.

The second section focuses on issues related to Spanish-speaking congregations. The documentary sources for this section are the oral histories done by the Redd Center under Embry's direction. (None of the interviews, however, were conducted by Embry.) Personal and organizational

issues related to the units are the focus of the discussion. Of particular interest are chapters six and seven, which discuss the advantages and problems of language-based wards and branches. These chapters help the reader understand some of the ethnic and cultural differences that lie beneath the “tip of the iceberg.” For example, interviewee Samuel Miera points out that in English-speaking wards, choir practice is usually a one-hour Sunday session, after which members hurry home. This desire to return quickly home might be interpreted by Latino members as cold or antisocial. In Miera’s Spanish-speaking branch, the choir met Tuesdays and Fridays, sang for forty-five minutes, and then visited for three hours—an important expression of communal warmth and love in Latino societies (80).

Readers will also leave these chapters with a deeper understanding of the complicated issues involved in the formation of language-based wards and branches and of the feelings of estrangement and perceived prejudice that can be experienced by minority members of a Church community. Anglo and Latino readers alike will leave with resolve to rid themselves of ethnic stereotypes.

However, despite the insights provided in the volume, *“In His Own Language”* may prove frustrating to those having experience with the history and evolution of these Spanish-speaking units. The oral histories and the author’s use of them as the primary documentation for the book leaves significant omissions, as does a lack of critical analysis of the issues.

There is little question as to the importance of using oral history in the writing of twentieth-century history. However, caution should be taken in how oral interviews are used. All historical documents have problems of subjectivity, but oral histories generally suffer from this problem more than many written records. Oral history’s greatest value in historical research is that it provides feelings and descriptions surrounding the events or issues being examined.<sup>2</sup> Oral histories have to be used with and supplementary to other primary source materials.<sup>3</sup> Though Embry did use other primary sources, particularly in the history of the Spanish-American Mission, there is a significant lack of written sources in other sections. The result is that the book is more anecdotal than substantive.

Moreover, if oral histories are to be a major source for history, it is important to interview a sufficient number of the people involved. Embry’s limited number of oral histories of the leaders and long-term members of Spanish congregations is a serious omission, particularly problematic in the section on branch histories. The history of the El Paso Texas Branch (42–45), for example, gives little more than a hint of the tumultuous history it went through in the 1960s, a time when racial conflicts in the United States sometimes resulted in violence and rioting.

The most significant of these conflicts occurred in California and Texas where the Chicano movement became the most violent and defiant. Fear on the part of the Anglos and anger on the side of the Latino (primarily Mexican-American) population found its way into some Church communities and activities. In El Paso, some young Latino Church members were leaders in the political struggle. When local stake officials reinterpreted certain Church policies concerning unity and began disbanding language units, the secular militancy of some of the Latino members resulted in a clash with Anglo stake leaders and conflicts occurred. Probably the most serious incidents were in El Paso, where some leaders of the Spanish-speaking unit refused to accept the dissolution of the branch. The result was the excommunication of several leaders and a serious split based on race that in some areas persists to the present.

Embry makes no mention of excommunications of Latino leaders and gives little indication of the influence of outside political movements. In addition, none of the Spanish-speaking leaders of the El Paso branch, for example, past or present were interviewed, leaving the history of the El Paso branch in this book seriously lacking in substance. Other conflicts, though not as dramatic, continue to occur to the present, most recently in California at approximately the time Embry was preparing this book to go to press, and she briefly alludes to "rumors" of the closing of a stake (51). Embry may have omitted details of these problems simply because she chose not to deal with this aspect of the history.

The histories of the Spanish-speaking branches and wards in Provo, Utah, also suffer from insufficient interviews. None of the branch presidents who served between 1960 and 1980 were interviewed, even though they all lived in the area when the interviews were conducted. Little information is given on the evolution of the first branch to a ward, and some factual mistakes are made: Enoc Flores is mistakenly identified as the first bishop. Paul Buckingham was the branch president at the time of the organization of the ward in 1980 and served as bishop for almost a year. Nor does the story suggest the struggles with stake presidents on several occasions to keep the unit from being dissolved.

Examining the list of interviewees, one notices a serious absence of interviews with most of the old, unwavering Hispanic families who have provided much strength and support to branches throughout the United States for so many years. Those faithful Saints, many of whom were baptized in Mexico, should be interviewed to discover the history of these units.

The second part of the book, which is more sociological, suffers from the same problems. The strongest and largest communities of Spanish-speaking members of the Church are in Texas and California, yet over half of the interviews were done in Provo, even though many of those interviewed

had been raised outside of Utah. Nearly half of those interviewed were university students or young members in their twenties. These demographic factors significantly affect the quality of the interviews because of the interviewees' limited experience in the Church. Again, the faithful older members in the branches in Texas and California who have seen changes and adjustments over the years are the ones best able to provide the information desired.

Despite these problems, Embry's book does a great service in pointing out the need for attention to the subject. The Church outside of the United States continues to expand, and the numbers of immigrants being baptized in the United States are also increasing. Many members are still immigrating to the United States and creating large groups of non-English-speaking members. The integration of these members into the Church will continue to be a challenge. The issues raised by Embry and the full history of the Church's response to this challenge in the past can be valuable in understanding how to respond in the future.

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1. Rather than being autonomous units, these first language-based meetings were auxiliary to the established geographical congregations—similar to what we now call “firesides.” However, they were formally organized with a presidency and were held on a regular basis. For more information, see William Mulder, *Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 200, 250–54; Richard Jensen, “Mother Tongue: Use of Non-English Languages in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the United States, 1850–1983,” in *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington*, ed. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 273–303.

2. John Rae, “Commentary,” *Technology and Culture* 4 (spring 1963): 175.

3. “Oral history is only one form of historical documentation and should be used in conjunction with other relevant records and documents.” This statement is found in the introduction to all oral histories located in the James Moyle Oral History Program of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



EUGENE F. FAIRBANKS. *A Sculptor's Testimony in Bronze and Stone: The Sacred Sculpture of Avard T. Fairbanks*. Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1994. xi; 147 pp. Illustrations. \$21.95.

Reviewed by Norma S. Davis, Emeritus Associate Professor of Humanities, Brigham Young University.

In 1972, Eugene F. Fairbanks published a book on the life and work of his father, the sculptor Avard T. Fairbanks. Twelve years later, and seven years after his father's death in 1987, the author revised and published a second edition, completing the narration of the artist's long and successful career. As the title of this book implies, Avard Fairbanks devoted much of his life to expressing the message of the restored gospel through his art. He chose to do so by sculpting idealized men, women, and children who are handsome and strong as well as steadfast in their devotion to truth. Heroically, they face life and its often inexplicable hardships calmly and gracefully.

The first twelve pages of the book give a brief biography of the artist. The reader learns that Avard was born in Provo, Utah, in 1897 to a family of artists. His father, John B. Fairbanks, was one of the early pioneer artists in the territory. Avard's older brother, J. Leo, studied art in Paris and was a recognized artist in the Rocky Mountain region. Therefore, it came as no surprise when Avard showed exceptional artistic talent from a very early age. When John B. Fairbanks gained permission to work in New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art making copies of masterpieces, young Avard soon followed. A few months later, the boy received a scholarship at the Art Students League, where he studied sculpture under the noted James Earl Fraser. According to the biography, his youthful talent attracted the attention of some of the best sculptors of the day. Motivated by this recognition of the boy's talent, John B. took Avard to Paris when Avard was about fifteen years old. While the son studied at various art academies, the father painted. Together they increased their knowledge by regular visits to the museums. This ideal experience was cut short by the advent of World War I. There follows an interesting account of their narrow escape from France just ahead of the advancing German army and a description of a harrowing trip home by ship. The unique quality of Avard's childhood convinced the young man and his family that he was to use his talents to fulfill a special mission for the Church.

J. Leo and Avard received a commission to erect four friezes for the LDS temple in Laie, Hawaii. The story continues with an account of Avard's marriage, his early commissions for sculptures, and his studies at the University of Utah. Based mainly on his accomplishments as a sculptor rather than his academic standing, Fairbanks was appointed an assistant professor of art at the School of Architecture at the University of Oregon in

Eugene in 1920. A leave of absence from that school in 1924 allowed him to attend Yale University to earn his bachelor of fine arts degree. He then returned to Oregon, where he continued to teach and sculpt until he received a Guggenheim Fellowship. He took his wife and four young boys to Europe for the next few years. On their return in 1928, Avard taught at the Seattle Institute of Art and earned a master of fine arts degree at the University of Washington. The next year he was appointed associate professor and resident sculptor in the Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Michigan. During the next eighteen years, he produced a large quantity of sculpture and earned both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in anatomy. In 1947, Fairbanks returned to Utah with his family when he accepted a position as dean of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Utah. From then until his death in 1987, he was recognized as one of the leading artists of the state.

The remaining 133 pages of the book focus on some of Fairbanks's most notable religious sculptures. Each turn of the page introduces the reader to a new work of art, reproduced in black and white and accompanied by a brief descriptive text. Usually the text is confined to a few passages of scripture or a brief explanation of the history of the subject. The two most comprehensive coverages are associated with his work on the Hawaii Temple and his various sculptures of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Excerpts from the artist's correspondence during his work on some of the sculptures contain interesting and informative material. The book closes with a section titled "The Mission of Avard T. Fairbanks," which reminds us that this has been the central focus of the book:

The clay and tools were lifted from the sculptor's hands on the first day of 1987, at the end of a 78 year professional career. Avard Fairbanks left a legacy of influence and momentum to create high quality and dynamic art among his students and family which death cannot erase. His mission continues in bronze and stone. (147)

Although the book provides insight into the artist and his work, typographical errors and extensive use of the passive voice were annoying to this reader. The book is a limited, highly personal narration; the importance of the subject demands a more comprehensive study. Putting the religious works in context with Fairbanks's sculpture on other themes could have provided a broader evaluation of the artist's abilities. A more detached author could have documented in greater detail Fairbanks's training and traced the influences of his teachers and family members upon his content, technique, and style. More comparisons of his works with those of his contemporaries in and outside Utah would allow the reader to arrive at a more informed understanding of Avard T. Fairbanks's place in the history of sculpture. Having said this, the fact that this is a book written mainly under the influence of the artist himself and augmented by the personal observations of his son makes it a valuable contribution to the history of the arts in Utah.

## Brief Notices

*The Antipolygamy Controversy in U.S. Women's Movements, 1880–1925: A Debate on the American Home*, by Joan Smyth Iversen (Garland, 1997)

*The Antipolygamy Controversy in U.S. Movements, 1880–1925*, situates antipolygamy controversies within the larger contexts of U.S. political and women's history. The second volume in Garland's Development of American Feminism series, this work, written by a non-LDS author, argues that antipolygamy discourse arose in the context of the nineteenth-century view of the moral superiority of women and then faded when that viewpoint became largely irrelevant to the new feminism of the 1920s.

This text explores antipolygamy controversy in three U.S. women's movements: First, the campaign against patriarchal power in the 1880s as part of the ongoing struggle to define the post-Civil War family; second, the struggle to maintain traditional values against the collapse of Victorian mores at the end of the nineteenth century; and third, the 1910–11 national media barrage against the Church for its alleged duplicity on the practice of plural marriage. The text recounts the national fervor against plural marriage but does not itself participate in that vitriol. Indeed, the author acknowledges that Latter-day Saint plural marriage “can only be understood as a religious principle” (57).

The author cites liberally from secondary-source articles written by competent LDS historians, insuring accuracy on basic history. Some minor errors nevertheless dot the work. For example, the University of Deseret was not “founded” (55) in 1869; the school was first opened in 1850, closed in 1852, and reopened in 1867. Apostle Matthias F. Cowley was not “excommunicated” (242) but disfellowshipped

in 1911. And Edward W. Tullidge had already left the Godbeite movement by the time he proclaimed, “This is woman's age” (56).

Quibbles aside, this volume makes a significant contribution to a number of different fields. Particularly compelling is Iversen's discussion of how both suffragists and their opponents used antipolygamy rhetoric to further their own aims until women were given the vote in 1920.

—Jed L. Woodworth

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*A Dictionary of the Maya Language as Spoken in Hocaba, Yucatan*, by Victoria Bricker, Eleuterio Po'ot Yah, and Ofelia Dzul de Po'ot (University of Utah Press, 1998)

Today, there are twenty Mayan languages spoken by the Maya from southern Mexico and throughout Mesoamerica. *A Dictionary of the Maya Language as Spoken in Hocaba, Yucatan*, is a welcome contribution to the body of scholarship dealing with one of those twenty languages. Even though this dictionary is limited to the language spoken in the area surrounding the community of Hocaba, Yucatec is spoken by several hundred thousand people.

This volume is one of the first dictionaries available to scholars that does not move first from Yucatec to Spanish and then from Spanish to English. The authors move directly from Yucatec to English, even though they readily point out that there are many Spanish colloquialisms in spoken Maya. The only disadvantage is that the reverse is not true—the dictionary does not move from English to Yucatec. This omission can prove a handicap to the beginning student who wishes to learn Maya.

The introduction to the volume explains the historical background of the authors' fourteen-year project and details the dictionary's organization, contributions, and limitations. The last eighty-one pages, entitled "Sketches of Maya Word Morphology and Inflections," describe the organization of the Yucatecan language and provide great help to those interested in learning the structure, formation, sounds, and proper use of the language.

—Clark V. Johnson

While not yet countenancing the possibility of baptism for the dead, the evangelical proponents of divine perseverance derive the scriptural teaching that the gospel will be proclaimed to the dead from 1 Peter 3:18–4:6 and several other biblical texts.

An old German proverb says, "A good question is half an answer." This book clearly identifies an important question. In their suggestions for further reading (167–68), however, the authors should look a little further for the other half of the answer.

—John W. Welch

*What about Those Who Have Never Heard?*

by Gabriel Fackre, Ronald H. Nash, and John Sanders (InterVarsity, 1995)

Written by three evangelical Christians, this volume asks the question, "If Jesus is the only way of salvation, then what about those who have never heard about him?" Recognizing the significance of the issue, each of the three authors presents a different model for alternative evangelical understandings of scripture on this issue, to which the other two authors respond.

Nash's view, called "restrictivism," holds that it is "necessary to know about the work of Christ and exercise faith in Jesus before one dies if one is to be saved" (12). Sanders argues for "inclusivism," meaning "people may be saved even if they do not know about Christ. God grants them salvation if they exercise faith in God as revealed to them through creation and providence" (13).

Most interesting to Latter-day Saints will be the third position, which Fackre identifies as "divine perseverance," also called "postmortem evangelization." In other words, some evangelicals are willing to entertain the possibility that "those who die unevangelized receive an opportunity for salvation after death. God condemns no one without first seeing what his or her response to Christ is" (13).