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Nomadic people of biblical times relied on the hospitality of others for survival. The desert tent-dwellers of the Middle East were known for exceptional hospitality; weary travelers, though complete strangers, could expect a meal, water for washing, and good company during their stay. *Flight*, mural by Minerva Teichert. Oil on masonite, 36" x 48". Museum of Art, Brigham Young University.

# The Lost Commandment

## The Sacred Rites of Hospitality

*Peter J. Sorensen*

Also when a stranger came into their cities and brought goods which he had purchased with a view to dispose of there, the people of these cities would assemble, men, women and children, young and old, and go to the man and take his goods by force, giving a little to each man until there was an end to all the goods of the owner which he had brought into the land. (Sephher Ha-Yashar 18:16)<sup>1</sup>

Thus the medieval Book of Jasher (Book of the Upright or Just One; Jasher is not a person's name) characterizes the infamy of Sodom. In another passage, a poor man who wandered into the land of Sodom was given silver and gold, but once there, the people were commanded not to give him so much as a morsel of bread (19:8). If the man died of hunger, the people would take back their money, strip him of his garments, then bury him without ceremony beneath some shrubs. Anyone coming to the aid of the stranger thus abused could expect to be stoned (19:16) or burned to ashes in the street (19:35). These accounts typify the vice of being inhospitable.

Hospitality refers to the relationship between a host and a guest. It is a sacred duty that demonstrates how the host and guest should treat each other; people in both roles have certain reciprocal responsibilities. The setting is also important. In most cases, hospitality takes place in the host's dwelling; the host offers his home as a haven. However, hospitality is much more than an evening dinner date at home with friends. As will be shown, hospitality has expansive applications. For example, because there were no hotels or passports in the ancient world, at least not as we know them today, merchants or travelers in distant lands needed a host

who would not only give them a place to stay, but would also take legal responsibility for them. Hosts would vouch for their guests' character while introducing them to local officials or to other merchants in the marketplace. Hosts became essentially the agents of these strangers. Hospitality, therefore, became a powerful bond of trust and even a contractual agreement. Out of this relationship grew a cultural formality that rose to the status of ritual—not in the sense of an official religious ordinance (this article does not intend the words *rite* and *covenant* to mean a formal covenant)—but hospitality bespoke a sacred ethos that both the guest and host, if they were honorable, were careful to follow.

This effective covenant of hospitality is ubiquitous and unmistakable in biblical texts, in religious ceremonies, and in social settings throughout

### **Peter J. Sorensen**

I think it can be funny sometimes how ideas for scholarly articles come about. Peter Sorensen found his inspiration for this article on hospitality in an unlikely place: “I first thought about hospitality,” says Sorensen, “while watching the Disney film *Darby O’Gill and the Little People*. King Brian warns Darby not to violate the ‘sacred rites of hospitality.’ From there, I noticed the same rites in Shakespeare—everywhere!” As Professor Sorensen began to ruminate and study more on the subject, he could see that hospitality is quite ingrained in ancient cultures and sacred texts. “Finally, I found it in the scriptures, where it unlocked some real puzzles for me,” concludes Sorensen.

This article gives several examples of hospitality from the scriptures, but during the editorial process, I noted so many more examples that I wonder if I will ever read the scriptures quite the same way again. This subject is also very timely in our day. Our culture, particularly in America, is increasingly devoid of customs that anciently were designed to develop love and bring people together. What, for instance, is the proper way to greet someone, or to make them comfortable in your home?

According to Sorensen, these issues have eternal ramifications also. “Next I hope to write on the covenant of hospitality and its impact on the temple, and on our eternal roles as guest and hosts,” he says. This article opened my eyes to hospitality as more than a temporary custom, but as something that connects us with the infinite.

—James Summerhays, *BYU Studies*

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recorded history. As will be shown, this sense of covenant between the host and guest becomes even stronger when Diety enters the picture. It is clear that the host-guest relationship is part of God's commandment to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19:18).

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*If we see only the inhospitable behavior of others, we will have failed to rediscover the lost commandment.*

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Remembering the lost commandment of hospitality would serve us well today. Recent events at home and abroad are testing American motives as guests and hosts as never before.<sup>2</sup> In the current war, American troops are encouraged not to take souvenirs that might rightly belong to the cultural heritage of Iraq (such as items from Saddam Hussein's numerous mansions), thus assuring the Iraqis that we are still their "guests"; however, charges of immoral, degrading behavior among a few American troops guarding Iraqi prisoners threatened to derail our moral high ground of attempting to end tyranny and infamy in Iraqi government.

But no matter the situation, no matter the culture, no matter the name of the god, whether Jehovah, Allah, or Vishnu, none of us has any way to wriggle free: the penalties for inhospitable behavior are great—even of eternal, cosmic import—and the rewards of genuine hospitality, despite the very real risks, are deeply satisfying and represent the highest order of reverence imaginable. Above all else, let us remember the symbols of the mote and the beam: if we see only the inhospitable behavior of others, not reviewing our own lives to repair our own failings as guests or hosts, we will have failed to rediscover the lost commandment.

### **The Stranger in the Gates**

The example from the medieval Book of Jasher highlights an aspect of the evil in Sodom that is often overlooked in the tally of sins of this city of the plains: the mistreatment of the "stranger in the gates."<sup>3</sup> We seldom pay attention to the ironic juxtaposition of the destruction of Sodom in Genesis 19 and Abraham's hospitable treatment of the three holy men in chapter 18. Part of that irony is Sodom's failure to be hospitable to the stranger in the gates. With that irony also comes a certain logic: if hospitality is a lost commandment of God, it makes perfect sense that the most wicked city would also be the most inhospitable.

In contrast, when Abraham sees three strangers approaching his tent, he bows low and begs them to honor his tent, following the hard and fast rule of the Bedouins that the guest is always holy, never to be subjected to

anything but kindness and deference, even to the point that the host will preserve the guest's anonymity unless he offers the host his name.<sup>4</sup> Abraham's first duty is to wash their feet, his servant rushing off to fetch water. This initial act of comfort, setting the guest at ease, is the duty of a worthy host and an extremely polite use of water, which in that part of the world is as precious as gold. Sarah stokes the fire to make "cakes" of meal (*hors d'oeuvres*, really) for the visitors, seeing to their immediate hunger pangs. Abraham has a tender calf dressed out for a main course, and provides butter and milk for a special treat; then he stands by and watches them eat, waiting only to serve them, to make them feel like kings.<sup>5</sup>

One can easily imagine how terrifying a journey in the wilderness could be; the sands might shift in the wind, covering the trail. Brigands could waylay the unwary (think of the everyman in danger on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho). Thirst, hunger, and wilting heat could dog even the best prepared, most experienced traveler (think of Hagar or Moses wandering, friendless, in the desert after being cast out of their homelands). Where an oasis might have been a year earlier, now the underground waters have shifted or played out. Without being able to trust a stranger, no wanderer could hope to survive, unless one had the good fortune to be part of a caravan. We of European descent could learn much from these desert tent dwellers. A well-traveled professional photographer, author of a remarkable article in the *National Geographic*, quotes his own photographer, Reza:

I have been shooting pictures for 35 years and have traveled in 107 different countries, but nowhere have I enjoyed greater warmth than I experienced among the Bedouin. . . . Exhausted after a long day driving in the Sinai desert, you'd approach a tent, and suddenly someone would appear with coffee and a beautiful carpet to sit on—yet they'd never ask who you were or where you're from. I sometimes wonder if the rest of us have forgotten such values.<sup>6</sup>

In more recent history, we read of members of the Church relying on the hospitality of many others (including native Americans and trapper-explorers such as Jim Bridger) in Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, throughout the Great Plains, and into the Intermountain West. Though these modern Israelites moved in wagon caravans, there was still danger from accidents, famine, weather, or hostile tribes. The hospitality of others was essential, for even with the best planning hundreds of Latter-day Saints would lose their lives.

Returning to the account in Genesis 18, Abraham (who was given this new name, which likely referred to his being father-prince of nations but also may imply he was a friend to *all* people) sets the three holy men on



their way. The idea that these are in reality not mortals, but *b'nai elohim*, or even Jehovah himself in disguise among them, fits perfectly with a story Jesus told, which we recognize today as the "poor wayfaring man of grief," wherein the allusion to Jesus' position as a guest in need of hospitality has often been ignored. Unbeknownst to Abraham, the holy men are departing to rescue Lot and his household before the destruction of Sodom. But the voice of the Lord<sup>7</sup> debates, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; . . . For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him . . . to do justice and judgment" (Gen. 18:17, 19). Evidently Abraham is told what will happen, for the sudden realization that the fate of his nephew's family rests with his three visitors inspires the unusual bargaining scene as the messengers prepare to depart toward the cities of the plains. Abraham clearly had not schemed to feed the visitors merely to beg favors; besides, they had already blessed him and his wife beyond measure. But Abraham, desperately afraid for Lot, dares to bargain with the Lord, whittling the number required to save the city from destruction down to the ten righteous residents of Sodom. He need not have worried after all, for the Lord was going to bring forth Lot and his family from the city before the horrible destruction would begin. Yet it is likely that Abraham, although personally familiar with the persecutions of the most sinful, pagan citizens of antiquity, was bargaining for the lives of *countless* strangers who might, had they the chance, have slit the patriarch's throat to steal his cloak. He was bargaining on behalf of many he likely had never met!

A further study shows that the covenant between the host and guest is unmistakable, including the provisions for the "stranger in the gates." A host of sources confirm the universality of this covenant from a Judeo-Christian as well as Islamic perspective.<sup>8</sup> For example, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, under "Hospitality," gives us the Greek *philoxenia*, that is, love of strangers or foreigners. Equivalent to *philoxenia* is the European and Latin *hospes*, which can stand for either guest or host, resulting in the Latinate *hôpital* (French), *hospital* (English), *hôtel* (French), *hospice*, *hospitable knights* or *hôpitaliers* (Knights Templar, who created the way stations for pilgrims for safety, banking and exchange affairs, food, clothing, and healing). The Knights Templar has become the Red Cross in modern times, the name being derived from the Redcrosse Knight in Spenser's *The Fairie Queene*. The list goes on, but the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* cautions us that for the Old and New Testament use of the theme, there are "special nuances . . . particularly with regard to the guest and host roles played by God or Christ."<sup>9</sup>

The Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 19 implies that Lot, as a righteous kinsman of Abraham, had a habit of waiting outside the gate for strangers, at least until the city rolled up the carpet. Upon seeing the three messengers of God at the city gate, Lot bows with his face toward the ground and begs them to “turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways” (JST Gen. 19:2). The messengers offer the expected polite refusal due a host whose home the strangers “invade.” When Lot, as expected, becomes politely insistent, they accept. Lot is a gracious host; his invitation for them to rise early and leave only implies a fear that the guests, if found, will be abused by the city dwellers. Later, with the men of Sodom clamoring at his door, Lot risks his life by pleading with the mob to leave his guests and daughters alone. Lot emphasizes that the holy men are “under the shadow of my roof,” implying that even the Sodomites understood, at least superficially, the special privileges of guests (JST Gen. 19:9–15). The angels’ response to the Sodomites’ unholy desires gives an ironic twist to the expression “blind justice.”

Many Old Testament stories whose backdrop is hospitality are seen in a new light once the lost commandment is remembered.<sup>10</sup> Joseph’s refusal to lie with Potiphar’s wife is partly built on the premise that Joseph, as a servant, has a responsibility to treat his “host” with honor. His violating that trust would have been more than simply the evil of a disobedient servant. Guests who are violators of a home are like defilers of a temple. The ideals of home as a sacred place, together with the sensitivities regarding hospitality, manifest themselves across wide cultural boundaries.<sup>11</sup>

### **Hospitality in Myth and Literary Motif**

In Roman mythology, it is evident that the hearth of the home sanctifies it, for Diana and Demeter both treasure the hearth. Indeed, in Euripides’s tragedy *Hippolytus*, we find the same situation as that of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife when Aphrodite curses Theseus’s son Hippolytus for his adoration of Diana exclusive of other gods. J. G. Frazer sums up the tragic dilemma well:

Aphrodite, stung by his scorn, inspired his stepmother Phaedra with love of him; and when he disdained her wicked advances she falsely accused him to his father Theseus. The slander was believed, and Theseus prayed to his sire Poseidon to avenge the imagined wrong.<sup>12</sup>

It is hard to know whether the rites of hospitality originated with a historical event or whether, after the fact, such myths of origin were connected to an age-old ritual. A coronation, the ribbon-cutting at a new

business, crossing the threshold of the wedding cottage, or unlocking the front door of one's new home have all become rituals, but they were first historical events. The idea that the gods may visit a person's home in the guise of beggars, or the idea that elves like Santa leave tiny gifts in stockings hung at the nearest place of egress may or may not have origins in a particular historical event, but rather have origins in ancient ritual.

In any case, many scholars argue that Greek mythology has some connections to actual historical events. Just as in the examples from Genesis, Greek mythology would have us beware that the gods are testing us, gauging our hospitality to the stranger in the gates. The Greeks have preserved the positively gruesome story of Tantalus's attempt to deceive the gods, who were at the dinner table in his palace. He boils and then serves up his own son to them to test their powers of discernment, hoping to prove that they are vastly overrated as gods. Tantalus, who had previously dined *chez les dieux* and had been treated to sacred ambrosia and nectar, is punished horribly. His family line bears the curse as well, suggesting that using the sacred obligations of hospitality to skewer the gods who have shown you kindness is the worst behavior imaginable.

In the general culture of the world, however, the idea of hospitality has survived not as a commandment of God or as a stipulation in God's covenant with mankind, but as an obligation of human beings toward each other. Both negative and positive examples abound in literary history. The Trojan War is kindled when Paris (Alexandros) violates the hospitality of Menelaus by kidnapping the beautiful Helen. Renaissance paintings that depict her being carried away show her genuinely terrified in some cases, but smiling coyly in other cases. Menelaus then drags his brother Agamemnon and the Achaeans into the fray, while Paris drags in King Priam, the noble Hector, and the Trojans. They meet to battle each other on the plains of Ilium—all for a pretty face that, as Marlowe penned, “launched a thousand ships.”

Though we are repulsed by the bloodiness of Odysseus's revenge on the suitors of Ithaca, his killing of these hoodlums is the first step to restoring order in his debauched kingdom, for during his absence, Penelope's suitors raid the pantry, party day and night, and abuse and terrorize the servants as well as Telemachus, Odysseus's gentle son.

Students of mythology will remember the nighttime visit of the goddess Demeter to a worthy home into whose hearth Demeter sets the baby of the house in order to give him eternal youth. Upon seeing her son set in the center of the fiery hearth, the boy's mother screams, surprising the goddess and thus ruining the magic charm. Demeter loves the child in place of her own lost darling Persephone, yet she cannot repair the damage

to the charm. Demeter was attempting to repay this family for taking her in as a guest when she appeared to be but a poor, lonely, tired old stranger resting by a well. The list of examples from ancient myth is virtually endless.

Shakespeare made the violation of the code of hospitality a *hamartia*—a sin or mistake of missing the mark, or an irreversible tragic error.<sup>13</sup> No more frightening example exists than in *King Lear*, when Cornwall and Regan violently blind their host Gloucester in his own home. Gloucester pleads, “What means Your Graces? Good my friends, consider / You are my guests. Do me no foul play, friends.” He warns them, even in his terror, “I am your host, / With robber’s hands my hospitable favors / You should not ruffle thus” (3.7.31–32, 40–42). And in *Macbeth*, out of the protagonist’s own mouth we hear the domestic obligation attending the visit of King Duncan, who only recently had named Macbeth Thane of Cawdor: “He’s here in double trust: / First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, / Strong both against the deed; then, as his host, / Who should against his murderer shut the door, / Not bear the knife myself” (1.7.12–16).

In the only humorous scene of *Macbeth*, the porter, lowliest of servants, hears a thunderous knock at the main entrance, but instead of simply sliding the grate and shouting out a “*Quo vadis*,” the porter stands and speculates aloud who the visitors might be, playing the part of both host and guest, while the knocking increases in frequency and intensity. The effect is comic intensification (the word “relief” in “comic relief” means more than simply a brief diversion from the suspense, but it means to stand out in sharp contrast, making other scenes even darker and more sinister). The longer the porter avoids his duty, the more dreadful the knock—for at that moment Macbeth and his wife are cleaning up the scene of their horrible misdeed of killing the king and his menservants. The effect even surpasses Poe’s in “The Tell-Tale Heart.”

In *Hamlet*, a group of professional actors appears, offering to perform before the court at the palace. After welcoming them and reviewing with them past performances, the prince offers them the hospitality of the palace, urging Polonius, councilor to the king, to see that the actors are “well bestowed,” adding, with emphasis, “Do you hear, let them be well used . . .” (2.2.522–23). Polonius is officious (his usual humor), but perfunctory in his response: “My lord, I will use them according to their desert” (2.2.528). Hamlet, already angry at Polonius’s revolting obsequiousness toward the murderous King Claudius, is incensed at the reply: “God’s bodkin, man, much better. Use every man after his desert, and who shall scape whipping? Use them after your own honor and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty” (2.2.529–32). The lesson here is important: being a good host is a form of unconditional love. Just as one cannot

wholly merit mercy (for the very essence of mercy is that the recipient is unworthy of it), so one clearly cannot be a partial host, catering only to visitors who meet preconceived qualifications.

Othello's wonderful storytelling is his gift to Brabantio and Desdemona for their kind dinner invitations. But Brabantio feels violated when the old Moorish general "entrances" a very young Desdemona into an elopement in which *both* partners love

"not wisely but too well" (5.2). If the playgoers blink, they could miss the report toward the play's end that Brabantio has died from a broken heart.<sup>14</sup> Shakespeare utilizes the code of hospitality to great dramatic effect. His examples, following the *didache* of instruction and delight, serve as notice, even to people of title, that certain rules cannot be ignored.

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*Jesus' teachings on hospitality are so frequent that they perhaps go unnoticed.*

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### The Covenant of Hospitality in the New Testament

To reiterate, Abraham's hospitality is a universal and solid foundation for establishing great covenants and promises with Jehovah. We see that Shakespeare makes hospitality a great sign of spiritual health, as do many other artists from the Middle Ages to the Modern. This foundation is also essential to understanding several passages in the New Testament where the covenant of hospitality is alive and well, so much so that for several New Testament authors it literally goes without saying.<sup>15</sup> A case in point: Jesus asks a lawyer to give him the essence of the Mosaic covenant. The lawyer replies, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself" (Luke 10:27). Jesus tells him he has answered right, but the lawyer, seeking to justify his past actions, asks, "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Jesus then gives the parable of the Good Samaritan, which emphasizes that any stranger in need of help is a neighbor. In this story, Jesus can be seen as a Samaritan, who shows hospitality by becoming an agent of the stranger; he binds up the wounds and finds lodging for any injured traveler in a world full of cutthroats.<sup>16</sup> We, like Jesus, are required to help strangers, who might, were the circumstances different, even persecute us on another day. God binds himself by the principle that the merciful obtain mercy. Whatever our sins, our hospitality to a stranger may decide our ultimate destiny. My personal hope, along with countless others I'm sure, is that God's mercy will cover me better than my mercy has covered the suppliant strangers of my past.

Myriad *logia* and parables fall into order with their foundation clearly being the sacred rites of hospitality. Abraham understood these sacred

rites when he risked destruction to tempt Jehovah, bargaining with a skill comparable to Shakespeare's Shylock to save the wicked Sodomites if ten righteous could be found among them. Clearly, the lawyer in Luke 10 was aware that these two commandments were the heart and soul of the Old Testament. Jesus declares, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9). God, despite this invitation, must at some point close his door to strangers—those who have estranged themselves from him and have put off their own repentance far too long:

Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. (Luke 13:24–27)

On what basis can God shut his door? As the next passage shows, he does so when he has given ample invitation and the guests still reject him. To ignore the host altogether and then to abuse his messengers is a heinous offense:

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise; And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. (Matthew 22:2–10)

Notice that, in the end, strangers "both bad and good" are welcome at the feast. So intent is the king on giving hospitality that he will receive anyone who accepts the invitation.

Jesus' healing of the centurion's servant, found in Luke 7 but more fully recounted in Matthew 8, is well understood in light of the sacred obligations of guest and host. Upon hearing that the servant is sick, Jesus offers without hesitation to be a guest and come to the Roman centurion's home, despite the scandal it would provoke among devout Jews (the Romans are

idolaters and eat food forbidden to Israelites). The centurion has been stationed in Israel long enough to know how easily a Roman can give offense to a Jew, and he offers a cautionary rejoinder to Jesus: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Matt. 8:8). Jesus marvels at the centurion's faith and takes the opportunity to turn the centurion's considerate reply into an object lesson on faith: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matt. 8:10). The centurion in question does not create Roman policy, for he is a man "under authority" (Matt. 8:9), doing a job he does well, despite his possibly not liking the policies that he must carry out. Despite his duties, and despite his feelings of unworthiness to host Jesus in his home, the Roman's effective recognition of the second great commandment and his lack of hesitation to be considerate is not lost on Jesus, who adds, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:11–12). As a Roman outsider, the centurion has few close friends who could or would do as much for him; and whatever Rome's sins, Jesus prophesies that Romans will one day be dining with Israelites at God's hospitable banquet, a prophecy fulfilled when Roman gentiles become attached to the Christian "sect" of Judaism, sharing bread and wine at the sacrament of the Holy Supper.

The hospitality of another centurion appears in Acts 10, this time with a clever narrative twist that harks back to the former miracle: "Cornelius, a centurion of the . . . Italian band" (Acts 10:11), who is a devout Godfearer and an aspiring convert to Judaism, is told in a vision to send his servants in search of Peter, who is staying at the home of Simon the tanner in Joppa. Accordingly, Cornelius sends two servants and a soldier. Peter, meanwhile, meditating and praying on the tanner's roof, falls into a trance and receives a highly symbolic vision (reminiscent of Isaiah's and Ezekiel's) in which food is arrayed on a huge, cloth-covered plate. Peter refuses the fare, possibly all three times it is offered, because the meal includes ritually unclean animals he would have to kill and dress. But God insists, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (Acts 10:15). I rather doubt that having Peter really kill and eat unclean food would have improved the vision, but I suspect that a share of these items typically graced the tables of important Romans—pigs, shellfish, and the like, defiling any Jew who even sat at table. Right as the vision closes, Cornelius's servants arrive. Peter, whose spiritual intuition is even more remarkable after Jesus' ascension, does not fail to connect the vision with the coming of Cornelius's men. The Spirit bids him to go, and Peter is at ease following a Roman soldier into the lair

of a centurion. Several brethren follow with Peter, perhaps for moral support, or perhaps because of lingering fears of what happened the last time when their Nazarene file leader fell into Roman hands. In this instance, hospitality may be the last thing on their minds.

Cornelius, however, took hospitality very seriously. Upon Peter's arrival, Cornelius "fell down at his feet, and worshipped him" (Acts 10:25). Luke's words need not involve any notion of worshipping Peter as a god, but they see Cornelius's actions as expressing the lowliest humiliation and highest regard. Abraham's visitors are holy men as well, yet he bows low, thanking them for honoring his humble abode. Cornelius is receiving a man of high station and is likewise careful to be a gracious host. A God-fearer would surely not mistake Peter for Jehovah, especially since Cornelius had seen an angel only four days earlier. In any case, the point of hospitality is that one is always wiser to err on the side of a generous welcome, for "some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2). Although Peter has been imbued with authority and a newfound eloquence in preaching the gospel following the Ascension, he learns a fearful lesson: God's hospitality is for both Jew and Gentile. One can almost detect Peter's shock, in response to Cornelius's account of the angel's visit, as Peter proclaims, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). The brethren with Peter are equally shocked when Cornelius speaks in tongues (Acts 10:45-46), a confirmation that the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon this Gentile, a stranger among the Jews. Peter, seeing that all people have a standing invitation to join the household of faith, then commits the family to baptism.

Cornelius offered them hospitality in part because Peter had done the same, unstintingly, for when the three strangers came to Simon's house in Joppa to speak with him, Peter "called them in, and lodged them" (Acts 10:23). He accepted three strangers, one of them a Roman soldier, into a Jewish home, repeating the kindness of Abraham toward his three visitors. When Peter crossed Cornelius's doorstep, he was finally able to do that which the other Roman centurion felt unworthy to let Jesus do.<sup>17</sup> This signals a singular development in the expansion of Christian missionary labor, but far more important for my argument, it demonstrates that the covenant of guest and host is as important in the New Testament as in the Old.

Jesus' teachings on hospitality are so frequent that they perhaps go unnoticed. After his resurrection, Jesus walked along the road leading to the village of Emmaus with two men, Cleopas and Simon, but their eyes were "holden" that they did not recognize him. The remarkable events at



Emmaus should not overshadow the beautiful enactment of the covenant of hospitality:

And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. (Luke 24:28–31)

I strongly believe that Cleopas and Simon<sup>18</sup> received such a dispensation not merely because they were chosen to be witnesses of the resurrection (undoubtedly the great byproduct of the experience) but as a test and a reward for their commitment toward their neighbor. For indeed, the man with them is cloaked, and no doubt has disguised his voice as well, and is thus a stranger—one who clearly has spent little time in Jerusalem, seemingly unaware of the recent uproar over Jesus. Yet the disciples fear for him; with night coming on, a stranger might lose his way—or worse. Though they know he means to move on, they are insistent and remind him that “the day is far spent.” Then, at table, the stranger gives himself away. He would have blessed the food using a typical Jewish formula, so that the scales fall from their eyes when he hands the food to them, revealing the marks in his hands and wrists. It is then that he vanishes.

Is it any wonder that Jesus’ greatest desire is to sup with us, and our greatest longing to welcome him to dinner as our guest? He declares, “With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15). After his resurrection Jesus eats with the disciples on at least three occasions: by the sea, in the city, and at the village Emmaus. I had always assumed he did so to prove he was not a spirit. Simply allowing his disciples to touch him would demonstrate that, whereas here he communes with them, appears as the guest, and allows them to host. After his final ascension, Jesus promises that he will return one day for his faithful disciples, “and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). At that time he will reverse the roles and become the host: “In my Father’s house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2).

The covenant of hospitality gives a deeper explanation to several ritual passages in the New Testament concerning the washing of feet. The first, concerning missionary work, returns our minds again to the scene of Sodom’s evil:

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this

house. . . . And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. . . . But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you. . . . But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. (Luke 10:4–12)

The essence of the gospel, the good news, is “that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” (Luke 10:11). It is a message of friendship and delight, of peace and hope. Indeed, it is the best of gifts. Why does shaking the dust off one’s feet condemn the city to the doom of Sodom? Because the city abused the stranger in its gates. If a disciple had been invited in, the master of the house would have washed and anointed his feet to take away the pain and fatigue of a long journey. But the dust remains and “cleaveth” to his feet, meaning that the town was inhospitable to one who had neither money nor knapsack (without purse or scrip). Why will the city that turns away the disciples suffer more than Sodom? Because Sodom was hostile to angels on a mission of doom, whereas Jesus’ disciples were on a mission of joy and mercy, so that refusing them entrance merited an even greater condemnation.

The next passage is set in Luke where Jesus condemns the Pharisees for their inhospitable treatment of the common people of the earth. Jesus sits at meat at the home of Simon<sup>19</sup> the Pharisee when a sinful woman bursts in and washes Jesus’ feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, then anoints them with precious ointment. For her to have touched Jesus would have offended a Pharisee, and Simon apparently grumbles under his breath about Jesus’ shortcomings with respect to sinners and commoners. Jesus, who earlier discerns that Pharisees would condemn him as a glutton and winebibber if he chose to be a guest for dinner at their house, wounds Simon to the heart:

Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. (Luke 7:44–47)

The woman is the perfect hostess—the love she shows is of the highest order. The Greek text uses the word *agapaō*, meaning the type of love that transcends ordinary friendship or passion or affection. According to the customs of her day, she honors a man who has quickly earned the

reputation of forgiving readily any truly penitent sinner. Now, upon her first meeting with Jesus, she is rewarded for her hospitality, her royal greeting to this stranger.

In contrast, Simon is rightly chastised for his failure to show hospitality. Jesus points out that Simon's pharisaical separateness from common people, especially from publicans and sinners, proves that he does not love as greatly as does the woman. Despite his so-called righteousness, Simon the Pharisee is sterile—living the outward “law” but forever estranged from God—while the woman follows Abraham's exalted example.

The Gospel of John strongly connects this dinner with two other feasts: the dinner at Bethany and the Last Supper (during Passover) before Christ's Passion. All three dinners involve the washing of feet, and in some way these washings belong in apposition to each other. At Bethany, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with costly ointment (John 12:3). The disciples are present at Mary's home just as they are at the Passover feast six days later. Judas is there also, and he does not scruple to complain about Mary's waste of expensive spikenard, which might have been sold to feed the poor (John 12:5). The dinner at Bethany shows Lazarus's role as host, for he stays at the table to commune with Jesus (John 12:2), ostensibly leaving Martha to cook, and Mary to make her guest comfortable. Martha upbraids Mary (Luke 10:38–42) for “sitting” at Jesus' feet while she works (Mary doubtless lingered there after washing and anointing his feet). Mary and Martha have become a sort of binary opposition for the contemplative life as opposed to the life of service; yet Martha's mistake is not her service but the feeling that her role is unnoticed or inferior, and likely much more difficult. All three—Mary, Martha, and Lazarus—are being excellent hosts, while Judas comes across already as a covenant breaker, insulting the host and further alienating himself from Jesus and the other disciples.

The Last Supper reverses the roles: Jesus is now the host. It is fortunate that John 13 preserves the scene of the Last Supper that is missing from the synoptic gospels. It belongs, I believe, in apposition to Mary of Bethany's anointing of Jesus in John 12:3. We must recall in Matthew 26:17–18 that Jesus had made plans for the dinner beforehand, sending his disciples with certain words to say to the house owner that would complete the arrangement but would avoid giving any information about the location of Jesus or Lazarus to the priests (Lazarus was in just about as much danger as Jesus<sup>20</sup>). Peter's hesitation to let Jesus wash his feet stems not from a wanton ignorance of hospitality, but from his high regard for Jesus' place and mission; once Peter realizes the ordinance has eternal or cosmic significance, he rushes headlong to be washed head to foot—a remarkably resonant comment about higher ordinances (John 13:5–8). These three dinners

stand in apposition to each other because of the washing and anointing of feet. In each instance the host carries out this epitome of hospitality.

### Hospitality in the Book of Mormon

When we turn to the Book of Mormon, the covenant of hospitality can also be seen in bold relief. Quite recently, a subtitle added to this book of scripture restored our perspective on this important ideal. The Book of Mormon is “Another Testament of Jesus Christ,” meaning it is inexorably tied to the Old Covenant of Jehovah as well as the New Covenant of Jesus

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*In a promised land, we are guests in God’s home. In this land that is choice above all others, the covenant relationship of guest and host is in full force.*

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Christ. The covenant is repeated all through the scripture but is often ignored by the Latter-day Saints, despite the fabled hospitality of the Church. “For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off” (Ether 2:10). Stated another way,

the whole land is God’s home, and anyone who possesses it is a guest in his home; in this land that is choice above all others, the covenant relationship of guest and host is in full force. The destruction of Book of Mormon cities at the death of the Savior, and the subsequent arrival of the resurrected Jesus to usher in the four generations of righteous inhabitants, attests to the validity of the covenant. Likewise, the entire disappearance of Nephites by the end of the Book of Mormon is de facto proof of the viability of the covenant; that is, a covenant land is set apart and holy, becoming a refuge for the righteous and a place where God can appear, and anyone that abuses the host and breaks the bond of hospitality must be cast out of God’s garden. The comparison of the promised land with Eden is apt, for like the Nephites, Adam and Eve transgress against their host by serving and obeying, momentarily at least, another god (Satan), causing their expulsion from Eden.<sup>21</sup>

However, more specific negative examples occur throughout the Book of Mormon. Consider Laban’s horrid treatment of Nephi and his brothers, who come to his house to try to get the brass plates, which were inscribed with Lehi’s genealogy, the Torah, and a record of the prophets. Laman gets the “short straw” when the brothers cast lots to see who would approach Laban. Laman appears to be a caustic, belligerent sort, so we can easily imagine that he arrives at Laban’s house with a chip on his shoulder, and that he is curt, even abrasive in his demands. Yet Laban’s retort is out of all

compass: “Behold thou art a robber, and I will slay thee” (1 Nephi 3:13). If Laban is indeed a captain of fifty<sup>22</sup> (1 Nephi 3:31), Laman does wisely to flee “out of [Laban’s] presence” (1 Nephi 3:14). Laban’s inhospitable treatment of these visitors merits Jehovah’s harshest judgment—which judgment echoed the doom of Sodom.

Alma 10 contains a striking parallel to Lot’s receiving of the holy visitors to Sodom. Amulek is off to visit close family but must suddenly return to his house because an angel appears to warn him of the arrival of a prophet. Amulek’s duty is to host the stranger in the gates: “Return to thine own house, for thou shalt feed a prophet of the Lord; yea, a holy man” named Alma, who has journeyed “many days” without food. Despite the gentle tone of this passage, one wonders—Why would a prophet on a long trek make the journey without food? The scripture strongly infers that sinful people have refused him hospitality. God’s reward, therefore, will be considerable if Amulek offers help in the right spirit: “He shall bless thee and thy house; and the blessing of the Lord shall rest upon thee and thy house” (Alma 10:7). This promise of continued wealth and security is given to Amulek, although he is destined to lose his family and his wealth as he joins Alma to announce the Day of Deliverance made possible through the promised Messiah.

It is the Book of Mormon’s paragon of virtuous kingship, Benjamin, that gives us the clearest rules for hosts: “Ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish” (Mosiah 4:16). Benjamin speaks over and over in Mosiah 4 of “condemnation” as the ultimate fate of the inhospitable. The two kings, Noah and Benjamin, are juxtaposed in the text because the kings of Zarahemla are far more hospitable, as a rule, than the kings of Lehi-Nephi.<sup>23</sup> King Noah is the corrupt counterpart to King Benjamin; the detailed description in Mosiah 11 of King Noah’s vaunted palace and lands contrasts sharply with Benjamin’s homely victory garden, which he has cared for with his own hands. Benjamin freely shares with the poor that which God has given him freely; King Noah hoards his goods, except during fertility celebrations, where large-scale drinking from the fruit of Noah’s vineyards further corrupts the people. Though Noah’s court possessed the law of Moses (for Abinadi quizzes Noah and his priests on points of the Torah), Noah has clearly succumbed to the effects of idolatry—the surest signs being the constant mention of vineyards, whoredoms, drunkenness, and luxury.

The most notable mistreatment of the stranger in the gates happens to two honest messengers, Abinadi and Samuel the Lamanite, who warn that the sin of inhumanity would prove the destruction of even kings and priests in their palaces and temples. Abinadi, a local resident of the land

of Nephi, is horribly received by his own neighbors, who, according to the law of Moses, ought to show respect toward each other. Abinadi must flee but returns two years later. He has to adopt the guise of a stranger to gain entrance into the city, but again he is rejected. When Abinadi prophesies in the street of the city of King Noah, he is seized by the crowd. When he prophesies that they must “repent in sackcloth and ashes” (Mosiah 11:25), the prophet is reminding Noah that his people are beggars in a promised land, and that Jehovah will tolerate neither inhumanity nor arrogance. Abinadi’s ultimate fate is to be burned to death, but his dying words prophesy a like reward for the king who so brazenly had condemned God’s messenger.

The other example of mistreating the stranger is found with Samuel the Lamanite. We know little about him. In an odd mirroring of Abinadi, Samuel, who had been preaching among the Nephites, begins his homeward trek when Jehovah insists that he again confront the Nephites with God’s warning of Zarahemla’s doom, but “they would not suffer that he should enter into the city” (Helaman 13:4). So, rather than disguising himself as had Abinadi, Samuel “got upon the wall” of the city to preach. It is Samuel’s unique privilege to predict and announce the cosmic signs of the birth and death of Jesus: a day, a night, and a day of light; a new star arising in the vault of heaven; and three days of darkness (a day, a night, and a day) to mark his death; mayhem and catastrophe will attend the Nephites in those days, to the point that the bodies of Nephite forebears will be cast out of tombs as a witness against the evil and abomination of their own children (Helaman 14:25).<sup>24</sup> Samuel is an ethnic enemy to the Nephites, just as Jonah was when he feared that he may be killed simply for opening his mouth at Nineveh. But all Nineveh repents in sackcloth and ashes, while many Nephites are openly antagonistic toward their messenger. A mob mentality takes over, and the populace sling stones at Samuel and shoot arrows but fail to wound the Lamanite. They soon rush to the wall to subdue Samuel. Doubtless there are stairs or ladders, but he leaps down from the wall and escapes.

I would maintain that when Jehovah called Samuel to labor, he offered him the same covenant offered to the apostles: the laborer is worthy of his hire, and the city that receives the prophet as a proper guest shall prosper; the city that does not will be leveled—as was Sodom, and, in this case, as was Zarahemla.

Another affirmative example from the Book of Mormon of endearing a guest to his host is ably demonstrated by Ammon, who is willing to become a household servant to reward King Lamoni’s mercy toward him. Alma 17 declares that Lamoni “was much pleased with Ammon” to the

point of offering him a daughter to wife (Alma 17:24). Ammon puts the king off brilliantly not by accounting himself *too righteous* to accept such a gift, but by declaring himself *unworthy* to merit such a prize, wishing only to herd Lamoni's sheep as a servant. Among all the Lamanite kings described in the Book of Mormon, Lamoni is perhaps more like a chieftain or, even better, a sheik; the hospitality of a "tent" is more than implied by the shepherding duties, as is the ritual of the sheik's daughters serving the dinner and dancing before the heroic servant. It is in Lamoni's service that Ammon shows his reliance upon Jehovah for his strength, convincing Lamoni of Jehovah's power by cutting off the arms of the renegades scattering the king's herds. As a conquering hero might cast the weapons of the enemy at the feet of a king, Ammon's companions gather up the "arms" (actual arms in this case) and cast them at the feet of Lamoni.<sup>25</sup> Thus Ammon proves his valor as the most courageous of guest-servants.

### Latter-Day Hospitality

Hospitality is clearly important in the Restored Church. For example, section 124 of the Doctrine and Covenants contains extensive instructions concerning a boarding house in Nauvoo, the one place in early Church history in which all the aspirations of the Saints found expression. Nauvoo, which was given the appositive "The Beautiful," represented to the Saints the literalizing of the metaphor of a Golden Age.<sup>26</sup> Concerning the many projects outlined for the city plat, Christ declares,

And now I say unto you, as pertaining to my boarding house which I have commanded you to build for the boarding of strangers, let it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it, and let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein, from generation to generation. For this anointing have I put upon his head, that his blessing shall also be put upon the head of his posterity after him. And as I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph: In thee and in thy seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed. Therefore, let my servant Joseph and his seed after him have place in that house, from generation to generation, forever and ever, saith the Lord. And let the name of that house be called Nauvoo House; and let it be a delightful habitation for man, and a resting-place for the weary traveler; that he may contemplate the glory of Zion, and the glory of this, the corner-stone thereof; That he may receive also the counsel from those whom I have set to be as plants of renown, and as watchmen upon her walls. (D&C 124:56-61)

As a document for the theology of hospitality and as a policy statement for institutional hospitality, these verses are really astounding. First, the boarding house will protect "strangers" in the gates of Nauvoo, a ritual

act that quite literally will prevent Jehovah from destroying the city and its people for perpetrating the ancient evils of Sodom. The “weary traveler,” who may be an angel or even Jesus in disguise, receives specific mention. The boarding house will evoke the cornucopia that was the hallmark of Eden’s natural hospitality, allowing the traveler to “contemplate the glory of Zion.” This building is to be the glorious cornerstone of the Saint’s Utopia. The Nauvoo House is the temporal embodiment of the return to Eden and to the paradisiacal glory which was long ago lost, for this hotel will be a “delightful habitation” and a “resting-place,” suggesting deliverance for the faithful from sorrow and care in the paradise that immediately follows mortality. However, more important even than these details from the passage is the explicit connection of hospitality to the “father of the faithful,” Abraham. In keeping this law of hospitality, Joseph Smith and his family are offered the same covenant that was offered to Abraham, that of blessing all the nations of the Earth. At the time of this revelation, early 1841, Joseph and the Saints, I believe, were intent on making Nauvoo a center place of Zion, just as they had aspired to do in Kirtland and Far West, and as they finally did, after Joseph’s death, in Salt Lake City.<sup>27</sup> The deeding of the Nauvoo House to Joseph Smith’s family, in perpetuity, guarantees a residence and steady income, just as the Israelites’ inheritance of Canaan guaranteed grazing lands and rich soil for farming and horticulture. The implication is that Joseph’s own posterity will be as the sands of the sea.

The Nauvoo House is difficult to distinguish from the Nauvoo temple in section 124. It is clear that it serves as a holy place for the “health and safety” of non-Mormon visitors, but it is no ordinary hotel; it is a refuge from the world where that traveler “shall contemplate the word of the Lord.” It is to be a “healthful habitation,” “a good house, worthy of all acceptance.” It is a temple, a house of the Lord in every sense, for whoever is appointed *governor* to the house (an interesting title for a *maitre d’hotel*, one that suggests an important authority or administrator) must not “suffer any pollution to come upon it. It shall be holy, or the Lord your God will not dwell therein” (D&C 124:23–24). Though it actually does not, this verse is doubtless thought by most readers to refer to the Nauvoo Temple, a structure the Lord directs to be built at the same time.

As mentioned earlier, the offering of such a holy place as a residence for the weary stranger is a pledge of honor and safety that ultimately protects Nauvoo itself from destruction. Even the temple proper, the Nauvoo Temple, is a furnished dwelling place, a house where Jehovah may visit or dwell, as an occasional visitor in Nauvoo might do in the Nauvoo House. Jehovah’s residence in Nauvoo must be clean, in perfect order, and free of visitors who would violate the implicit covenant of guest and



host. Only those who have already entered into gospel covenants can be guests in Jehovah's own house, and such guests must preserve the dignity of the house, whether the Lord of the manor is at home or has merely left the servants in charge. The hospitality of the temple is clear and almost self-explanatory: no raised voices, no loud laughter, no unkind words or feelings are to be either thought or expressed, no swearing of profane oaths, no entrance into precincts reserved for other guests or servants, and no intrusion upon Jehovah himself without his express invitation. The servants must care for the temple furnishings, such as altars, anointing horns, fonts and lavers, as well as decorative symbols, paintings, chairs, and tables.

### **Temple versus Chapel Hospitality**

Still today, the most sacred rites in the Restoration presuppose hospitality. Temple behavior is extremely restrictive, not because anyone fears God's retribution for insouciance, but because Latter-day Saints feel they are guests in another person's home. Despite their model demeanor in temples, the Saints are often criticized for irreverence in their regular meeting houses; their behavior, especially in the affluent world of Caucasian Mormons in North America, can be best described as boisterous—not maliciously perverse, but certainly enthusiastic. Children race down the aisles with reckless abandon, and parents either chase them and make more noise, or ignore them completely, which allows for even wilder behavior.

The cause of this problem may be simpler than we suspect: Latter-day Saint meetinghouses are just that—a place for the Saints to get together. These chapels are the domain of the people. The meetinghouse is not a sanctuary for strangers or special guests, but is a place where people mutually gather together as equal fellows. These meetinghouses do not echo the covenant of hospitality in the same way as do the temples. Though they seem at first to resemble the vaunted architecture of other denominations' church buildings, they are actually far from being so: there is little or no attention to lighting, there are no religious icons to inspire awe, and there are no precincts off limits to even young children. The organists are seldom if ever formally trained, and altars and high places for sermons are absent. The sermons (called "talks") are given by everyone, including children, and none are formally trained as speakers. The most central of all the sacraments of orthodoxy, communion or mass (L. *missa*, or communal meal), is dignified but relatively unceremonious in Mormondom. Its central prayers and ritual offerings of bread and water are handled by

teenage boys who, while remarkably committed to their callings, nonetheless lack special clothing beyond white shirts and ties and inspire less awe with their straightforward recitation of prayers and their presentation of the sacramental emblems than do their formally trained counterparts in other denominations.

For orthodox Christians such as Catholics, the chapel is the equivalent of the ancient temple, with its outer courts, church porch, inner courts, altars, lavers, and most holy places. The central altar and the high places for sermons are reached by ascending a spiral staircase to one side of the central altar or the other. Cathedrals are the great temples and country churches the less glorious but still sacred houses of God. Thus, while orthodox churches are open to everyone, those attending communion are guests and have a far more passive role, creating contemplative and reflective moods. The congregations sing hymns, to be sure, in orthodox meetings, but the canticles are mostly handled by trained choirs wearing beautiful robes. The reading of sacred texts in the Bible is a very important event in orthodoxy; such readings follow a liturgical calendar and are reserved for dignitaries and people of consummate skill.

For Mormons, the temple ceremony produces the same sense of awe and reverence; everything in the house of the Lord deepens a sense of hospitality toward God. In Mormon temples, everyone wears white clothing, maintains ritualized reverence, and in every way treats the temple as God's house. Courtesy is enjoined to the point that participants should not have any animosity toward other participants.

### **Personal Observations on Hospitality**

The idea of hospitality has somehow become disconnected from its primeval roots—the entertaining of God in one's own home, and entering temples set apart as abodes of deity. Yet Jesus was perfectly clear when, after declaring that the first law of all was to love God, he insisted there was a second law, not less important but like the first, that we must love our neighbors. The guest-host relationship is crucial in fulfilling both of these commandments.

I remember being dismissed from an investigator's home and asked never to return because my companion and I were so intent on teaching the gospel that we failed to rise or even acknowledge the husband, who was returning home after a hard day's work. I notice now with genuine pleasure that missionaries receive remarkably better sensitivity training in culture than I ever received. That said, there are limits—another missionary and I rightly refused a glass of a French vintner's best year. What

is hospitable isn't always what is right. My father-in-law and his GI buddy, treated to a meal and a night's shelter, turned down a French host's invitation to lie with his daughter, appalled at what the offer implied about the morals of some American GI's during World War II. Every missionary or military person I've known has a dozen such stories, good or bad, about every culture. Hopefully, love and tact will still govern us in situations where hospitality must be declined. At my brother's home, no dinner prayer occurs (no active churchgoers there), but they are politely silent as we offer prayers when they visit our house. American Mormons, in family gatherings as well as in dinners with Mormon neighbors and friends, always ask, "What would you like us to bring? A salad? A dessert?" In Utah the candy dish has become a ritualized centerpiece for formal guests. I have heard that our candy dishes in Utah are social substitutes for alcohol. Among those who drink socially, offering such drinks before, during, and after dinner is not at all unusual. While it coincidentally loosens speech and inhibitions a tad, social drinkers will explain that its real purpose is to commune, to share, to become one with others. Small wonder then that these household gestures, as well as religious sacramental services, involve communion through the exchange of food.

In Laie, Hawaii, my fair-haired family was an odd spectacle in the sea of brown in our neighborhood. Early on, I learned to accept graciously some very strong Samoan cocoa that for this *palagi* was certainly an acquired taste. But I came to love another strong offering, *palusami*, taro leaves cooked in coconut milk with onion; a slice of breadfruit or taro went very well with it. A very touching event was the day our next-door neighbor (who is too modest for me to name) brought me a plate of my favorite Samoan dish after I had injured my right eye and had undergone a rather delicate emergency surgery. The food that my neighbor, who had a young family and was poorer by far than this English instructor, would offer was half the covenant, and my delighted acceptance fulfilled the other half.

Beyond literary tradition, the obligations of hospitality have made certain peoples famous: one hears constantly of the hospitality of the deep South; the Irish have a sterling reputation as hosts, despite the bitter, centuries-old animosity between Catholics and Protestants; the Austrians' hospitality is legendary—and so it goes. Salt Lake City, Utah, scored a resounding success in early 2002 by hosting the Winter Olympics, followed by the Paralympics. One of the greatest fears among those visiting was that the Mormons would overwhelm the entire event with blatant proselytizing. The shrewd and sensitive President Gordon B. Hinckley wisely proffered instead the famous "right hand of fellowship." The promise was, without any obligation, to befriend the strangers in the gates,

protect them from danger (such as terrorism, which was thwarted by some fifteen thousand troops and police from many places), speak to them in their own language (accomplished by thousands of volunteers, many of

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*The penalties for inhospitable behavior are great—even of cosmic import, and the rewards, despite the risks, are deeply satisfying and represent the highest order of reverence imaginable.*

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them former Mormon missionaries, who speak all the major languages of the world), and freely offer them food and shelter (residential homes were opened to receive visitors).

The sacred rites of hospitality transcend any one religion, nation, or people. Mistrust is rampant in these troubled times—would a member of the Taliban slit the throat of an American who gave him food

and shelter? Would an American refuse to bind up the wounds of a member of Al-Qaida if that man were hit by a bus and left for dead by the side of the road? Would leaders of nations detest and mistrust each other if they sat and ate together regularly as hosts and guests?

I repeat, even at the risk of redundancy: the risks of hospitality are greater now than ever before, for the abuse of hospitality is greater than ever. But I would point out that God, whether one believes in Allah, Jehovah, or Apollo, does not leave us room to wriggle free: the penalties for inhospitable behavior are great—even of eternal, cosmic import, and the rewards, despite the risks, are deeply satisfying and represent the highest order of reverence imaginable.

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1. This particular translation of the book of Jasher was published in Utah (Salt Lake City: J. H. Parry, 1887); its fidelity to the Hebrew original was well vindicated by experts in the 1840s, when it first appeared in America. Its use among Latter-day Saints has been consistent, but neither extensive nor influential. Its authorship is a mystery, as are the translators of the English version. The book likely dates from the twelfth century. The best treatment of its background and use among the members of the Church is Edward J. Brandt's PhD dissertation, "The History, Content, and Latter-day Saint Use of the Book of Jasher" (BYU, 1976). My thanks to colleague Stephen Ricks for pointing me toward this source.

2. For example, my youngest son, Marine Lance Corporal Tim Sorensen, spent a month guarding the border between Iran and Iraq, in a sense helping to maintain the proper guest-host relationship. His duty was to prevent Iranian terrorist incursions from coming into Iraq. To my surprise, Tim never had to fire his weapon, and his battalion came home, not as disgraced bunglers, but as fine soldiers who received a presidential citation for their swift and efficient service. Indeed, though the television networks never seemed to talk about military efforts on the east side of Iraq, my son's unit received rousing approval from the Iraqis, who formed huge lines outside just to watch the LAVs rolling by.

3. Deuteronomy 14:27–29 is a good example of a covenant of blessing that Jehovah makes with those who are hospitable to strangers within the gates of their city.

4. Tad Szulc, "Abraham: Journey of Faith," *National Geographic* (December 2001), 120. My thanks to colleague Zina Petersen for pointing me toward this exceptional essay.

5. In the biographical documentary video "The Faith of an Observer: Conversations with Hugh Nibley" (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1985), Hugh Nibley, the renowned professor of ancient scripture, a man who was intimately familiar with Arabic customs in ancient and modern times, alluded to an apocryphal account of this episode (perhaps a midrash) in which Abraham is so conscious of his social obligations that he actually goes out into the wilderness (*mithbar*, the dangerous, forbidding desert) looking for *any* stranger who might benefit from his hospitality. Abraham knows how highly Jehovah prizes the guest-host covenant, and it is the capstone of his hospitality that he is known as the "friend of God" and the "father of nations."

6. Szulc, "Abraham: Journey of Faith," 120.

7. It is unclear in this passage if the Lord is speaking to the holy men, or speaking *through* them to Abraham, or if it is a disguised Deity that is speaking to Abraham face to face.

8. My thanks to John W. Welch for drawing my attention to some of these sources. The positive and negative examples of guest-host covenants in the four LDS Standard Works are so frequent and vivid that, without any scholarly apparatus beyond the ability to read Early Modern English, one can compile a remarkable list. It is ironic that despite its being a forgotten commandment, hospitality has been thoroughly discussed. There is no single word in Hebrew for this ideal, perhaps because of its sanctity or perhaps because it was ubiquitous, and therefore it would be redundant to give it a name. My solution to this conundrum is simple: gospel discussions of hospitality have been subsumed under other commandments and principles, such as love, mercy, justice, and the like. Those who "rediscover" the principles and rites of hospitality may see scriptures in a whole new, possibly blinding, light.

9. *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), s.v. "Hospitality."

10. It is redundant to cite secondary sources when the primary sources are self-evidentiary. But one could support these discussions with thorough examinations of Christiana van Houten's *The Alien in Israelite Law* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1991), or John Koenig's *New Testament Hospitality: Partnership with Strangers as Promise and Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), and, most recently, Amy E. Oden, ed.,

*And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), whose sources include some of the (again) endless ancient and recent Jewish and Christian commentators on the Old and New Testament elements of hospitality. The principles are obvious enough, but the example of the mote and the beam suggests some of us stand in need of correction: shooing away Jehovah's Witnesses like barflies, declaring a white man's cold war when Nat Cole buys a home in an upscale white neighborhood, or accusing Samoans of emptying a Tongan's freezer of fish when it turns out the *palagis* in the neighborhood were the real thieves. Immanuel Velikovsky suggested in his last major work *Mankind in Amnesia* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1982) that mankind has acquired a collective amnesia toward its guest-host relationship with the beautiful planet God gave as an abode. Thomas H. Huxley, in his 1877 essay "Technical Education," put it another way: the end of study is not knowledge but *action*, not simply all one must *know*, which must come first, but all one must *do*. That is why there are two parts to the greatest commandment: Love God (receive *gnosis*), then love your neighbor (*caritas*).

11. The idea of home as a temple was advocated by the influential British military leader Lord Raglan. Similarly the Hebrew word *hekhal* can refer to a palace as well as a temple.

12. James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996 [Macmillan 1922]), 5.

13. *Hamartia* has been misunderstood by generations of literary critics. The standard translation, "tragic flaw," does not refer to a weakness in character, such as ignorance or hubris, but to a lost opportunity that leads to the irreversible error that dooms the protagonist. Hubris in and of itself is not a *hamartia*, for it can be repented of, but once hubris leads to a king's rash vow (Creon's or Lear's comes to mind), hubris can blind a character into committing a *hamartia*. The word may originally have referred to a cast spear, which misses its correct mark and strikes down another, as when Hamlet fails to kill Claudius while the latter is praying, for fear it will damn Hamlet and exalt the repentant king, not knowing the king's words ascend to heaven while his true hypocritical thoughts remain within him. Later, Hamlet, visiting his mother, stabs at a figure behind the arras, thinking it is Claudius spying, but discovers he has instead slain Polonius, who, however perverse, was still the father of Hamlet's beloved Ophelia and of Laertes, Hamlet's good friend. It is the only perfect *hamartia* in all of Shakespeare.

14. Gratiano declares, "Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead. / Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief / Shore his old thread in twain" (5.2.211–13).

15. The writings of Luke, for instance, are replete with examples of hospitality. Jerome H. Neyrey gives these references: Luke 5:29–39; 7:36–50; 10:38–42; 11:37–52; 14:1–24; 15:2; 19:1–10; 22:7–38; 24:28–32, 36–49; Acts 9:10–19, 43; 10:6; 12:12–17; 16:15, 34; 17:5; 18:7; 21:8, 16; 27:3; 28:7–10, 13–14. Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Social World of Luke–Acts: Models for Interpretation* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991), 226.

16. John W. Welch, "The Good Samaritan: A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation," *BYU Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 79–82.

17. An intriguing question arises: Could Cornelius actually have been the centurion whose servant Jesus healed? Could the same servant have come to fetch Peter at Joppa? Could this centurion have become a god-fearer because he wit-

nessed the crucifixion, whereas he “glorified God” in declaring, “Certainly this was a righteous man”? (Luke 23:47).

18. This would not be the chief apostle, Simon Peter, whom they encounter later at Jerusalem where the “eleven” are already gathered.

19. Simon was a common first name. I would suggest that since the apostle Peter was named Simon, Luke and others might have used his name as a simple template to represent “Hebrew” sorts of names, which Christians in other lands might more easily recognize (the same may be true of the name Mary, though here I would suggest that Mary Magdalene would be the template, having had a far greater influence on *primitive* Christianity than the Virgin Mary).

20. “But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus” (John 12:10–11).

21. I do not dispute the essential nature of the Fall but merely attempt to point out the obvious: no one would do cartwheels over having to live in a telestial world, especially after having lived in the garden of God.

22. Hugh Nibley first made note of Laban’s likely status in his early *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957), lesson 10. This text was adopted as the 1957 senior priesthood study manual for the Church and is reprinted as Hugh W. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 3rd ed., vol. 6 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1988).

23. King Mosiah, Benjamin’s father, who fled Lehi-Nephi with others, arrived as a stranger in Zarahemla, where the citizenry “rejoice exceedingly” (Omni 1:14) that Israelite remnants besides the Mulekites have been led by Jehovah to the Chosen Land, for hitherto, each group must have been certain they were alone among all the aboriginal tribes already occupying the land. Mosiah’s peaceful succession to the throne of Zarahemla, thus intermingling two different tribes (Judah, through Zedekiah; and Joseph, through Lehi), stands in stark contrast to the violent tale of the Theban king Oedipus, who, a stranger from Corinth, runs *from* the oracle of Apollo and murders an older man (Laius, the king of Thebes, who turns out to be Oedipus’s own father) at the crossroads, committing an abhorrent offense as a stranger in a strange land. Although Oedipus indeed solves the riddle of the Sphinx, liberating Thebes, he ultimately brings Thebes to a far worse doom by marrying the recently widowed queen (Iocasta, who turns out to be his mother), bringing sterility to the innocent Theban people. Thus, by ignoring the laws of hospitality, Oedipus brings down ruin upon them and himself.

24. This sign is neither pleasant nor affirmative. It is mentioned in the midst of terror and uproar, and clearly can’t refer to resurrection, since Christ himself is not yet resurrected.

25. As for the “arms” play on words, it could be that this constitutes the best pun in the Book of Mormon. The Bible also has numerous puns of this sort, usually based on Hebrew puns.

26. Marilyn Gaull’s wonderful *English Romanticism: The Human Context* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988) successfully demonstrates that the British romantics (1780–1830) “invented a golden age in ancient Greece . . . , an invention reflecting [England’s] own need to believe in a sun-filled land of happy, youthful, healthy people, an Arcadia governed by kindly philosophical statesmen and

divinely inspired poets” (183). For a short season, Nauvoo succeeded in building the Utopia, Arcadia, or Holy City that poet William Blake, for example, anticipated for London’s ultimate transformation into the New Jerusalem.

27. The successful hosting of the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City and its environs in 2002 proves that venues now exist wherein the entire world can come to the “tops of the mountains” to encounter Mormonism’s grand vision of hospitality.



# Joseph Smith and the 1834 D. P. Hurlbut Case

*David W. Grua*

Joseph Smith, the Latter-day Saint Prophet, was not a lawyer by training, but he became well acquainted with the court system in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois during his brief lifetime. Through his encounters with the law, he developed a distinct view of the law's prospect for delivering justice. At first, Smith had a firm belief that, through faith and God's assistance, he would find justice. He was willing to go before the courts to present his complaints with confidence that he would ultimately prevail against all challenges. But after 1837, when his enemies began assailing him with numerous "vexatious lawsuits,"<sup>1</sup> he learned he could not rely on courts for his protection and rights.<sup>2</sup>

Important in Joseph Smith's legal experience was the April 1834 case of *Ohio v. Doctor Philastus Hurlbut*, Joseph's first appearance in the courts of Ohio and a rare occasion on which he took the initiative in a judicial action. In December 1833, Hurlbut, an excommunicated Latter-day Saint, had threatened publicly to kill Smith in Kirtland, Ohio. Coming in the midst of a wider persecution of the Saints in Geauga County, Ohio, during the winter of 1833–34, and occurring a short time after the Latter-day Saints in Missouri had been expelled from their Jackson County homes, this threat was one the young President of the Church was not willing to let pass. He filed an official complaint with Geauga County authorities, requesting them to prevent Hurlbut from carrying out his threat. As the prosecution proceeded during the first four months of 1834, Smith recorded his prayers for deliverance in his daily journal, revealing his strong belief that the Lord would fill the courts with the spirit of justice.

Previous historical treatments of *Ohio v. Hurlbut* have focused primarily on Hurlbut's anti-Mormon activities and have commented only

## David W. Grua



As an undergraduate history student at Brigham Young University, I worked as a research assistant for John W. Welch, Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law. Professor Welch, serving as an editor for the Joseph Smith Papers Legal Series, asked me to compile data on the 1834 Hurlbut case and to write up my research.

At first the project seemed daunting, as I had no legal training. With the help of a legal dictionary and some law books and by consulting with Dr. Welch and other lawyers, I learned enough to understand this relatively simple case. I've since come to

know that many a lawyer in the nineteenth century learned the law in the same way.

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briefly on the case within its legal context.<sup>3</sup> A notable exception is Firmage and Mangrum's *Zion in the Courts*. The authors recognized the importance of the case in understanding the early Church's legal experience, but their brief analysis did not seek to connect the case to Joseph Smith's own developing views toward the law. Furthermore, its brevity obscured many important elements of the case.<sup>4</sup> This article presents the first legal examination of *Ohio v. Hurlbut* in light of all of the known pertinent court records and within the religious context of Joseph Smith's earliest legal experience in Ohio.

### Pretrial Events

Although the case itself began on December 21, 1833, events occurred nine months earlier that set it in motion. In March 1833, the newly baptized Doctor Philastus Hurlbut (Doctor was his given name) arrived in Kirtland, Ohio. Joseph Smith recorded that Hurlbut visited the Smith home on March 13, 1833, to discuss the Book of Mormon, marking an early interest in the foundational scripture.<sup>5</sup> Five days later, Sidney Rigdon ordained

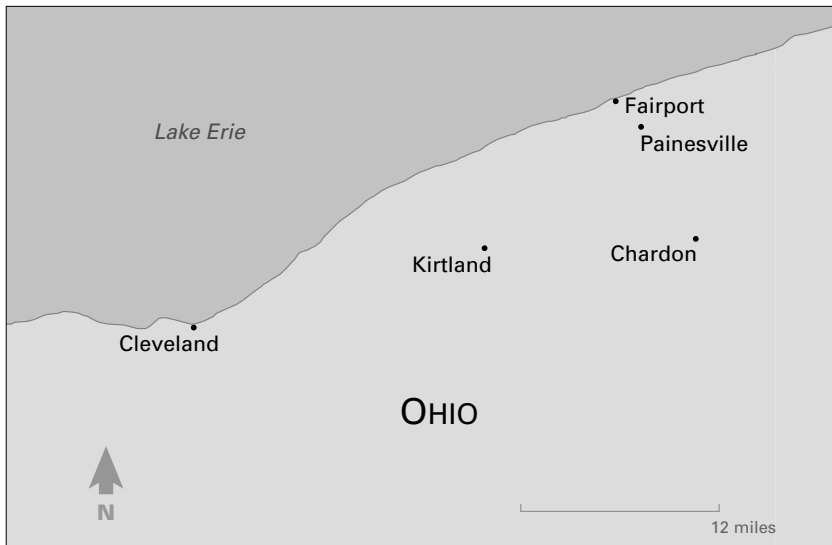
Hurlbut an elder, and on March 19, 1833, Hurlbut was called to serve a mission in Pennsylvania.<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after establishing himself in Pennsylvania, Hurlbut's fellow missionary Orson Hyde accused Hurlbut of immorality before a church council in Kirtland, which excommunicated Hurlbut on June 3, 1833 for "unchristian conduct with the female sex."<sup>7</sup> Hurlbut, however, was not present at this hearing and appealed the decision. He traveled to Kirtland, confessed his offense, and the council reinstated him on June 21, 1833. It was soon evident that he was not sincere in his repentance, as two days later the council excommunicated Hurlbut for claiming to outsiders that he had "deceived Joseph Smith's God."<sup>8</sup>

Hurlbut determined to pursue the matter by lecturing against Joseph Smith and the Church. He thereby became the darling of churches opposed to Smith.<sup>9</sup> While delivering his anti-Mormon lectures in Pennsylvania, it appears, Hurlbut heard about a novel written several years earlier by Solomon Spalding entitled *Manuscript Found*. The unpublished manuscript allegedly resembled the historical parts of the Book of Mormon. Hurlbut met a man named Jackson, who had known Spalding and was familiar with Spalding's novel. Jackson stated to Hurlbut that the Book of Mormon was remarkably similar to Spalding's novel.<sup>10</sup> Hurlbut immediately returned to Kirtland, where he reported what he had heard about the Spalding novel, thereby exciting certain audiences against the already unpopular Mormons. In a contemporary letter, Smith mentioned that Hurlbut was "lieing in a wonderful manner and the people are running after him and giving him mony."<sup>11</sup> Hurlbut still needed more evidence if his claims were to be taken seriously. After gathering financial support from anti-Mormons in Geauga County, Hurlbut embarked in late July or early August on a journey that took him through Ohio, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New York.<sup>12</sup> He spoke with Spalding's relatives about *Manuscript Found* and acquired statements from Smith's former Palmyra neighbors concerning the character of the Smith family.<sup>13</sup> Historian Richard Anderson has shown that Hurlbut influenced or tampered with the statements by guiding each toward negative conclusions about the Smith family.<sup>14</sup>

## Back to Kirtland

In late November and early December 1833, word reached Geauga County that a mob had expelled the Latter-day Saints from Jackson County, Missouri.<sup>15</sup> Geauga County anti-Mormons, emboldened by this news, began to threaten Smith and his followers in Ohio with a similar expulsion. On December 5, 1833, Smith wrote to Edward Partridge and others



Ohio communities relevant to the 1834 Hurlbut case. Joseph Smith filed the complaint against D. P. Hurlbut in Kirtland, traveled twelve miles to Painesville to attend the three-day January 1834 hearing, and traveled more than eight miles to Chardon for the six-day April 1834 trial.

in Missouri that “the inhabitants of this county threaten our destruction and we know not how soon they may be permitted to follow the examples of the Missourians.”<sup>16</sup> George A. Smith later said of this time period: “In consequence of the persecution which raged against the Prophet Joseph and the constant threats to do him violence it was found necessary to keep continual guard to prevent his being murdered by his enemies, who were headed by Joseph H. Wakefield and Dr. P. Hurlbert . . . during the fall and winter I took part of this service going 2½ miles to guard at President Rigdon’s.”<sup>17</sup> Although Latter-day Saints recorded their memories of these events, Wakefield and his fellow anti-Mormons did not leave any account of their involvement in the persecution.

In mid-December 1833, Hurlbut returned to Kirtland and began to lecture on his material. How and when Hurlbut threatened to kill Smith remains shrouded in historical mystery. Not one contemporary description has survived to shed light on what Hurlbut actually said. George A. Smith later stated that “in delivering lectures he [Hurlbut] had said he would wash his hands in Joseph Smith’s blood.”<sup>18</sup> It is apparent that Joseph Smith was not present when Hurlbut threatened the Prophet’s life. Despite

the lack of details, it is clear that a threat did occur and that Smith felt constrained to take his complaint before the county officials.<sup>19</sup>

On December 21, 1833, Smith went to the office of John C. Downen, justice of the peace for Kirtland Township.<sup>20</sup> There he filed a complaint against Hurlbut, stating that there was “reason to fear that Doctor P. Hurlbut would Beat wound or kill him or injure his property.”<sup>21</sup> The complaint asked the court to compel Hurlbut to keep the peace.<sup>22</sup> The Ohio statute relevant to the case reads:

It shall be lawful for any person to make complaint on oath or affirmation, before a justice of the peace, stating, amongst other things, that the person making such complaint has *just cause to fear, and does fear*, that another *will beat, wound, or kill him* or her, or his or her ward, child, or children; or will commit some other act of personal violence upon him, her or them; or will burn his or her dwelling house, or out-house, or will maliciously injure, or *destroy his or her property*, other than the buildings aforesaid.<sup>23</sup>

On December 27, 1833, Justice Downen issued an arrest warrant directing that Hurlbut be apprehended and brought before Painesville Justice of the Peace William Holbrook.<sup>24</sup>

On January 4, 1834, Kirtland Constable Stephen Sherman brought Hurlbut to Justice Holbrook’s office in Painesville. Justice Holbrook postponed the hearing until January 6, 1834, during which time Hurlbut remained in the custody of Constable Sherman.<sup>25</sup> A probable reason for the delay was that witnesses needed to be subpoenaed and prepared to give testimony concerning the threat. By statute, a justice of the peace could delay the hearing for thirty-six hours while material witnesses were found and prepared.<sup>26</sup> Word of the arrest quickly spread throughout Geauga County. Non-Mormon B. F. Norris wrote on January 6, 1834, that “Smith has sworn the peace against a man named Hurbert who has ben engaged for about three months in trasing the origin of the book [of] mormon. He has returned and was arrested yesterday and has his trial tomorrow.”<sup>27</sup>

Constable Sherman brought Hurlbut before Justice Holbrook on January 6, 1834, only to be turned away again. The court record states that “not being yet ready for the examination on the part of the State this cause is again postponed to the 13th of January 1834, at 9 o’clock a.m.”<sup>28</sup> This rescheduled hearing was apparently in violation of the statute governing the postponement of hearings; it is unknown which party requested the additional time. Concurrently, it seems that Hurlbut requested that he be transferred from Constable Sherman in Kirtland to Constable Abraham Ritch of Painesville.<sup>29</sup> The court record does not state why this occurred,

but perhaps Constable Sherman had been keeping Hurlbut in Kirtland and the constable did not want to continue traveling back and forth.

Hurlbut's arrest did not impede the other Geauga County anti-Mormons from continuing their threats. Norris wrote, "It is said that the inhabitants have threatend mobing them. They are now arming them-

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*Joseph Smith believed that through faith the Lord would deliver him from his enemies and ensure that justice was done.*

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selves with instruments of war such as guns sords dirks spontoons & Smith has four or five armed men to gard him every night they say they are not going to be drove away as they ware at missory they will fight for there rights."<sup>30</sup> On January 8, 1834, the day after this letter was written, the anti-Mormons acquired

a cannon and fired it in a threatening manner. Oliver Cowdery said, "We suppose [they meant] to alarm us, but no one was frightened, but all prepared to defend ourselves if they made a sally upon our houses."<sup>31</sup> This show of force was the closest that the Church's enemies actually came to acting out their threats during the winter of 1833–34.

Joseph Smith, in the meantime, was preparing spiritually for the upcoming hearing. On January 11, 1834, he gathered together with some of the more prominent Latter-day Saints in Kirtland. In preparing his testimony for the hearing, Smith dictated some of his memories of Hurlbut, and then one of the brethren prayed for Joseph, petitioning the Lord for deliverance from the anti-Mormon. "That the Lord would grant that our brother Joseph might prevail over his enemy, even Doctor P. Hurlbut, who has threatened his life, whom brother Joseph has caused to be taken with a precept; that the Lord would fill the heart of the court with a spirit to do justice, and cause that the law of the land may be magnified in bringing him to justice."<sup>32</sup> Although the prayer was not uttered by Smith himself, he had it recorded in his journal, thus illustrating his belief that through faith the Lord would deliver him from his enemies and ensure that justice was done.

## The Justice Court

The preliminary hearing determined if the prosecution had sufficient evidence to send the case to the county court. The county prosecuting attorney didn't attend these preliminary hearings,<sup>33</sup> thus requiring Smith as the aggrieved party to retain a lawyer. He hired Benjamin Bissell, who had started his law career in 1830.<sup>34</sup> Bissell served as an ad hoc prosecuting

David Grua, one of the Joseph Smith Papers team, has chronicled the earliest known legal case involving Joseph Smith in Ohio. It is also the first in which he was the initiating party. He is not called plaintiff, because it was a criminal rather than a civil action. Joseph was the “complaining witness.” The defendant, Doctor (his given name, not a title) Philastus Hurlbut, had threatened Joseph’s life. Joseph brought the action, the result of which put Hurlbut under a court order supported with a bond to “keep the peace.” This legal procedure was the forerunner of proceedings of this generation that give rise to what today are called restraining orders. Grua surrounds the court record with the references from Smith’s journal from the time, as well from writings of other early Mormon leaders and newspaper accounts that flesh out its historical context.

—Gordon A. Madsen, Utah Bar

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attorney for this hearing, calling witnesses for the state and presenting the state’s case.<sup>35</sup> Justice Dowen later recalled, “Bissel, one of Ohio’s ablest lawyers . . . was always counsel for the Mormons in important cases.”<sup>36</sup>

As a defendant, Hurlbut was entitled to engage a lawyer on his behalf. He retained James A. Briggs, who was admitted to the bar only three months earlier, in October 1833.<sup>37</sup> Briggs, despite his inexperience, was familiar with the situation because of his association with anti-Mormons that funded Hurlbut’s research.<sup>38</sup> Although this hearing was designed to allow the prosecution to present its case, Briggs took advantage of the opportunity to make arguments for his client and cross-examined the state’s witnesses.

On January 13, 1834, Smith traveled the twelve miles from Kirtland to Painesville for the preliminary hearing. Although only Justice of the Peace William Holbrook was identified in the court record, eyewitnesses reported that two Painesville justices presided at the hearing.<sup>39</sup> The identity of the second justice remains unknown. The Methodist church on the southeast corner of the public square served as the court house.<sup>40</sup> According to Briggs, “The matter attracted a great deal of curiosity . . . the church was filled to overflowing.”<sup>41</sup> The prominence of Joseph Smith combined with the upheaval caused by Hurlbut’s anti-Mormon preaching made it impossible for the hearing to be held in a smaller arena. Many citizens in the county wanted to witness Hurlbut, “the exposer of the Mormon

mystery,” on trial.<sup>42</sup> Prominent Mormon leaders Oliver Cowdery, Orson Hyde, and Parley P. Pratt attended in support of Smith.<sup>43</sup>

Bissell called sixteen witnesses over the next three days to testify concerning the alleged threat: Amos Hodges, Curtis Hodges, Sarah Wait,

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*Having Joseph Smith testify about the origin of the Book of Mormon was central to the hearing.*

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Burr Riggs, Mary Copley, Joseph Allen, M. Hodges, David Elliot, Joseph Smith Jr., Leman Copley, Charles Holmes, Samuel F. Whitney, S. Clayton, Joseph Wakefield, J. Wait, and E. Goodman.<sup>44</sup> Most of these witnesses were members of the LDS

community or people who had relatives that had joined the Mormons. The majority of the witnesses gave evidence against Hurlbut, while four of the witnesses surely testified in Hurlbut’s defense. Charles Holmes was a known supporter of Hurlbut.<sup>45</sup> Samuel F. Whitney, Newel K. Whitney’s brother, viewed Joseph Smith unfavorably.<sup>46</sup> Joseph H. Wakefield had been an elder in the Church but had apostatized and funded Hurlbut’s research.<sup>47</sup> Leman Copley testified for Hurlbut in this hearing. Two years later, Copley decided that he had been wrong and asked for Smith’s forgiveness.<sup>48</sup>

Justice Holbrook allowed the lawyers to discuss topics unrelated to Hurlbut’s guilt or innocence. A letter sent from “the presidency of the high Priesthood” on January 22, 1834, stated that the trial included an investigation of “the merits of our religion.”<sup>49</sup> It appears that the origin of the Book of Mormon was central to the hearing. Charles Grover remembered that he “was witness at a lawsuit in Painesville and again heard Hurlbut lecture. At the close Square [Squire] Holbrook read to the audience from Spaulding’s ‘Manuscript Found.’”<sup>50</sup> Hurlbut’s research, which the whole audience had been hearing about for months, was discussed at length. Eber D. Howe recorded Leman Copley’s trial testimony, which related a strange account of Smith meeting Moroni in the woods.<sup>51</sup>

Briggs recorded that Smith was on the witness stand on two of the three days. Briggs asked Smith to give the court his account of finding the plates used to translate the Book of Mormon. Bissell objected, since that topic had nothing to do with Hurlbut’s guilt or innocence. He then withdrew the objection because everyone in the room wanted to hear the account.<sup>52</sup> “[Smith] testified that when he dug into the earth, and reached the plates, that he was kicked out of the hole he had dug and lifted into the air by some ‘unseen power.’”<sup>53</sup>

Briggs felt he was hard on Smith during his cross-examination. “I guess, in my speech to the Court in the case, I must have been rather hard on



the Prophet and his testimony and Mormonism,” he wrote.<sup>54</sup> “I paid my respects to one of the leaders of the Kirtland Mormons in such a manner that he said, ‘if it was not for [Joseph Smith’s] religion he would whip that young lawyer Briggs.’ Perhaps I am the only one that ever escaped a flogging on account of a man (that is, Smith) being a Mormon.”<sup>55</sup>

At the conclusion of the testimony, Justice Holbrook gave his ruling:

It is the opinion of the Court that the Complainant had reason to fear that Doctor P. Hurlbut would Beat wound or kill him or injure his property as set forth in his complaint and it is the consideration of the Court that the defendant enter into a recognizance to keep the peace generally and especalley towards the Complainant, and also to appear before the Court of Common Pleas on the first day of the term thereof next to be holden in and for said County and not depart without leave, or stand committed till the judgement of the Court be complied with.<sup>56</sup>

Unfortunately, the court record did not state the dollar amount of the recognizance (that is, the bond Hurlbut was required to post). The amount required by law was between \$50 and \$500.<sup>57</sup>

### **Waiting for April**

Holbrook’s unwillingness to dismiss the charges turned the tide of public opinion momentarily; the hostility that Hurlbut had stirred up receded immediately. On January 22, 1834, the Presidency of the High Priesthood wrote to the scattered Church members in Missouri. The Presidency, although obviously concerned with the welfare of their Missouri brethren, were pleased to relate that their own local problems seemed to be dissipating. With the favorable decision by Justice Holbrook, those problems suddenly became manageable. “There is not quite so much danger of a mob upon us as there has been. The hand of the Lord has thus far been stretched out to protect us. . . . Thus [Hurlbut’s] influence was pretty much destroyed, and since the trial the spirit of hostility seems to be broken down in a good degree but how long it will continue so we cannot say.”<sup>58</sup>

Six days later, on January 28, 1834, Smith met with Oliver Cowdery and Frederick G. Williams. With Williams acting as scribe, Smith continued the dictation of Hurlbut’s story from where they left off on January 11, 1834. He said that Hurlbut “saught the distruction of the saints in this place and more particularly myself and family” (a vague reference to Hurlbut’s lectures and the threat). Smith then recorded that “as the Lord has in his mercy Delivered me out of his hand till the present and also the church that he has not prevailed viz the 28 day of Jany 1834 for which I off[er] the gratitud[e] of my heart to Allmighty God for the same.” This is all that Smith recorded about the January preliminary hearing and its

be taken.

Thirdly, That the Lord would grant that our brother Joseph might prevail over

his enemy, even Doctor P. Hurlbut, who has threatened his life, whom brother Joseph <sup>caused to be</sup> has taken with a precept; That the Lord would fill the heart of the Court with a spirit to do justice, and cause that the law of the land may be magnified in bringing him to justice. Fourthly, That the Lord would

Excerpt from Joseph Smith's Ohio "Book for Record," January 11, 1834, spanning pages 44 and 45: "Thirdly, that the Lord would grant that our brother Joseph might prevail over his enemy, even Doctor P. Hurlbut, who has threatened his life, whom brother Joseph has caused to be taken with a precept; that the Lord would fill the heart of the court with a spirit to do justice, and cause that the law of the land may be magnified in bringing him to justice." This passage, a prayer recorded by Frederick G. Williams, demonstrates Joseph's trust in the Lord and in the legal system for deliverance from persecution.

aftermath. But these journal entries show with powerful clarity Smith's religious sincerity and a psalmodic trust that the Lord would intervene and deliver him from the enemy. The brethren then knelt "before the Lord being agre[e]d and united in pray[er] that God would continue to deliver me and my brethren from <him> that he may not prevail again[st] us in the law suit that is pending." The prayer ended with a plea to soften the hearts of wealthy Geauga County land owners, at least one of whom had funded Hurlbut's research.<sup>59</sup> This prayer offers another example of Smith's positive views toward the law and his belief that not only would the Lord intervene on his behalf, but also that justice could be found in the American legal system.

The following months witnessed considerable speculation in Geauga County concerning the impending trial. Hurlbut's supporters claimed that the whole proceeding was a sham brought about by the judge so that the lawyers could continue to harass Joseph Smith before the county court. Hearing such rumors, the editors of the *Evening and the Morning Star* reported that

A very grave judge to the west of this, of the THEE, and THOU, Order, in the *greatness* of his wisdom and righteousness, embraced every favorable opportunity to impress the public mind, as we were informed as far as his influence would extend, that the Justice's court, held in Painsville, only bound Hurlbut over to the County Court, that the lawyers might have a fair opportunity of *rediculing*, and *scandalizing*, Jo. Smith, as he

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My progenitor and namesake was closely associated with the events surrounding this first Ohio trial involving Joseph Smith. As the Prophet's scribe and his counselor in the First Presidency, Frederick G. Williams actively participated in the discussions that were held and the prayers that were offered in connection with the suit brought against Doctor Philastus Hurlbut. This trial and other experiences with the law that followed convinced Williams of the need for members of the Church to be involved in the workings of government, especially the judicial system. Not long thereafter, Frederick G. Williams ran for and was elected a justice of the peace for Geauga County, Ohio, thus becoming the first member of the Church to hold an elected government office.

—Frederick G. Williams, Brigham Young University

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was pleased to call him. This was doubtless the desire of his *own* heart, otherwise, he would not have charged the Justices in Painsville with dis-regarding their oaths so far, as to bind an innocent man [that is, Hurlbut] over to the court of his country, for trial, for such base purposes.<sup>60</sup>

In this heightened state of rumor, prediction, and speculation, the April trial approached. Activity also continued in the courts. Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Geauga County Reuben Hitchcock<sup>61</sup> met with Justice Holbrook and made a copy of the proceedings of the preliminary hearing, as well as a copy of the recognizance to keep the peace.<sup>62</sup>

### In the County Court

On March 31, 1834, Smith traveled eight miles to appear before the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas in Chardon.<sup>63</sup> Although Hurlbut had been ordered to appear before the court on that day, several cases were being heard, meaning that the Hurlbut case would not be held for several more days. Who served as counsel for Hurlbut remains unknown. Briggs made no mention of representing him beyond the January hearing. The prosecuting attorney, although not named in the court record, was probably Stephen Matthews.<sup>64</sup> No historical source indicates that Bissell helped with the prosecution.

On April 1, 1834, Smith recorded that he spent the day making subpoenas for witnesses.<sup>65</sup> He must have then given the subpoenas to the clerk, who had authority to serve them.<sup>66</sup> In preparation for the trial, Smith wrote his feelings about the Lord's goodness and prophesied concerning Hurlbut's fate: "My soul delighteth in the Law of the Lord for he forgiveth my sins and <will> confound mine Enimies the Lord shall destroy him who has lifted his heel against me, even that wicked man Docter P. H[u]rlbut he <will> deliver him to the fowls of heaven and his bones shall be cast to the blast of the wind <for> he lifted his <arm> against the Almighti therefore the Lord shall destroy him."<sup>67</sup>

On April 2 and 3, 1834, Smith attended court. He later recorded in his official history: "Hurlbut was on trial for threatening my life."<sup>68</sup> President Judge Matthew Birchard<sup>69</sup> listened to the examination of seventeen prosecution witnesses: Curtis Hodges, Sarah Waite, Burr Riggs, Mary Copley, Joseph Allen, David Elliot, Joseph Smith, John P. Markill, Peter French, Solomon Webster, Jotham Maynard, Edmund Gillett, Simon Wright, James Boyden, Irvin Hodges, Arial Hanson, and Truman Waite.<sup>70</sup> The defense called seven witnesses. Charles Holmes, Samuel F. Whitney, and John C. Downen<sup>71</sup> were each cross-examined. Matthew Allen also testified for the defense but was not cross-examined. Daniel Copley, who was

Hurlbut's missionary companion and was excommunicated on the same day as Hurlbut,<sup>72</sup> was sworn with Harvey Smith and Samuel Wheeler to testify on Hurlbut's behalf, but the record indicates that they did not actually testify.<sup>73</sup>

Judge Birchard adjourned the case for the weekend on Friday, April 4, 1834. On Monday, April 7, 1834, Smith knelt with Newel K. Whitney, Oliver Cowdery, Frederick G. Williams, and Heber C. Kimball to pray "that I may prevail against that wicked Hurlbut and that he be put to shame."<sup>74</sup> It is probable that testimony resumed this day. A reporter for the *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette* attended the trial on Tuesday, April 8, 1834, and wrote: "The court house was filled, almost to suffocation, with an eager and curious crowd of spectators, to hear the Mormon trial, as it was called."<sup>75</sup>

The official court record no longer exists. The *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette* is the only surviving contemporary source to give an account of the testimony. By combining this source with a late reminiscence of Hurlbut's witness Samuel Whitney, we can reconstruct some of what the witnesses said. First, testimony was heard concerning Hurlbut's reputation. It was determined that Hurlbut had once been a member of the Mormon society but had been excommunicated for misconduct. Whitney stated, "Jo testified in court that Hurlbut was expelled for base conduct with lude women."<sup>76</sup> According to the *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, other witnesses testified, "After this, he [Hurlbut] discovered, that Joe was a false prophet, and the Book of Mormon a cheat;—began lecturing against it, and examining and collecting proof that the story of the Book of Mormon was taken from a manuscript romance, written by one Spalding, who formerly lived at Conneaut, and who died before publication."<sup>77</sup> These statements set the stage for testimony concerning the threat on Smith's life.

The *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette* stated, "Many witnesses testified to threats of revenge from Hurlbut." Justice of the Peace John C. Downen, who testified in Hurlbut's behalf, said this concerning the nature of the threat: "Hurlbut said he would 'kill' Jo [Smith]. He meant he would kill Mormonism."<sup>78</sup> This argument was probably Hurlbut's main defense. It is true that Hurlbut posed a serious threat to the church as an entity, but most other witnesses gave evidence in support of the claim that Hurlbut indeed intended to physically enact violence upon Smith.

Downen's statement shifted the testimony from the actual nature of the threat to the question of whether or not Smith had reason to fear bodily injury, considering the fact that he was in a predominantly Mormon community. A female witness, either Mary Copley or Sarah Wait, when asked on cross-examination why she did not immediately inform Smith of the

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David Grua's detailed work on the legal documents in the 1834 case of *Ohio v. Doctor Philastus Hurlbut* should be of help to all biographers of Joseph Smith. This careful reconstruction of that legal proceeding sets the record straight on several details, which invites further reflection. Never before have historians realized how often Joseph Smith found himself in court. *BYU Studies* has published articles on his 1826 trial in South Bainbridge, his 1838 hearing in Richmond, Missouri, and other legal difficulties, but many more of his judicial encounters remain to be analyzed.

The experiences of Joseph Smith have been compared with those of the Apostle Paul. Certainly, Joseph and Paul have the courtroom in common. The book of Acts reports over and over how Paul found himself accused before judges and magistrates, only to be delivered, and similarly Joseph would never be convicted.

Both Joseph and Paul were able to keep an amazing number of things going while being assailed by vexatious lawsuits. In Joseph's case, during the three months between the initial *Hurlbut* hearings and the conclusion of the trial alone, he worried about the problems faced by the Saints in Missouri, conducted priesthood conferences and council meetings, received sections 102 and 103 of the Doctrine and Covenants, traveled in Pennsylvania and New York to recruit volunteers and raise support for Zion's Camp, and was concerned with family matters and economic arrangements.

In *Ohio v. Hurlbut*, Joseph Smith found himself on the side of the prosecution. To his great relief, Joseph's complaint was vindicated by the state prosecutors. But, significantly, he would rarely again complain to judicial authorities about people who perpetually harassed him. Perhaps the Prophet was disappointed in the upshots of this courtroom victory. After all, Hurlbut did not repent; he was not reclaimed in friendship. Moreover, Hurlbut was able to evade the arm of justice; for three years, the sheriff could not find him, and by then Joseph had left the state of Ohio for good. Meanwhile, Hurlbut had sold his materials to Eber D. Howe, who gladly published them as the first anti-Mormon book, *Mormonism Unveiled*, promptly advertised for sale in the *Painesville Telegraph* in November 1834. While justice may have been done in the Hurlbut case, these outcomes were less than satisfying. Thus, although Joseph Smith probably came away from the Hurlbut case with a positive attitude toward the court system, he may also have sensed its inherent limitations as well.

—John W. Welch, Brigham Young University

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threat, said “that she did not believe Hurlburt, or any other human being, had the power to hurt the prophet.” Smith, however, in his own three-hour long testimony, was much more humble in his assessment of “divine invulnerability,” stating that he did fear for his life.<sup>79</sup>

According to Samuel Whitney, Smith “testified that he had no arms and that his house was not guarded.”<sup>80</sup> It appears that the attorneys were attempting to reconstruct the violent atmosphere in Kirtland in order to provide context to the threat and to determine if Smith really had reason to fear for his life, for when Whitney took the stand, he was asked about the ominous atmosphere in Geauga County. “I was a witness and supposed I was to testify about the firing of guns in Kirtland which had brought together the Mormon men under arms several times; they were in constant fear of being mobbed.”<sup>81</sup> Soon, however, the attorneys began to question Whitney about the character of Joseph Smith:

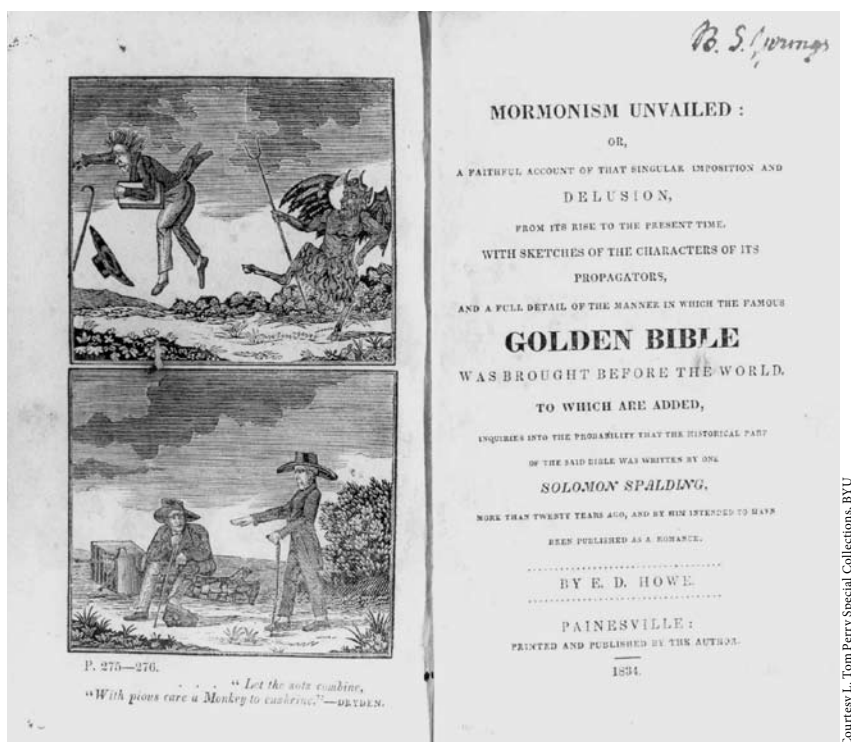
I was asked if I believed Jo. S. the M prophet was a man of truth and veracity. I told them I was not sworn to tell what I believed. After considerable debate by the counsel the judges decided it was a proper question. I said I did not for Jo knew he had sworn to things which he was well aware I knew were not true. Jo had told me a short time previous, while I was painting my bro’s store (he at that time was living in the dwelling part of it), that he had a sword and pistol, and that his house was guarded by six men every night. He told me their names.<sup>82</sup>

Unfortunately, no other historical source has survived to shed further light on the Prophet’s testimony about guards. Whitney’s memory of these events was recorded fifty years later and therefore cannot be accepted without reservation. George A. Smith and others confirmed that they guarded Smith’s home during the winter of 1833–34.<sup>83</sup>

After hearing the concluding testimony on Wednesday, April 9, 1834, Judge Birchard ruled that the court was “of opinion that the said complainant had ground to fear that the said Doctor P. Hurlbut would wound, beat or kill him, or destroy his property as set forth in said complaint.”<sup>84</sup> Hurlbut was then ordered to enter into new recognizance for \$200 to keep the peace and be of good behavior towards the citizens of Ohio generally and especially toward Smith for six months. Two of Hurlbut’s friends, Charles Holmes and Elijah Smith, acted as sureties.<sup>85</sup> Hurlbut, as the losing party, was also ordered to pay the court costs of \$112.59.<sup>86</sup> The total number of trial days remains unknown, but Smith, along with several other witnesses, was paid \$3.00 at \$.50 per day on April 9, 1834, suggesting that the trial lasted six days split between two weeks.<sup>87</sup>

Smith recorded in his journal a statement summarizing the court’s decision that illustrated his belief that he could receive a fair trial in the





*Mormonism Unveiled*, published in 1834 in Painesville, Ohio, seven months after the D. P. Hurlbut trial. While Eber D. Howe is listed as the author, the book contains many of Hurlbut's anti-Mormon materials. On the frontispiece are two images showing an interpretation of events Joseph Smith related at the January 1834 preliminary hearing.

American courts as well as his humility and gratitude: "On the 9 [April 1834] after an impartial trial the Court decided that the said Hurlbut was bound over under 200 dollars bond to keep the peace for six month[s] and pay the cost which amounted to near three hundred dollars all of which was in answer to our prayer for which I thank my heavenly father."<sup>88</sup> Over the next two years, Geauga County sheriffs failed to collect the court costs.<sup>89</sup>

On April 10, 1834, Oliver Cowdery wrote, "Hurlbut the apostate has just been bound to keep the peace under \$200 bond in the circuit court in this county for threatening the life of Bro. Joseph Smith, Jr. We are not in any fear that the kingdom will be overthrown by him."<sup>90</sup> The immediate threat imposed by Hurlbut to the Latter-day Saints was thus quelled in April 1834. Hurlbut the anti-Mormon preacher was momentarily silenced.



It also seems that the other Geauga County anti-Mormons took notice of the proceedings and halted their threats for a time. However, Hurlbut found other, ultimately more damaging ways to continue his attack against Smith. Although defeated in court, Hurlbut soon saw to the publication of his arguments against Smith by selling his research to editor Eber D. Howe, publisher of the *Painesville Telegraph*, who agreed to publish the research in book form. The book was first advertised in November 1834, in that newspaper, under the title of *Mormonism Unveiled*.<sup>91</sup> At that point, Hurlbut himself dropped out of the picture of Church history. He later joined the United Brethren Church, and on various occasions found himself embroiled in controversy with that church's leaders, indicating that Smith was not the only religious figure with whom Hurlbut had trouble.<sup>92</sup>

## Conclusion

*Ohio v. Hurlbut* taught Joseph Smith some specifics of the law of the land. The case hinged on the legal definitions of threats and fear, two things that would follow Smith throughout his life. Smith learned how the law of the land could prevent his enemies from acting out their threats and how he could lessen his own fears. Smith also came away from the case with a distinct belief that he could receive impartial treatment from the American court system. These lessons contributed toward Smith's developing understanding of the law.

Although after 1837 Smith expressed his displeasure with "vexatious suits," *Ohio v. Hurlbut* shows that at least as late as 1834 he believed strongly that justice could be found in the courts. The prayers uttered by Smith and recorded in his journal throughout the case illustrate how his religion affected his views toward the law:

*Smith's views were recorded in prayer.* The fact that Smith's views toward the case were recorded in prayer form illustrates that Smith thought of the case in a spiritual sense. Smith did not give long treatises to explain his opinions on his legal cases, but rather articulated them in his prayers to God for help.

*Smith believed God would intervene.* Just as David of old, Smith believed that if he prayed with faith, God would intervene and deliver him from his adversary. Unlike others of the nineteenth century who had begun to relegate God to a purely spiritual sphere and deny His ability to enter the secular realm, Smith believed that God still reigned over both the spiritual and the physical.

*Smith believed he could receive justice in the American court system.* Smith had opinions about America's cultural institutions, from marriage

to the economy. The law was no different, and he therefore had strong feelings about America's legal institution and his prospects of justice therein. These prayers indicate that he believed strongly that the courts were a viable and strong institution that could ensure that justice be done.

These points suggest that Smith was both religiously sincere and a dedicated American, but of course in his own way. Understanding Smith's views toward the American legal system is an important step toward comprehending Smith's (and, by extension, Mormonism's) relationship with American culture. In summation, the Latter-day Saints who prayed for Smith on January 11, 1834, said it most clearly when they earnestly implored the Lord "that the law of the land may be magnified."

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1. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 2:214.

2. Max Parkin, "The Nature and Cause of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio between 1830 and 1838" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966), 263–78. See also Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 55–58.

3. The case is mentioned briefly in Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, 2d ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 143–45; Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith, the First Mormon* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 155–57; Dale W. Adams, "Doctor Philastus Hurlbut: Originator of Derogatory Statements about Joseph Smith, Jr.," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 20 (2000): 83; Parkin, "Nature and Cause of Internal and External Conflict," 121–22.

4. Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts*, 52.

5. Joseph Smith, Journal, January 11, 1834, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:19. Smith did not record his memories of Hurlbut's visit until January 1834, right before a preliminary hearing was held to evaluate the prosecution's case against Hurlbut. Smith recorded here what his testimony would be at the hearing.

Most of the documents I have cited from Church Archives are more readily available in *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), DVD 20.

6. "Kirtland Council Minute Book," 12, 14, 16, Church Archives; Benjamin Winchester, *The Origin of the Spalding Story* (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking, and Guilbert, 1840), 6.

7. "Kirtland Council Minute Book," 12; Orson Hyde to George G. Adams, June 7, 1841, in Benjamin Winchester, *Plain Facts* (England, 1841).

8. "Kirtland Council Minute Book," 21–22.

9. Winchester, *Origin of the Spalding Story*, 7.

10. Winchester, *Origin of the Spalding Story*, 8–9.

11. Joseph Smith to William W. Phelps and others, August 18, 1833, Church Archives.

12. Winchester, *Origin of the Spalding Story*, 9–11.

13. Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, Ohio: By the author, 1834), 231–69, 278–90.

14. See Richard L. Anderson, "Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reappraised," *BYU Studies* 10, no. 3 (1970): 283–320. See also Rodger I. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reexamined* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990); and Richard L. Anderson, review of *Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reexamined*, by Rodger I. Anderson, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3 (1991): 52–80.

15. For a discussion of Kirtland's reaction to the Missouri troubles, see Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 162–74.

16. Joseph Smith to Edward Partridge and others, December 5, 1833, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1, 68–69, Church Archives.

17. George A. Smith, "Memoirs," 12, George A. Smith Collection, Church Archives.

18. George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 11:8, November 15, 1864.

19. "Mormon Trial," *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, April 12, 1834, page 3.

20. Record Book P, 431–32, Geauga County Archives and Records Center, Chardon, Ohio.

21. Record Book P, 431–32.

22. Record Book P, 431–32. This legal action was used as a preventive measure to impede individuals from acting out threats. Blackstone called it "preventive justice." William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. 4, *Of Public Wrongs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765–69; reprint, Buffalo: William S. Hein & Co., 1992), 248–49.

23. An Act Defining the Powers and Duties of Justices of the Peace and Constables (March 11, 1831), *Acts of a General Nature, Enacted, Revised, and Ordered to Be Printed at the First Session of the Twenty-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, section 9 and section 33.1 (Olmsted and Bailhache, 1831); emphasis added; hereafter referred to as Justices of the Peace Act.

24. John C. Dowen, Statement, January 2, 1885, p. 3, Chicago Historical Society. See Justices of the Peace Act, section 33.4. Justices of the Peace Act, section 10 states that warrants may be returned before any justice of a county.

25. Record Book P, 431–32.

26. Justices of the Peace Act, section 22.
27. B. F. Norris to Mark Norris, January 6, 1834, Mark Norris Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit. It seems that Norris was a day behind in his news. "Swearing the peace" was a common law term that denoted the action to compel individuals to keep the peace. Blackstone, *Of Public Wrongs*, 252.
28. Record Book P, 431–32.
29. Record Book P, 431–32.
30. B. F. Norris to Mark Norris.
31. Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps and John Whitmer, January 21, 1834, Oliver Cowdery Letter Book, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
32. Joseph Smith, Journal, January 11, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:19.
33. J. R. Swan, *Statutes of the State of Ohio* (Columbus: Samuel Medley, 1841), 738a.
34. A. G. Riddle, *History of Geauga and Lake Counties, Ohio: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Its Pioneers and Most Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Williams Brothers, 1878; reprint, Evansville, Ind.: Unigraphic, 1973), 30.
35. Justices of the Peace Act, section 11, specifies only that the justice conducts an examination. It does not state that both parties must have lawyers to examine the witnesses. However, a nineteenth-century commentary on Ohio law explained how these lawyers were to examine the witnesses. See John J. Manor, *A Treatise on the Criminal Law of the State of Ohio* (Toledo: Commercial Book and Job Steam-Printing House, 1857), 524–26.
36. Downen, Statement, 1.
37. James A. Briggs, letter to the editor, *Cleveland Leader and Morning Herald*, January 1884.
38. James A. Briggs to John Codman, March 1875, in John Codman, "Mormonism," *International Review* 11 (September 1881): 222.
39. James A. Briggs, letter to the editor, *New York Tribune*, January 31, 1886. Howe said that two magistrates of Painesville Township heard the case. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 276.
40. Briggs to Codman.
41. Briggs to Codman.
42. "Mormon Trial," *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, April 12, 1834, page 3.
43. Briggs, letter to the editor, *New York Tribune*.
44. Record Book P, 431–32.
45. Journal M, p. 193, Geauga County Archives and Records Center, Chardon, Ohio.
46. Mark Staker, "Thou Art the Man: Newel K. Whitney in Ohio," *BYU Studies* 42, no. 1 (2003): 116–17; Samuel F. Whitney, statement, March 6, 1885, pp. 17–19, microfilm, Church Archives.
47. George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 7:112, November 15, 1864. For evidence that Wakefield funded Hurlbut's research, see *Painesville Telegraph*, January 31, 1834.
48. Joseph Smith, Journal, April 1, 1836.
49. Presidency of the High Priesthood, Ohio, to the Brethren Scattered from Zion, Missouri, January 22, 1834, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1, p. 81.

50. Deming, ed., “Charles Grover’s Statement,” *Naked Truths about Mormonism*, January 1888, 3. *Naked Truths about Mormonism* was a short-lived newspaper printed in Oakland, California. Grover’s name does not appear on the official list of witnesses.

51. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 276–77.

52. Hon. Jas. A. Briggs Statement, *Naked Truths about Mormonism*, January 1888, 4.

53. Briggs, letter to the editor, *Cleveland Leader and Morning Herald*. See also Hon. Jas. A. Briggs Statement, *Naked Truths about Mormonism*.

54. Briggs to Codman.

55. Briggs, letter to the editor, *Cleveland Leader and Morning Herald*.

56. Record Book P, 431–32.

57. Justices of the Peace Act, section 12.

58. The Presidency of the High Priesthood to the Brethren scattered from Zion, January 22, 1834, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1, p. 81.

59. Joseph Smith, Journal, January 28, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:20. See also *Painesville Telegraph*, January 31, 1834.

60. Editor of the Star [Oliver Cowdery], *Evening and the Morning Star*, April 1834; emphasis in the original.

61. Record Book P, 431–32; *Pioneer and General History of Geauga County* (Burton, Ohio: Historical Society of Geauga County, 1880), 517.

62. Record Book P, 431–32; Justices of the Peace Act, section 20, 21.

63. Joseph Smith, Journal, March 31, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:27.

64. Matthews served as prosecuting attorney of Geauga County from 1828 to 1835. *Pioneer and General History of Geauga*, 70.

65. Joseph Smith, Journal, April 1, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:28.

66. Actually, the clerk would then give them to the constable, who would deliver them. An Act Directing the Mode of Trial in Criminal Cases (March 7, 1831), *Acts of a General Nature, Enacted, Revised, and Ordered to be Printed at the First Session of the Twenty-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, section 22 (Olmsted and Bailhache, 1831).

67. Joseph Smith, Journal, April 1, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:28.

68. 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), 2:47.

69. Birchard was President Judge from 1833 to 1837. *History of Portage County* (Chicago: Warner, Beers and Co., 1885), 332. The nature of this legal action did not allow for trial by jury. It appears that although this action was tried before the county court, the Justices of the Peace Act defining breach of the peace was used. See Justices of the Peace Act, sections 15–18.

70. 1831–1835 Execution Docket, p. 110, Geauga County Archives and Records Center, Chardon, Ohio.

71. Downen allowed Hurlbut to stay at his home when Hurlbut was in Kirtland. Downen, Statement, 3.

72. “Kirtland Council Minute Book,” 21–22.

73. 1831–1835 Execution Docket, p. 110.

74. Joseph Smith, Journal, April 7–9, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:28.

75. "Mormon Trial," *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, April 12, 1834, page 3.

76. Whitney, Statement, 17.

77. "Mormon Trial," *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, April 12, 1834, page 3.

78. Downen, Statement, 3.

79. "Mormon Trial," *Chardon Spectator and Geauga Gazette*, April 12, 1834, page 3.

80. Whitney, Statement, 18.

81. Whitney, Statement, 18.

82. Whitney, Statement, 17–19.

83. George A. Smith, "Memoirs," 12.

84. Record Book P, 432.

85. Journal M, p. 193.

86. Justices of the Peace Act, section 17; Record Book P, 432.

87. 1831–1844 Order Book, April 9, 1834, Geauga County Archives and Records Center, Chardon, Ohio; An Act Directing the Mode of Trial in Criminal Cases (March 7, 1831), *Acts of a General Nature, Enacted, Revised, and Ordered to Be Printed at the First Session of the Twenty-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, section 24 (Olmsted and Bailhache, 1831).

88. Joseph Smith, Journal, April 7–9, 1834; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 28–29. The court costs of \$112.59, combined with the \$200 recognizance, would account for the figure of \$300.

89. Execution Docket F, p. 82, Geauga County Archives and Records Center, Chardon, Ohio.

90. Oliver Cowdery to John F. Boynton, April 10, 1834, Oliver Cowdery Letter Book, 40, Huntington Library.

91. *Painesville Telegraph*, November 28, 1834.

92. Adams, "Doctor Philastus Hurlbut," 86–87.

# No Man Knows My Psychology

Fawn Brodie, Joseph Smith, and Psychoanalysis

Charles L. Cohen

Anyone (like me) approaching the study of Mormon history wet behind the ears soon confronts Fawn McKay Brodie's famous (or, in certain LDS circles, infamous) biography of Joseph Smith.<sup>1</sup> Quickly fulfilling Herbert Brayer's prophecy that it "will probably be one of the most highly praised as well as highly condemned historical works of 1945," *No Man Knows My History* elicited both wholesale acclaim ("the best book about the Mormons so far published," Bernard De Voto enthused; a "definitive treatment," seconded her friend Dale Morgan) and wholehearted condemnation ("the statement made by Joseph Smith that 'no man knows my history,'" Milton Hunter concluded, "is still true as far as Fawn M. Brodie is concerned").<sup>2</sup> Unsurprisingly, non-Mormons typically favored the book, while Mormons fulminated against it. The biography further strained Brodie's already ambivalent relationship with her father, an assistant to the LDS Church's Council of the Twelve, and hastened her excommunication.<sup>3</sup>

Over the years *No Man Knows My History* has more powerfully influenced how both professional historians and the wider public view Joseph Smith than has any other single text. Sydney Ahlstrom apotheosized Brodie in his magisterial synopsis of American religious history, deeming her "sympathetic and insightful account" of Smith's life and work "unequaled."<sup>4</sup> The book's abiding presence—abetted by its release as a paperback in 1995—continues to generate strong passions, especially among Latter-day Saints, although their judgments are more diverse than was true a half century ago. Devout Mormons long ago relegated Brodie, the arch-heretic, to, in Richard Van Wagoner's words, the "outer darkness,"<sup>5</sup> and some Mormon scholars, echoing Hugh Nibley's classic screed,

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Charles Cohen visited Brigham Young University twice in 2004, once in May while attending Mormon History Association meetings in Provo and again in July as a visiting fellow with the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History. As one of Professor Cohen's graduate students at Wisconsin, I was well acquainted with his work and had, along with another of his graduate students, Jed Woodworth, suggested both visits to MHA and Smith Institute officials as ways of providing him resources for his 2005 MHA Tanner Lecture. During his May visit, he purchased Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* and Bringhurst's *Reconsidering No Man Knows My History: Fawn M. Brodie and Joseph Smith in Retrospect* on a visit of ours to the campus bookstore. He presented the material published here during his second short stint in Utah, just a month and a half later.

His expertise in American history and psychology are evident in the essay (his first book is a careful study of the psychology of Puritan religious experience), but it is noteworthy that he wrote the piece as a relative newcomer to Mormon studies. The fact that this insightful comment on Brodie's work resulted from an initial foray into LDS historiography caught the attention of many in attendance at his presentation and David Whittaker, who had been asked to comment on the paper, expressed admiration that such a contribution had resulted from a mere month's work. In my view, Cohen's careful, perceptive analysis is characteristic of his writing generally and testament to his extraordinary capacity for scholarly work.

—J. Spencer Fluhman, Brigham Young University

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*No, Ma'am, That's Not History*,<sup>6</sup> continue to revile her, but others now adopt more sympathetic stances, her recreance notwithstanding.

Fifty years after the publication of *No Man Knows My History*, a group of historians from across Mormon (as well as, in one case, non-Mormon) traditions took its measure in a symposium whose papers, along with two previously published essays, Newell Bringhurst anthologized the following year.<sup>7</sup> Adjudged by one reviewer to be “the first systematic, multifaceted evaluation of [Brodie’s] work in book form,”<sup>8</sup> *Reconsidering “No Man Knows My History”* does indeed provide a balanced and comprehensive appraisal of Brodie’s oeuvre, yet reading it against the original suggests why—despite its manifest virtues—it may be time to lay her tome aside.

On one matter, at least, the anthology mirrors rather than illuminates a flaw in Brodie’s text. Within the ecology of American historiography as a whole, Mormonism has thrived in two niches, a “localist” one concerned primarily with the Church in its mountain Zion, and a more “externalist” approach incorporating the Saints into the larger story of the trans-Mississippi West. Bringhurst’s dedication to “two mentors who greatly influenced my fondness for American Western history”—A. Russell Mortensen, a specialist on Mormon Utah, and W. Turrentine Jackson, a pioneer in Western environmental history—emblemizes these perspectives.<sup>9</sup>

Absent from the dedication, however, and, far more significantly, from the collection and the literature more generally, is an equal appreciation of Mormonism’s place in the American *religious* past. The one article appraising *No Man Knows My History* “in this regard” was penned by Marvin Hill, who judged the biography “not entirely adequate” because Brodie neither considered Smith “to be religiously motivated” nor “trace[d] the religious forces” cohering his followers into a “movement.” Hill’s essay was not a new contribution, however, but had appeared originally in 1974. Defending its inclusion in the anthology is easy—a 1998 review accounted the article still “the most searching study [of Brodie’s book] by a Mormon scholar”—but one has to wonder why *Reconsidering* nowhere asks if the situation had improved subsequent to Hill’s article or, if it had not improved, why *Reconsidering* nowhere explains the inertia.<sup>10</sup> Roger Launius closes the anthology by tasking both Brodie and subsequent Mormon writers for “wrapping” themselves “into a tightly wound set of considerations about Smith,” thereby contributing to the “insular nature” of a “field” that “did

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not thrive as it might have, had new and different and challenging questions been asked that had application and interest beyond the narrow Mormon community.”<sup>11</sup> I would widen the circle of blame; Mormons are not alone in failing to contextualize their tradition historically.

The issue of how Mormon identities took shape within the currents of the nineteenth-century, and the perceived absence of a Mormon context within American religious culture warrants extended treatment elsewhere; in this article I want to tackle a small symptom of that perceived absence: the anthologists’ misconstrual of Fawn Brodie’s psychological expertise in *No Man Knows My History* and the inhibiting effect both her writing and the anthologists’ judgment may have had for subsequent explorations of the religiousness of Joseph Smith and his followers.

Although the Bringhurst volume illuminates *No Man Knows My History* from a variety of standpoints, the authors reach extensive common ground. All recognize—and rightly laud—Brodie’s achievement. A “skillfully” written tome whose narrative unfolds “swiftly and effectively,” a “legend” that is still the “standard work on the subject and the starting point for all analyses of Mormonism,” and the book that won Brodie “national stature” (at the tender age of thirty),<sup>12</sup> *No Man Knows My History* has wielded a “potent influence” that “served as a transition point” between a more “polemical” approach to Mormon history and one “more interested in understanding why events unfolded as they did.” To quote Mario De Pillis: Brodie “brought Mormonism into dialogue with the national culture.”<sup>13</sup> At the same time, they charge her with making numerous factual errors, misusing evidence, and serving up questionable interpretations: besides blunting Mormonism’s religious edge, she rendered character and motive so as to make her work “simultaneously more literary [than historical] and also more problematic,” offered too narrow an explanation for Smith’s adoption of polygamy, and, her “objectivity” notwithstanding, assumed “a highly moralistic perspective” that biased her judgment.<sup>14</sup> In Launius’s opinion, she cast a “long shadow” over Mormon historiography that “is both disturbing and unnecessary” but that nevertheless “remains a persistent tradition in the study of Mormonism’s first generation.”<sup>15</sup>

While I concur with the anthology’s authors on these and most other points, I would demur on one matter: Brodie’s facility in deploying psychology. “Brodie was a psychohistorian,” Todd Compton maintains, and her “pathbreaking” interest in documenting Smith’s sexuality “was entirely justified.” For Bringhurst, her book’s popularity stems in part from “its engaging methodological approach” whose “explicitly psychoanalytical” framework “set[s] it apart from other biographies of Joseph Smith.” De Pillis offers the most nuanced appraisal. While noting that,

“contrary to caricature, she used the psychoanalytic approach least in this first biography,” the “slant of *No Man Knows My History*,” he claims, “is unobtrusively but clearly Freudian.” Turning an analyst’s gaze on her, De Pillis contends that “most current appraisals would agree that her unconscious supplied whatever she had failed to do consciously,” adding that her “affinity for Freudian psychology could be seen, perhaps, as a surrogate belief system that replaced Mormonism for her.”<sup>16</sup> The authors’ consensus seems to be that a skilled depth psychologist had scheduled Smith for a “fifty-minute hour” and systematically diagnosed him. This conclusion, however, conflates the 1945 edition of *No Man Knows My History*, in which psychoanalysis figured almost not at all, with the 1971 revision, which added a section entitled “Supplement” that, as Launius notes, “incorporated recent trends from psychohistory.”<sup>17</sup> Only there did Brodie deploy depth psychology concertedly. In the original text, her disposition is unsystematic and the insights allegedly derived from it are inconsequential.

To designate the Fawn Brodie of 1945 a sophisticated practitioner of “psychohistory” is to read her later expertise and accomplishments backwards. Such a designation ignores contemporary witness and her own self-appraisal while also overestimating her knowledge of psychoanalysis, the degree to which she actually employed it, and the rudimentary level that theoretical applications beyond non-clinical settings had achieved to that point. Labeling the author of the original *No Man Knows My History* a “psychohistorian” applies the term anachronistically, since it first gained currency only in the 1970s. Inspired at the time by Erik Erikson’s biographies of Martin Luther and Mahatma Gandhi, scholars followed William Langer’s summons to make psychologically informed history their “next assignment.”<sup>18</sup> Brodie deeply admired Erikson—“an authentic genius,” she adjudged, albeit not one of Sigmund Freud’s magnitude—and, according to Bringhurst, considered him “one of her mentors,” but she did not come under his influence until after Erikson had published *Young Man Luther* in 1958.<sup>19</sup>

Significantly, immediate reviewers of the 1945 *No Man Knows My History* detected no psychoanalytic scaffolding. Blake McKelvey stated that Brodie “paints [Smith] as a dynamic personality,” and Marguerite Young averred that she had “recaptured” his “spirit,” but even while commending her skill at rendering Smith as a vivid historical character, neither credited Brodie with displaying special psychological acumen. Vardis Fisher, in fact, faulted the book for “a lack of information” concerning “psychology and comparative religions,” while De Voto slammed her for “pretty consistently” avoiding the “crucial issue” of Smith’s life—“his visions, his revelations and his writings”—and for offering only an “odd and inadequate

theory, that he was basically an artist,” his “prose fiction” the “natural expression of his fantasies and religious perceptions.” Brodie, in other

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words, had opted for a literary interpretation rather than seconding De Voto's own pet psychological theory that Smith “was a paranoid personality in process of becoming a paranoiac.” “The chapter on paranoia in any standard textbook of psychiatry,” De Voto huffed, “can be checked against the prophet's career paragraph by paragraph.” Ralph Gabriel said simply, “She avoids psychological or psychiatric

analysis or speculation.”<sup>20</sup> Interviewed thirty years after the book came out, Brodie certified this assessment. There was no psychohistory or psychobiography “in the Joseph Smith book except by inadvertence,” she asserted, largely, it would seem, as a reaction against De Voto's claims. “I did read a lot about paranoia,” she recalled, only to conclude that Smith “did not follow the classical picture of the paranoid at all.” As a result, she “moved back and out of the field of psychological investigation.”<sup>21</sup>

Such a disclaimer does not mean that Brodie brought no psychological interests to the biography or was ignorant of psychoanalysis. As an undergraduate at the University of Utah, she remembered, “I first began to learn important things. I had no anthropology but I had psychology and sociology.” Popular versions of psychoanalysis infiltrated American culture between the two world wars, and, as De Pillis notes, the University of Chicago “was becoming a major center” for its study just as Brodie arrived to take her M.A. Bringham records her as conversing in 1937 with Jarvis Thurston, a “college friend” who was the literary reviewer for the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, about James Joyce, William Faulkner, and Sigmund Freud. One of the judges who awarded her a prestigious Alfred A. Knopf Literary Fellowship six years later explained that he found her portrait of Smith ““very convincing,”” for although Brodie was cognizant of “such special interpretations as those supplied by psychoanalysis, economic determinism, religious bigotry, worship and straight debunking, she steers a path that is not so much a mean between these, as [something] simply better than any of them alone.”<sup>22</sup> Such evidence, however, does not in itself establish that she was necessarily well-equipped to employ Freud's ideas systematically. Having earned both her baccalaureate and masters degrees in English, she had received no formal training in academic psychology and could not have acquired a rigorous background in psychoanalytic techniques at the time except by becoming a physician and studying in

Europe; psychoanalytic institutes in the United States, the number of which burgeoned after World War II, did not open their doors to humanists until the 1970s.<sup>23</sup> Brodie's serious engagement with Freudianism occurred only after she moved to California, where her husband, Bernard, introduced her to psychoanalysts whom he was meeting through his work at the RAND Corporation. At that point, she began consulting them about her biography of Thaddeus Stevens, the Radical Republican congressman. Her diagnosis of Smith as an "imposter" in the 1971 revision of *No Man Knows My History* took into account a "detailed and fruitful discussion in a seminar on leadership in Los Angeles" attended by several psychoanalysts as well as members of the UCLA faculty.<sup>24</sup> A quarter-century earlier, though, Brodie was a psychological autodidact with at best a passing familiarity with psychoanalysis who was not yet sufficiently adept at "listening with the third ear" and converting her soundings into history.<sup>25</sup>

Even a more skilled practitioner would have had difficulty doing so, for psychoanalysts were only just beginning to elaborate ego psychology, which emphasizes the ego's capacity to adapt and channel the demands of id rather than being habitually overwhelmed by them. New also was object relations theory, which focuses on infants' psychological development as being guided more by their dynamic relationship with their parents (especially their mothers) than by the internal development of their psychosexual drives. By dwelling upon the more rational and adaptable aspects of human behavior along with the importance of social dynamics, these lines of inquiry gave psychoanalysis a social face and facilitated its incorporation into disciplines outside medicine and psychiatry: sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and history. In 1945, however, *Young Man Luther* lay more than a decade in the future, and, more than another decade beyond it, Fred Weinstein and Gerald Platt's seminal efforts to articulate a method for psychoanalytic history.<sup>26</sup> Aside from Freud's forays into cultural or historical subjects such as *Totem and Taboo* or *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, Brodie had few models for conducting full-scale psychoanalytic investigations outside a delimited clinical context. She later declared Freud's *Leonardo* to be "similar in spirit" to her "intimate history" of Thomas Jefferson, but she made no such claims for *No Man Knows My History*, and there are no apparent similarities between the Jefferson and Smith biographies.<sup>27</sup>

Gauging how particularly Brodie may have appropriated psychoanalysis is difficult because there is no evidence detailing what she read. The bibliography of *No Man Knows My History* cites very few secondary sources in general, although it does include Isaac Woodbridge Riley's *The Founder of Mormonism*, a "pre-Freudian" work casting Joseph Smith

as an epileptic, a diagnosis Brody spurned.<sup>28</sup> The bibliography does not list a single psychoanalytic title, and even the interpretation of Smith as

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an imposter derives, as far as the 1971 Supplement indicates, from only a single article by Phyllis Greenacre.<sup>29</sup> Brodie disliked using clinical vocabulary,<sup>30</sup> and her literary stylishness certainly benefitted from avoiding Freudian metapsychology’s lugubrious cadences, but her discomfort with technical language does not excuse her failure to cite works that influenced her methodology—if she used them. The best one can do is to scan *No Man Knows My History* for some trace of psychoanalytic language, inter-

pretation, or techniques with which someone familiar with one or more of Freud’s works might have been conversant.<sup>31</sup> One should expect to find at least some mention of the sorts of jokes and slips of the tongue that Freud deemed the “psychopathology of everyday life”; dream analysis based on the theory that a dream is the disguised fulfillment of a suppressed wish; attention to an individual’s sexuality, particularly its infantile organization; explanations of behavior as resulting primarily from conflicting impulses, especially unconscious ones; the mediation of such impulses by the intrapsychic agencies of id, ego, and superego; or examinations of neurotic etiology. Few such references jump out from the original text.

Brodie hardly even gestured toward Freudian theory, let alone employed it systematically, at one point even twitting “psychiatric analyses” (in general) for having “been content to pin a label” on Smith while ignoring “his greatest creative achievement [the Book of Mormon] because they found it dull.” Given her lifelong reluctance to brandish jargon, it is not surprising to find words like “introjection,” or “primary process thinking” absent, but Freud’s metapsychological infrastructure, notably the intrapsychic agencies of id, ego, and superego, do not appear even in plain clothes. The occasional sounds of psychoanalytic speech—for example, a reference to Smith’s “extraordinary capacity for fantasy”—do not reverberate diagnostically. Brodie characterized Smith’s “delusions of grandeur” in running Nauvoo as merely confidence that he acted as the Lord’s “anointed” prophet. Such a man, she affirmed, “sets up a kind of centrifugal force within himself that—by turning always away from the normal—may one day destroy him.” Otto Fenichel, who published his compendious *Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* in the same year that

*No Man Knows My History* appeared, would have pointed out that “belief in one’s own omnipotence is but one aspect of the magical-animistic world that comes to the fore again in narcissistic regressions,” the delusion that one is “king, president, or God” accountable by “the loss of reality testing.”<sup>32</sup> Although noting that “Dream images came easily” to Smith,<sup>33</sup> Brodie forbore from delving into the differences between a dream’s latent and manifest content.

Her clearest debt to Freud might have been her discussion of Smith’s sexuality, yet Freud’s influence seems to have extended only insofar as making it the subject of hot intellectual conversation. *No Man Knows My History* does not mention the infantile organization of Smith’s drives, and, for that matter, Brodie hardly needed the good Viennese doctor to convince her that a man who married, by her count, dozens of wives might have experienced libidinal hyper-cathexes that overwhelmed his superego’s fragile defenses. Moreover, Freud could not have rendered her much assistance, since he never identified polygamy as a psychological problem and barely mentioned it.<sup>34</sup> Thus, when Brodie asserted that Mormon temple ritual, betraying the “close affinity of religious and phallic rites” that is a “commonplace in social history,” derived “doubtless” from “the same unconscious drives that led the prophet into polygamy,” she outpaced the master himself.<sup>35</sup>

Just how little theory *No Man Knows My History* mustered in 1945 appears in stark contrast to Marion Starkey’s far more psychologically informed excursus on Salem witchcraft, *The Devil in Massachusetts*, published four years later. Like Brodie, Starkey preferred to avoid “analysis in the technical sense” and eschew “jargon” in “telling the story,” thereby “making psychological interpretation implicit” within the narrative “rather than a thing by itself,” but she also availed herself of “sound psychological counsel” from three doctors and cited several authorities, especially Freud.<sup>36</sup> To Starkey, Salem in 1692 suffered an outbreak of “mass hysteria” catalyzed by adolescent girls whose “natural high spirits,” turned inward by their culture’s puritanical strictures against instinctual gratification, “were concentrating in a force that awaited only the right moment to find explosive release” and that finally manifested themselves in a “frenzy” of demonic possession. Into her evocation of the victims’ afflictions she readably insinuated the classical psychoanalytic diagnosis that conversion hysteria translated sexual fantasies into somatic symptoms and repressed erotic thoughts—in Fenichel’s words, finding “plastic expression in alterations of physical functions.”<sup>37</sup> The girls’ fits resonated within a larger community that “craved [possession’s] Dionysiac mysteries. A people whose natural impulses had long been repressed by the severity of their belief,”



Starkey insisted, “demanded their catharsis.” Released, like *No Man Knows My History*, by Alfred A. Knopf, *The Devil in Massachusetts* gained extensive public notice and, eventually, substantial scholarly criticism. Arthur Miller drew upon it in writing *The Crucible*, which “bubble[s] with sexual tensions” credentialed by Starkey (as well as Miller’s own artistic license), but historians, finding little evidence of erotic phantasmagoria in Anglo-American (as opposed to European) witchcraft, have dismissed his rendition.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, Starkey exhibited a far greater command of psychoanalytic theory at the time than did Brodie.

The extent to which Brodie deserves any reputation for psychohistory in *No Man Knows My History* depends entirely upon the Supplement added in 1971, and even much of that essay is devoted to non-psychological matters.<sup>39</sup> In it she defended her previous thesis that Smith had manufactured accounts of his alleged “first vision” only long after the fact, stated that his family came to believe in his mission only after he had completed the Book of Mormon, related recent research showing that papyri Smith rendered into the Book of Abraham were in fact familiar pieces of ancient Egyptian religious literature, and chided the LDS Church for “racist practices” against Blacks, whose “theological basis” was derived from the Book of Abraham.<sup>40</sup> The kind of popular psychoanalytic terminology absent from the original volume clearly, however, suffuses the Supplement’s middle sections even before the explicit reference to the work of Phyllis Greenacre. Joseph Smith is said to have blurred the “distinction between his own dreams and fantasies and reality,” might well have “harbored unconscious or even conscious fantasies” that one of his brothers wanted to kill him, and may have been prey to “unconscious fantasies of guilt and fear” following the death of his oldest brother, Alvin.<sup>41</sup> Joseph Smith in the Supplement personifies the psychoanalytic perspective on human life as fraught with psychic conflicts. Brodie offered two important arguments, although commentators have made far more of the second than the first.

The first is really an exercise in psychoanalytic literary criticism, in which Brodie reads the Book of Mormon as a site in which Smith therapeutically resolved his anxieties concerning his brother’s fratricidal intentions and worked out “unconscious conflicts over his own identity.” Reacting to his fears that one of his brethren may have tried to murder him and his agitation over Alvin’s mysterious death, Smith wrote a tale about a father and six sons who bore “an extraordinary resemblance” to Joseph Smith, Sr., and his progeny. Although the dark descendants of the two evil brothers destroy their siblings’ heirs “in a frightful scene of genocide,” in the end the “white heroes, Nephi and Mormon, with whom Joseph Smith clearly identifies,” secret away “their sacred history,” Smith’s discovery



of which at the Hill Cumorah harnesses “the whole marvelous fantasy of fratricidal strife” to his “religious ambition” and new prophetic “image.”<sup>42</sup>

Yet, though the Book of Mormon “provides tantalizing clues to the conflicts raging within Joseph Smith,” Brodie professes, it does not explain their “intensity.” It is at this point that she turns to her second assertion, invoking Greenacre’s analysis of the “imposter.” Smith’s basic conflict, Brodie states, dealt not with “telling” or “not telling the truth, but rather between what he really was and what he most desperately wanted to be.” He was not a liar in any ordinary sense but rather suffered from a “personality disorder” in which the conflict between two identities, one “focused and strongly assertive,” the other “frequently amazingly crude and poorly knit.” The demands of the former force the latter into the role of an imposter, in which the individual may display sharp perceptiveness in some areas accompanied, however, by an impaired sense of reality over all. Brodie’s critics have not always noticed that she qualified her psychiatric portrait of Smith: Greenacre’s analysis “is not necessarily the decisive key” to his character, though, as a “clinical definition,” she maintained, it does seem “more adequate” than terms like “paranoid” or “parapath.” Nor is it “fair,” she remarked in 1975, “to describe [Smith] as a simple imposter.” Averse, as always, to “us[ing] models,” she averred that his was a “very special, complicated story.”<sup>43</sup>

The Supplement revises the original explication of Smith in a fundamental way, depicting him not as a consciously dissembling author who, like some narcissistic Pygmalion, embraced and then became his own creation, but rather as an individual tormented by unconscious conflicts and struggling to reconcile two dissonant personalities. As Marvin Hill recognized, “The mature Brodie seems to be telling us that her old interpretation was too simple,” although Brodie herself did not go that far. “If I were to write [*No Man Knows My History*] over again, knowing what I know now about human behavior,” she once mused, she would have paid his childhood more attention, developed the book’s earlier portion “more thoughtfully,” and “discuss[ed] the nature of his identity problem, which I think was severe, in psychiatric terms.” Nevertheless, though believing that with greater knowledge she would have done “a better job,” she judged that the book “holds up quite well,” and she stood by “everything in it.”<sup>44</sup> Casting Smith as conflicted rather than mendacious may alter one’s appreciation of his character, but in itself it affords little utility to historians, who want to know why specific events turned out as they did.

The Supplement does deepen Brodie’s analysis in at least two ways, however. First, it adds another dimension to her earlier naturalistic portrayal of the Book of Mormon as Smith’s skillful and artistic concoction

of “local Indian origin theories, the religious controversies of the day, and political anti-Masonry,” all of which can explain elements of the book’s setting but not necessarily the details of its plot. Since, Brodie maintained, the Book of Mormon can, “like any first novel,” be read autobiographically “to a limited degree,” its story line of fratricidal lineages emerges from Smith’s transposing his family’s dynamics into sacred history. Second, the Supplement offers a coherent explanation for Smith’s actions at the end of his life. Besides being troubled by “megalomania”—now exacerbated by his stature as a lieutenant-general, presidential candidate, “King of the Kingdom of God,” and “secret husband of perhaps fifty wives”—as well as the persistent contest between “fantasy and reality,” Smith by 1844 was experiencing “a new and ever escalating moral conflict” fueled by concern that “his continuing denial of polygamy” would soon be exposed as a “flagrant deception.” When William Law exposed his deceit, Brodie surmised, Smith “must have felt a shattering of his own grandiose and wholly unrealistic image of himself and his role in history.” Having been called “to account” by “a man called Law,” Smith first “reacted with lawlessness,” though “he was not normally a destructive man,” then slid into “a sense of depression, foreboding, and doom” that “dogged the prophet thereafter, contributing inexorably to his destruction.” The rage and regret triggered by the collapse of his fantasy made Smith complicit in his own death.<sup>45</sup>

Brodie’s insight into the Book of Mormon’s narrative structure can stand independently of psychological investigation and bears evaluating by literary scholars,<sup>46</sup> but her psychoanalytic explanation of Smith’s behavior is both inadequate in its own terms and incomplete as a guide to what truly made him tick. Psychoanalysis stresses the importance of childhood experience, even in the generation of neuroses that may not manifest themselves until adulthood, but since Brodie, as she admitted, failed to examine Smith’s childhood sufficiently, she could not account for the etiology of his imposter conflict. Whether she could possibly have done so even had she tried is debatable, since the historical record rarely—probably never—affords the dense evidence of childrearing and infantile development on which to base informed diagnoses,<sup>47</sup> certainly nothing like what an analyst can elicit during therapeutic sessions. Even what evidence does exist calls Brodie’s theory into question, since, as Hill pointed out, although Phyllis Greenacre located the source of imposters’ fantasies in their Oedipal conflicts, what knowledge of the Smith family we have suggests that Joseph, Jr., had a good relationship with his father (a point corroborated by Brodie’s identification of Lehi with Joseph, Sr.), and displayed “no evidence of abnormal oedipal turmoil.”<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, Brodie failed to give a psychoanalytic rationale—any rationale—for Smith’s spirituality.

If, as the Supplement suggests, he did not consciously fake his religious interest, then why (leaving supernatural explanations aside) did he believe in angels? Put another way, what is the psychology of religious genius? Brodie provides no clue.<sup>49</sup>

But if psychoanalysis did not inform the original text in 1945, what psychology did? The answer seems two-fold. For one thing, Brodie employed “common-sense” psychology, an utterly atheoretical approach (though for all that the tool of perhaps most historians most of the time), which is based on a scholar’s own

knowledge of human actions as much as anything else, and that views peoples’ motives as conscious and their behavior straightforward. From this perspective, Smith’s reasons for certifying polygamy were as venerable as David’s for sending messengers to Bathsheba (or, to sauce the goose with the gander, Helen’s for shipping out to Troy): variety is the spice of life, certainly for a husband who had spent “eight years of marriage” with “a woman somewhat his senior.” To Brodie, who claimed Joseph had to “pray for grace” whenever he spied a pretty face, monogamy must have appeared, in Brodie’s estimation, “as it has seemed to many men who have not ceased to love their wives, but who have grown weary of connubial exclusiveness—an intolerably circumscribed way of life.” Still, Smith “had too much of the Puritan in him” and was no “careless libertine” like John Cook Bennett, who “had never been troubled by the necessity of rationalizing his own impulses or of squaring himself with God,” so Smith “redefined the nature of sin and erected a stupendous theological edifice to support his new theories on marriage.”<sup>50</sup> Such an approach has its virtues, and its limits. One may surmise that sexual appetite contributed to the doctrine of celestial marriage—but why, then, did Smith dogmatize lust? Most men fearful of being caught with their hands in too many cookie jars do not feel compelled to invent elaborate theological devices to circumvent Matthew 5:28,<sup>51</sup> or, for that matter, provide ecclesiastical sanctuary for close associates who are strongly urged (not merely invited) to join him. Adverting to Smith’s “Puritan” inclinations merely substitutes an epithet for an explanation. Why, unlike Bennett, did he have to construct a rationalization that would “square himself with God”?

Brodie’s insight that Smith’s life must have become sexually stale, pericipient in a matter-of-fact way, displays the kind of “intuition” for which critics commend her,<sup>52</sup> yet it rests on inference rather than evidence: the

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sources tell us what Smith did but usually not why he did it. For Brodie to note that Smith had to pray for restraining grace does not prove that he considered monogamy circumscribing, only that female pulchritude revved his engines. A link is missing in the gap between his so-called admission of being stimulated and the not-so-foregone conclusion that being aroused without the possibility of sexual consummation is necessarily constraining. We do not know if Smith thought it was. This habit of insinuating herself into historical actors' minds constitutes the second part of Brodie's method.<sup>53</sup> "For weeks" after learning that Martin Harris had lost the 116-page translation of the golden plates, she stated, "Joseph writhed in self-reproach for his folly."<sup>54</sup> Lucy Smith described her son's distraught reaction when Harris told him the bad news, but, though one can well imagine Joseph agonizing over what to do, there is insufficient evidence to say in an unqualified declarative sentence what he actually did.

Examining passages in which Brodie uses the literary device of creating an identification between the reader and "various characters throughout the biography" to foster sympathy for Emma Smith, Lavina Anderson judges that "Brodie must frequently make up Emma's reaction out of guesses, lacking any reliable documentation." The following paragraph, which Anderson denominates "an important revelation of Brodie's technique,"<sup>55</sup> shows the artifice's capacity to arouse empathy—and to push the boundaries of historical method:

What passed through Brigham Young's mind as his prophet backed down [from fighting Sylvester Smith], one can only guess. His years of leadership lay ahead, stretching over endless wagon trails and across dusty plains. The man who was to bring thousands of wretched outcasts to the inhospitable mountains of the West and build a homeland there would not have yielded to a mutinous upstart. This lame retreat of Joseph's was weakness, boding no good for the company's discipline in the dangerous days ahead. Nevertheless, there was something in Joseph that made Brigham content to acknowledge himself the lesser man.<sup>56</sup>

Here we pass from intuition to invention. Brigham Young had not yet led the great Mormon trek, of course, and we have no idea how he would have acted either in Smith's shoes at that moment or in his own a decade later. Nor do we know if he did "acknowledge himself the lesser man," not to mention that it is hard to fathom why he would have effaced himself had Smith's "lame retreat" truly disgusted him. Dominating this scene *sub rosa* is a completely unexamined assumption about nineteenth-century male gender roles: being a man means never having to admit that discretion might be the better part of valor. Absent any discussion of frontier mores, on what basis can we be certain that Young perceived Smith's

refusal to fight as a loss of honor? Anderson concludes that “to the extent Brodie’s tools of tone, motive, and characterization are successful as literary devices, they simultaneously undercut the historical effect”—or, one might say more concisely, that they undercut the history.<sup>57</sup>

This critique of Brodie’s psychologizing matters precisely because her book once bestrode Mormon historiography like a colossus—to what effect might be gauged by again referring to work on seventeenth-century New England. When Perry Miller determined—after he had an epiphany while loading oil drums in the Belgium Congo—that he wanted to begin his study of American literature with Puritanism, his instructors, he later reminisced, warned him against wasting his career in a field from which all the wheat “had long since been winnowed” and only “chaff” remained. Miller rejected their advice and the reigning “progressive” paradigm, which emphasized the economic and social factors in New England’s development. Instead, he took what Puritan ministers thought seriously, and for forty years his reconstruction of their intellectual world dominated discussion. Miller almost singlehandedly rendered Puritanism one of the most vital topics in early American studies, and he made it central for understanding not only New England but the larger sweep of American intellectual history as well.<sup>58</sup> Historians so draped themselves in the fashions of Miller’s wardrobe—Ramist logic, covenant theology, the Jeremiad, and New England’s presumed declension from having been the City on a Hill to becoming just another market along the Atlantic littoral for English tinsel—that it took decades to realize the emperor had not always dressed his arguments fully, and even longer to decide that the garments themselves had worn thin. Miller, it finally appeared, had plumbed every depth of the Puritan mind except the one that mattered most—its bibliocentrism—and though he wrote a magnificent chapter on its “Augustinian strain of piety,” to a great extent he undid that insight by promptly construing Puritanism not as a religious temperament but as an intellectual edifice, thereby magnifying its impact on colonial New England culture while inhibiting its comprehension as a popular devotional movement and, in consequence, exaggerating its influence on the future of American letters while distorting its long reach over American religion.<sup>59</sup>

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*That Joseph could have hypnotized them all is scarcely credible.*

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Fawn Brodie exercised a similar hold over the history of Mormonism, for good reasons. With scholarly aplomb she presented Joseph Smith as one of nineteenth-century America’s pre-eminent figures (a “full-blooded human being” rather than a lunatic oddity), “demanded an increased

openness about Mormon origins and about Mormon history generally,” and “succeeded in settling” some issues about the early LDS “with a finality which seems remarkable.”<sup>60</sup> *No Man Knows My History* made straight the way for a more objective historiography.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, as Roger Launius suggests, her book has “straight-jacket[ed]” rather than inspired succeeding scholars, cossetting them into rehashing her questions instead of formulating their own.<sup>62</sup> In the process, she directed historians towards the beginnings of the LDS Church while at the same time her disinterest in Smith’s spirituality shooed them away from exploring Mormonism as a faith. Brodie’s discussions of religion are perfunctory and shallow. “The true mystic is preoccupied with things of the spirit,” she remarked without any reference to scholarly studies of the subject, “and in so far as he concerns himself with worldly affairs he denies his calling,” more a verdict aimed moralistically at Smith for “somehow” melding what she considered “two antithetical principles”—the “goodness of God” and the “making of money”—than an “objective” commentary about his communion with the deity. When she did approach that subject, she remarked that Smith’s later description of his revelations as “‘pure intelligence’ flowing into him” was “such an unspectacular process” that it “must have disappointed his questioners”—as if (leaving aside her complete lack of evidence regarding the reactions of Smith’s interlocutors) to say that divine communication must be a spectacular affair, or that God speaks only out of a whirlwind, not in a still, small voice.<sup>63</sup> A biography should elucidate its protagonist foremost and his or her followers only secondarily, but *No Man Knows My History* does not help us understand why Smith’s religious message—however confabulated, mercenary, or ad hoc it may have been—drew people in. To say merely that he had an aptitude “for making men see visions” or an “unconscious but positive talent at hypnosis” spotlights only his capacity as a performer, ignoring both what he performed and what his audiences imbibed.<sup>64</sup> Smith possessed undeniable charisma, but Mormons kept the faith despite great hardships even in his absence: witness their colonization of Missouri while he remained in Kirtland or their successful missions in England, which he never visited. Mormon religion is a dry streambed in *No Man Knows My History* because Brodie treated its fountainhead so perfunctorily.

How could so bold yet sensitive a scholar have missed the spirituality animating Smith and the Saints? At least a few answers come to mind. The first adverts to the dynamics of her original argument: if Smith were initially a fraud unanimated by religious sensibility, there would be no reason to investigate further. Yet Brodie herself contends that Smith did come to believe in his fabrications, which warrants her attention, and even if Smith had continued his deception all his life, the Saints themselves took

him (and their faith) seriously. That he could have hypnotized them all is scarcely credible. Brodie misses the point because she failed to set Smith's activities adequately within their wider religious context and thereby misconstrued the nature of his personal crisis. In the heady air of independence, states cast off their establishments (except in Puritanism's ancient bastions), revivals fired up, and preachers—whether belonging to a denomination or proclaiming their own singular gospels—proliferated. This homiletic hubbub was good news if you were Thomas Jefferson, for it evinced the flourishing of religious liberty based on the rights of individuals to worship as their consciences alone dictated, but bad news if you were a young man sifting the ashes of a burned-over district for the gold of absolute truth. As Prot-

estants in America competed against each other for converts in a situation where, without state support, none could gain most favored status, they adumbrated a theory, denominationalism, acknowledging that no church held the complete truth,<sup>65</sup> a formulation that allowed them to live along side each other more or less comfortably but that opened a spiritual abyss under someone who would take the welter of contesting doctrines as evidence not that all churches offered a version of the gospel, but that they afforded none at all. The impulses that turned Joseph Smith toward Cumorah had little to do with conflicts about who he was and much with his dismay over the churches' babble of truth-claims. His confusion issued not out of bouts between discrepant personalities but from having been buffeted by competing gospels that seemed to obscure God's voice and drain all sources of religious authority away.<sup>66</sup>

A second answer comes from Mario De Pillis, who, presuming that "no scholar escapes the prejudices of his or her own time," noted that Brodie came of intellectual age at the University of Chicago in an environment permeated by hostility to religion. He is certainly right that her exposure to "sweeping secularism, which replaced religion as a world view" during mid-century, and "the influence of Freudian psychology in presenting a different paradigm of human nature" from what religion portrays, provide "an important key to understanding *No Man Knows My History*," but such factors, while explaining how and where Brodie might hone the tools of abiding skepticism, do not by themselves indicate why she herself chose to pick them up. De Pillis answers that query by turning to Brodie

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*Presuming that "no scholar escapes the prejudices of his or her own time," it is interesting to note that Brodie came of intellectual age at the University of Chicago in an environment permeated by hostility to religion.*

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herself. Feeling confined by the LDS Church's insistence on adherence to all Mormon doctrines and hemmed in by cultural boundaries "strictly enforced by a powerful hierarchy," she, like so many other intellectuals of her day, "became completely irreligious" and disaffiliated from her faith. Brodie's doubts about her tradition had percolated for some time—"I was convinced before I ever began writing the book that Joseph Smith was not a true prophet," she said—and she found the "sense of liberation" at the University of Chicago "enormously exhilarating."<sup>67</sup> Yet quitting her Church seems to have led Brodie toward a disinterest in religion instead of vituperative rejection. De Pillis observes that many apostates leave their sanctuaries "more in sadness than in anger," and he considers the views of the Church that she expressed late in life "to be both remarkably even-handed and fair." A sense of moderation does typify both her attitude toward Latter-day Saints—she allowed in 1975 that "there are many things about the [Mormon] brotherhood that are very rewarding"—and, if one can circumvent her debunking attitude toward the Book of Mormon—admittedly an insuperable stumbling block for pious Saints—her approach to Smith, in which she intended to give him "credit for his genius as a leader as well as exposing his feet of clay," is equitable. Even Hugh Nibley averred that the book was "not animated by violent hatred."<sup>68</sup> Were *No Man Knows My History* merely a latter-day *Mormonism Unveiled*, it might have made a stir outside Zion, but it would not have attracted continuing attention from the entire historical community, much less eliciting a commendatory commemorative from Mormon scholars. Nor, had it portrayed Smith underhandedly, could it have attracted "converts to Mormonism, who," according to Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington, "say that their interest was first aroused by reading the biography." Thus, it is hard to posit that an ingrained animus toward Mormonism caused her to downplay Smith's religiosity.<sup>69</sup>

Perhaps, then, the answer lies in an aversion to religion in general. She once called herself a "heretic" and allowed (to a Catholic priest) that religion had proved "only a complication in [her] life, its abandon[ment]" being a "wholly liberating experience."<sup>70</sup> Her daughter described her posthumously as an "agnostic," though her younger son thought her "an atheist by the end." Her biographer notes that she "remained unambiguous in her distaste for Mormon institutions and dogma," her "animosity" reserved not just for the LDS Church but, more capaciously, for "all forms of organized religion."<sup>71</sup> There is no question that she treated religious claims very skeptically, but nothing in *No Man Knows My History* approaches the caustic atheism that saturates Freud, who regarded religion as a fantasy to be grown out of and a neurosis to be overcome.<sup>72</sup> One can hardly see him writing a biography sympathetic toward any religious figure. Erik Erikson treated Luther and Gandhi far more humanely, and, though



tutored in psychoanalysis by Freud, Brodie as a biographer gravitated toward Erikson. Taking up psychoanalysis gave her a more rather than less nuanced view of Joseph Smith; the self-conscious fraud of the original version became, as we have seen, the conflicted man of the Supplement, always driven to determine his authentic self. Yet even if Brodie did loathe religion, or at least churches, that attitude nevertheless did not foreordain her missing Smith's spirituality, for heretics, after all, are not necessarily unbelievers, while both agnostics and atheists can write sensitively (if not apologetically) about faith.

In alluding to Smith's revelations as "unspectacular,"<sup>73</sup> Brodie assumed that soul-shattering, washed-in-the-blood-of-the-Lamb conversion constituted normative nineteenth-century religious experience. Though spawned in a revivalist heartland, Mormon devotional temperament was—and is—emphatically removed from that of evangelical Protestantism, and, in trying to assimilate it to the New Birth, Brodie misconstrued it. As a result, an author otherwise distinguished for handling her subject respectfully neglected the religious passion igniting her protagonist's soul.

Why she did so is something that no one knows for certain.

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1. Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). The book was originally published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1945; a revised and enlarged second edition was published by Knopf in 1971.

2. Herbert O. Brayer, review in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 32, no. 4 (1946): 601; Bernard De Voto, "The Case of the Prophet, Joseph Smith," *New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review*, December 16, 1945, 1; Dale L. Morgan, "A Prophet and His Legend," *Saturday Review of Literature*, November 24, 1945, 8; Milton R. Hunter, review in *Pacific Historical Review* 15 (June 1946): 228.

3. Newell G. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie: A Biographer's Life* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma, 1999): on Thomas McKay's office, 82; on the relationship, 27, 93, 95, 103, 144; and on her excommunication, 112–13.

4. Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 1972), 504.

5. Richard S. Van Wagoner, "Fawn M. Brodie: the woman and her history," *Sunstone* 7, no. 4 (1982): 32.

6. Hugh 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); Louis Midgley, "The Brodie Connection: Thomas Jefferson and Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 20, no. 1 (1979): 59–67; Louis 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): 147–230. For an opposing view, see Glen J. Hettinger, “Hard Day for Professor Midgley: An Essay for Fawn McKay Brodie,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 32, no. 1 (1999): 91–101. Midgley discounts many of the positive reviews from 1945–46 since they issued from students of literature whose knowledge of history he rightly suspects, but I read the reviews by professional historians as more generally favorable than he does. Besides Brayer (and, for that matter, De Voto, a quite accomplished if “popular” historian), see Ralph H. Gabriel, review in *American Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (1946): 725–26; and Blake McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly* 19 (June 1946): 258–60. A one-paragraph descriptive review appeared anonymously in *Missouri Historical Review* 40, no. 3 (1946): 450.

7. Newell G. Bringham, ed., *Reconsidering “No Man Knows My History”*: Fawn M. Brodie and Joseph Smith in Retrospect (Logan, Utah: Utah State University, 1996). The republished essays were written by Marvin Hill (1974) and Bringham himself (1989).

8. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, review in *Western Historical Quarterly* 28 (Autumn 1997): 433; though see also Louis Midgley, “The Legend and Legacy of Fawn Brodie,” *FARMS Review of Books* 13, no. 1 (2001): 21–71.

9. Bringham, *Reconsidering*, [iv]. Bringham’s aunt, Lois Cooper Allen, was the third dedicatee.

10. Marvin S. Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History? A Critique of *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 67, 63; review by Klaus J. Hansen, *Pacific Historical Review* 67 (Feb. 1998): 122; and see Roger D. Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History: Fawn Brodie and the Legacy of Scholarly Analysis of Mormonism,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 221n7. For a contemporary statement similar to Hill’s, see the review in the *New Yorker*, November 24, 1945, 102, and, for a recent example, Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2001), 47, 123.

11. Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 219.

12. Lavina Fielding Anderson, “Literary Style in *No Man Knows My History*: An Analysis,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 147; Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 220, 196; Newell G. Bringham, “A Biography of the Biography: The Research and Writing of *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 32.

13. Newell G. Bringham, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence: Varied Responses to *No Man Knows My History*,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 55; Launius, “From Old to New Mormon History,” 195, 196; Mario S. De Pillis, “Fawn McKay Brodie: At the Intersection of Secularism and Personal Alienation,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 122. For similar assessments of the book’s lasting significance, see reviews of the anthology by Richard S. Van Wagoner in *Utah Historical Quarterly* 65 (Fall 1997), 391; and Marilyn S. Blackwell, *Vermont History*, 67, nos. 1–2 (1999): 74; as well as Sterling M. McMurrin, “A New Climate of Liberation: A Tribute to Fawn McKay Brodie, 1915–1981,” *Dialogue* 14, no. 1 (1981): 74–75.

14. Anderson, “Literary Style,” 148; Bringham, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence,” 55; Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History,” 62. On factual errors, see, for instance, Todd Compton, “Fawn Brodie on Joseph Smith’s Plural Wives and Polygamy: A Critical View,” in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 156–58, 166–71, and passim; on misused evidence: Bringham, “Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence,” 49–51; and Hill, “Secular or Sectarian History?” 75–76; on literary rather than

historical quality: Anderson, "Literary Style," 148; on explanation of polygamy: Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 79–82; Compton, "Brodie on Joseph Smith's Plural Wives," 158–60; and Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 209–10; on moralism: Bringham, "Biography of the Biography," 22–23; Bringham, "Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence," 53; Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History," 62; and Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 209, 214.

15. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 195.

16. Compton, "Brodie on Joseph Smith's Plural Wives," 155; Newell G. Bringham, "Introduction," in Bringham, *Reconsidering*, 2; De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 112.

17. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 196. For a recent view that does not distinguish between the 1945 and 1971 versions, see Walker, Whittaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 138, 156–57.

18. William L. Langer, "The Next Assignment," *American Historical Review* 63, no. 2 (1958): 283–304; Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: Norton, 1958); Erik H. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence* (New York: Norton, 1969). A search of the "America: History and Life" electronic database at <http://sb2.abc-clio.com> (which begins in 1964) uncovered the first use of the term "psychohistory" in 1970—revealingly, in a journal's inaugural issue—though a search for "psychohistory" in the subject index calls up one entry in 1967. See Bruce Mazlish, "Toward a Psychohistorical Inquiry: The 'Real' Richard Nixon," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1, no. 1 (1970): 49–105.

19. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 113; Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 4.

20. McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly*, 259; Marguerite Young, "Joseph Smith, Mormon Prophet," *The Nation*, December 8, 1945, 632; Vardis Fisher, "Mormonism and Its Yankee Prophet," *New York Times Book Review*, November 25, 1945, 112; De Voto, "The Case of the Prophet, Joseph Smith," 1; Gabriel, review in *American Historical Review*, 726.

21. Shirley E. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie: An Oral History Interview," *Dialogue* 14, no. 2 (1981): 109. Published a few months after Brodie's death, the piece excerpts a longer interview conducted by Shirley E. Stephenson at California State University, Fullerton, in 1975. Brodie also remarked that Smith had "baffled" her "even after the book was finished," and that "It wasn't until fifteen or twenty years later when I had done a lot of reading in psychiatric literature that I felt I had some more explanations," a "little bit" of which she included in the Supplement, Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 104.

22. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 100; Nathan G. Hale, Jr., *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917–1985* (New York: Oxford, 1995), 57–73; De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 111; Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 68–69, 80; bracketed word in original.

23. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 50, 59; Hale, *Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, 102–14.

24. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 138–41; Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 419n‡.

25. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 110. The phrase "listening with the third ear" comes from Theodor Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear: The Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst* (New York: Farrar, Straus, 1948).

26. See Hale, *Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, 231–46; Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, *The Wish to Be Free: Society, Psyche, and Value Change* (Berkeley: University of California, 1969), and Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, *Psychoanalytic Sociology: An Essay on the Interpretation of Historical Data and the Phenomena of Collective Behavior* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1973).

27. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 3.

28. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 497; T. L. Brink, “Joseph Smith: The Verdict of Depth Psychology,” *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976), 74. See also Stephenson, “Fawn McKay Brodie,” 110; and Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 4.

29. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 418–19; De Pillis, “Brodie: Intersection of Secularism,” 113.

30. Bringham, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 4; De Pillis, “Brodie: Intersection of Secularism,” 113.

31. Freud’s most popularly accessible works in English at this time, one or more of which Brodie could easily have obtained, were *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, trans. G. Stanley Hall (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1920); *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, trans. W. J. H. Sprott (New York: Norton, 1933); and *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, trans. A. A. Brill (New York: Modern Library, 1938), which included “The Psychopathology of Everyday Life,” “The Interpretation of Dreams,” “Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex,” “Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious,” “Totem and Taboo,” and “The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement.”

32. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 69, 27, 354–55; Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* (New York: Norton, 1945), 421.

33. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 25.

34. Freud mentioned polygamy only twice, and then fleetingly: once in regard to the childhood sexual behavior of his patient “little Hans,” the other in conjunction with the concept of “sexual bondage,” some “measure” of which he deemed “indispensable to the maintenance of civilized [i.e., monogamous] marriage.” He seems to have regarded the institution of polygamy as a “primitive” practice, but in neither case did he disparage polygamous impulses as themselves perverse, neurotic, or impure. See Freud, “Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy,” and “The Taboo of Virginity,” in James Strachey, gen. ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1966–74), 10:15, 110; 11:193–94. Both works were readily available in English translations while Brodie was writing.

35. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 279; and see Walter, Whittaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 47. That Brodie deemed the alleged “close affinity” to be a “commonplace in social history” (emphasis added) is indicative of her “secularist” worldview: surely a discussion of rites and rituals belongs to religious history. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 279.

36. Marion L. Starkey, *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1949), xii, xv. For citation of Freud’s work, one of the three most important sources on which she based her “reconstruction,” as well as other “Psychological and Anthropological Sources,” see 284, 309–10.

37. Starkey, *Devil in Massachusetts*, 29, 14, 29; Fenichel, *Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*, 217. See also Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, *Studies in Hysteria*, trans. A. A. Brill (Boston: Beacon, 1937).

38. Starkey, *Devil in Massachusetts*, 30; Charles L. Cohen, "History and The Crucible," *Opera Prompter* [Madison, Wisc.], 23 (October 1989): 19; Charles Cohen, review essay on *A New Language for Psychoanalysis*, by Roy Schafer, *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History* 17 (Feb. 1978): 125–26.

39. See Gary James Bergera, "Toward 'Psychologically Informed' Mormon History and Biography," *Sunstone* 15 (December 1991): 30, who misses, however, Brodie's psychoanalytic reading of the Book of Mormon.

40. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*: on the first vision, 405–10; on the chronology of his family's believing, 410–13; on the Egyptian papyri, 421–23; and on the Church's racial policies, 423–25, quotations from 425, 423.

41. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 412, 414, 415.

42. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 416, 413, 415, 416.

43. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 417, 418, 419; Phyllis Greenacre, "The Imposter," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 27 (1958): 359–82; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 105.

44. Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 83; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 104, 105. See also Hill, "Brodie Revisited: A Reappraisal," *Dialogue* 7, no. 4 (1972): 75. In the "Preface to the Second Edition," xi, Brodie stated flatly that the "new discoveries" of which she took note "do not necessitate important revisions in the biography," but that, "On the contrary," they "support my original speculations about Joseph Smith's character."

45. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 413, 419, 420, 421.

46. For recent efforts to treat the Book of Mormon using depth psychologies, see William D. Morain, *The Sword of Laban: Joseph Smith, Jr. and the Dissociated Mind* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, 1998); Robert D. Anderson, *Inside the Mind of Joseph Smith: Psychobiography and the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999); and C. Jess Groesbeck, "The Book of Mormon as a Symbolic History: A New Perspective on Its Place in History and Religion," *Sunstone* 131 (March 2004): 35–45.

47. Cohen, review essay, 123, 126, 128.

48. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 414; Hill, "Secular or Sectarian History?" 82.

49. Lawrence Foster, "The Psychology of Religious Genius: Joseph Smith and the Origins of New Religious Movements," *Dialogue* 26 no. 4 (1993): 1–22, advances one answer: Smith, like many creative religious figures, suffered from a type of manic-depression.

50. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 187, 297, 310, 297.

51. "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

52. Anderson, "Literary Style," 147.

53. See Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, 54–55, for examples of Brodie's suppositious language.

54. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 55.

55. Anderson, "Literary Style," 141, 146, 142.

56. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 151.

57. Anderson, "Literary Style," 148 (where she calls them "tools of fictional effect" [emphasis in original]). For a similar judgment, see Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1988), 113–14.

58. Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1956), viii. See also Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630–1650* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1933); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1939); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1953); and Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* ([New York]: William Sloane, 1949).

59. Charles L. Cohen, "The Post-Puritan Paradigm of Early American Religious History," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 54 (Oct. 1997): 695–97, 701–3, 705; Charles L. Cohen, "In Retrospect: Robert Middlekauff's *The Mathers*," *Reviews in American History* 29 (Dec. 2001): 635–46; and see De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 115.

60. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 111; Walker, Whitaker, and Allen, *Mormon History*, 47; Hill, "Brodie Revisited," 73.

61. On her "objectivity," see Bringhurst, "Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence," 41, 55; McKelvey, review in *New England Quarterly*, 260; and Fisher, "Mormonism and Its Yankee Prophet," 112.

62. Launius, "From Old to New Mormon History," 197, and see 233n93: "chasing the shadow of Brodie's Joseph Smith has been in many ways unnecessary and counterproductive."

63. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 263, 57.

64. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 74, 77.

65. Sidney Mead, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 16–37.

66. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1984), 53–56; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 1989), 114; Mario S. De Pillis, "The Quest for Religious Authority and the Rise of Mormonism," *Dialogue* 1, no. 1 (1966): 68–88.

67. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 99, 95, 114–115; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 106, 100.

68. De Pillis, "Brodie: Intersection of Secularism," 115, 116; Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 106, 109; Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, 7.

69. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 113. See also Lavina Anderson's personal reaction to reading *No Man Knows My History*, in "Literary Style," 128–29.

70. Stephenson, "Fawn McKay Brodie," 102; Van Wagoner, "Fawn M. Brodie: The Woman and Her History," 36.

71. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie*, 258, 257.

72. See particularly Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, in Strachey, *Standard Edition*, 21:3–56. On his theories of religion, see Daniel L. Pals, *Seven Theories of Religion* (New York: Oxford, 1996), 54–87.

73. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 57.

# Early Mormon and Shaker Visions of Sanctified Community

*J. Spencer Fluhman*

Polly Knight's health was failing as she and her family trudged toward western Missouri. Having accepted Joseph Smith Jr. as God's prophet on earth, the Knights left their Colesville, New York, farm and joined with other Mormon converts at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831. Finding a brief respite there, they again set out, this time for the city of "Zion" that Joseph Smith said they would help build in Jackson County, Missouri. Worried that Polly was too ill to complete the trek, her family considered stopping in hopes she might recover. But "she would not consent to stop traveling," recalled her son Newell: "Her only, or her greatest desire was to set her feet upon the land of Zion, and to have her body interred in that land." Fearing the worst, Newell bought lumber for a coffin in case she expired en route. "But the Lord gave her the desire of her heart, and she lived to stand upon that land."<sup>1</sup>

Latter-day Saints, though, were not the only Christian sect in the early nation to treasure the notion of a fellowship with other believers in a life apart from the world. A generation earlier, converts had come together to live as one in the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing. New converts, calling themselves Believers but commonly known as Shakers, gathered into communities in Massachusetts, New York, and other parts of New England. As this society expanded, Shaker leaders and converts traveled from established communities in New England to newly formed frontier communities in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Despite poverty, persecution, and the difficulties of frontier settlement, many reacted as did David Rowley, a Vermont cabinetmaker who converted to Shakerism in 1810, who wrote "that I never have seen one movement since I set out in this blessed way but that I felt thankful for it; & can with confidence



recommend it to all souls who are sick of the vain world & are seeking . . . a way of true life & imperishable love.”<sup>2</sup>

Such was the attachment of many Latter-day Saints and Shakers to the idea of living in a holy community. Throughout the nineteenth century, conversion to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or to the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing was virtually synonymous with “gathering.” Indeed, the search for a workable holy community serves as a unifying theme for the early history of both these movements. Historians have long noted similarities between the two

### J. Spencer Fluhman



My interest in Shaker communities stems from my stint as a research fellow in the “Archive of Restoration Culture” project sponsored by the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University. Under the direction of Richard L. Bushman (Gouverneur Morris Professor of History Emeritus, Columbia University), we fellows spent the summer of 1999 placing prominent LDS concepts in their early-American cultural context.

I was struck then, and now, by “gathering” as practiced by the early Saints and sought possible analogues in early American religious history. The Shakers were an obvious choice for comparison. Not only had earlier scholars noted similarities between the two movements but, as I sifted through early Shaker documents, I began to comprehend intersections not only between the groups’ communitarian impulses but in their prophetism, patterns of spirituality, and apocalyptic dispensationalism.

My interest in comparing Shaker and Mormon theology continued into my graduate studies in history at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and resulted in this extended analysis. I find that my D&C students here at BYU enjoy comparing the early Shaker and Mormon communities and reading the groups’ lively descriptions of each other.

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groups; Stephen Marini has gone so far to say that the Latter-day Saints were among the Shakers' "direct successors."<sup>3</sup>

Similarities notwithstanding, some nonhistorians might fail to associate the two movements, given the demographic trajectories each has followed since its respective founding. Mormonism experienced dynamic growth throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, partly the result of a vigorous proselytizing program and high birth rate. Over half of the Church's members today live outside the United States, establishing Mormonism as a world religion. Shakers, too, experienced periods of explosive growth in their early history, but seasons of intense proselytizing were interspersed with spans of official suspension of evangelism. Moreover, the Shakers' celibate life ensured a modest growth rate. Shakerism attracted adherents after the U.S. Civil War, but the number of followers has steadily dwindled since the mid-nineteenth century. A small handful of Believers now tend the remaining Shaker village in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.<sup>4</sup> Historians are thus more likely to call attention to the longevity of the Shaker experience than its size. Indeed, more than two hundred years of Shaker communal life have earned the sect the renown of being history's most successful communal society.<sup>5</sup>

These dissimilar histories notwithstanding, early Shakers and Mormons offered similar responses to the rapid transformations of the early American republic. Christians had long been accustomed to the notion of coming "out of the world" (1 Cor. 5:10), but most did not see that ideal in literal terms as did early Mormons and Shakers. Most of their Christian contemporaries no doubt felt that they, too, had been "chosen" out of the world (John 15:19), but they probably would have insisted that their faith or piety was enough to separate them from the profane and ungodly; they could live and work among the unregenerate without being "of the world." Mormons and Shakers, however, shared a conception of their communities as Zions—holy communities set apart wherein one might experience the true Christian church and pursue the right course to salvation.

Communitarianism offered practical advantages—a measure of physical protection, for example—for these persecuted, minority sects, but Mormons and Shakers saw their holy communities as more than pragmatic responses to outside circumstances. Indeed, the theologies of Joseph Smith (1805–1844) and Joseph Meacham (1742–1796), the respective founders of Mormon and Shaker communitarianism, shaped what might be termed a religious sociology for each sect. They infused their communities with tremendous theological significance, situating the communities in holy space and time and linking their characteristics with the fundamentals of Mormon and Shaker notions of salvation. And because these founders

defined their communities over and against American culture as they perceived it, these communities reflected their founders' dissatisfaction with various aspects of American life.

What follows is an elaboration of the meanings of religious community manifested in the theologies, organizations, and settlements led by Joseph Smith and Joseph Meacham. The two leaders dominated the theology of their movements in the early-nineteenth and late-eighteenth centuries, respectively, and their theologies in turn shaped their communities. Although each founder's vision of sanctified community was adjusted subsequently, the original frameworks persisted in modified form long into the history of each. Indeed, the historical procession of each movement across the years bears the imprint of these early visions. Mounting similar responses to shared concerns about their world, Mormons and Shakers nonetheless took very different paths across the nineteenth century. Ultimately, the differences between Smith's and Meacham's visions of religious community helped define the survival and expansion of each movement. Their approaches and concerns can be compared at four junctures: their attainment of leadership, their reasons for building Zion, the social and physical characteristics of their communities, and their conception of Zion in sacred history.

### **Zion's Prophets, Like unto Moses**

Mormons and Shakers looked to Joseph Smith and Joseph Meacham as their respective prophet-leaders, but the two men came to that status in different ways. The process was somewhat uncomplicated in Smith's case: though it was not easy for Smith to achieve his reputation as a prophet, Latter-day Saints by definition believed in his prophetic powers. He shared administrative power in the church with close associates and shifted considerable responsibilities of governance to administrative councils as the church grew, but he dominated theological and administrative decisions throughout the church's first decade and a half. He presented many of his revelations as scripture; he related visions and visitations from heavenly beings; he asserted that God's authority had been restored to him by prophets of the past and was thus found in Mormonism alone.<sup>6</sup> In short, Smith's declarations of prophetic gifts and divine manifestations were central to the Mormon message and to his acceptance as a leader among his people.

Joseph Meacham's ascendancy to preeminence was more complicated. He was not the founder of Shakerism but the third prophet to lead the sect. Meacham nonetheless came to be regarded as the father of

Shaker communitarianism. Father Joseph, as he was known to the faithful, built upon the traditions and teachings of charismatic founders and put in place reforms that shaped Shaker experience for generations.

**History of the Shakers.** The sect was born in Manchester, England, in the 1750s when James and Jane Wardley separated themselves from their Quaker community, having determined that their co-religionists had drifted from their ecstatic spiritual roots. Called Shakers for their “uncommon mode of religious worship,” which included shaking and other bodily contortions during trance-like states, the Wardleys’ small flock regarded them as “prophet and prophetess.”<sup>7</sup> This visionary preeminence within the group passed at some point to Ann Lee (or Lees). She and other Shakers lived in open antagonism to their Manchester neighbors. Court records document their frequent disturbance of local church meetings, in which they appear to have vocally condemned other Christians for their laxity and unrighteousness.<sup>8</sup> Predictably, these confrontational tactics engendered hostility in non-Shakers, and authorities quickly tired of the nuisance.<sup>9</sup>

By 1774, opposition in Manchester had become intense enough to convince Lee and a few other Shakers to emigrate to America. English pacifists could scarcely have picked a worse time to attempt a fresh start in the New World. Revolutionary Yankees viewed them with suspicion, and more than one transplanted Shaker spent a stint in jail during those first years. The English Shakers disappear from the documentary record until about 1777, when the tiny band purchased a small tract of land at Niskeyuna, near Albany, New York.<sup>10</sup>

The religious excitement that attended an evangelical “New Light” stir during summer 1779 helped prompt the Shakers to promulgate their message actively. Evangelical revivals occurring in New York and Massachusetts heightened expectations of an imminent millennium, and tales of a “new and strange Religion” at Niskeyuna lured curious locals to visit the tiny Shaker enclave.<sup>11</sup> The New Light Baptists at New Lebanon sent church elder Joseph Meacham and a few others from the congregation to investigate the sect. Shaker tradition has it that Lee foresaw Meacham’s coming and that she and the other Shakers answered his queries with such eloquence and power that “at length he was fully convinced that these strange people professed the spirit, kingdom, & work for which he had so earnestly prayed, & sought . . . and that indeed their testimony was the voice of the son of God.”<sup>12</sup>

Prompted by their success with Meacham and the other New Light Baptists, Shakers decided in 1780 to open the gospel to their American neighbors. They established a system of hospitality and teaching, welcoming

visitors to Niskeyuna and inviting them to witness their worship and hear their doctrine.

Exactly what these early Shakers taught is not clear. Nor is it entirely apparent how the group lived or functioned. The paucity of sources for the earliest years is acute, made especially so by Ann Lee's hostility to written creeds, histories, or testimonials. Lee's own illiteracy no doubt contributed to these sentiments, which persisted in Shakerism after her death.<sup>13</sup> As a result, the primary documentary sources for this early period are Shaker theological and historical works written some thirty years after Lee's death and contemporary accounts by outsiders or defectors.<sup>14</sup> Historians have grown increasingly wary about accepting the Shaker accounts uncritically, fearing that their hagiographic nature might reveal more about nineteenth-century Shakers than earlier ones. The outsider or defector accounts are often hostile and hence possibly inaccurate as well, if for different reasons.<sup>15</sup>

Still, some general descriptions of the early period of Shaker history and doctrine are possible. Ann Lee, her brother William, and a close Manchester friend named James Whittaker comprised the leadership of the fledgling sect but functioned without clear responsibilities or roles—an arrangement Stephen Marini has characterized as “a kind of ensemble improvisation.”<sup>16</sup> Ann Lee acted as the group's charismatic visionary but was reportedly “a woman of few words.” Shaker historians touted her brother's piety but admitted he was not “much gifted in public speaking.”<sup>17</sup> James Whittaker, the more gifted orator, was the sect's chief teacher of doctrine. Early Shakers referred to Ann Lee as “Mother” or “Mother of Zion,” understood that she was “Christ's wife,”<sup>18</sup> and considered her “holy,” even “omniscient.”<sup>19</sup> Early Shakers taught that they comprised the only true church, a new dispensation of God's saving work. They taught that Christ had come in the body of the Believers, that celibacy was critical to spiritual progress, and that they communed with departed spirits.<sup>20</sup>

Lee and the English Shakers continued to teach the unconverted at Niskeyuna, holding meetings and worship services for converts who would travel there and return home after the meetings.<sup>21</sup> This practice left converts in outlying areas who could enjoy fellowship and instruction only to the extent that they could find time and resources to travel to Niskeyuna. To bolster the converts and spread their gospel, the Lees and James Whittaker undertook a prolonged evangelical circuit during 1781–83.<sup>22</sup>

The missionary journey was successful, but shortly after the two years of constant travel, the Shakers lost two of their three leaders. William and Ann Lee died in 1784, leaving Whittaker alone to lead the group. Most Believers accepted Whittaker as the lone head of the movement, though a

When I first saw this title, I wondered: Besides recognizing that Mormons and Shakers both created communities based on hopes that the millennium was near, can we Mormons really compare our family-centered church to a sect that believed in lifelong celibacy? After reading this article, I have to say that the answer is yes. Author Spencer Fluhman carefully points out several striking similarities between the Shaker and Latter-day Saint attempts to establish Zion. Even more intriguing than the similarities, crucial doctrinal differences distinguish the two religions beyond the Shakers' well-known celibacy. For example, this article showed that although the millenarian zeal between the two religions was similarly charged, Latter-day Saint views of Zion called for consistent and intense missionary work, leading to sustained growth. This article taught me about the connection between Shakers and early Mormons beyond what we know from Doctrine and Covenants 49.

—Karen Todd, BYU Studies

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few of the original English Shakers refused to acknowledge his leadership and left the group.<sup>23</sup> Whittaker's own unexpected death in 1787 came as a bewildering shock to the Believers.

**Father Joseph, Shakerism's "Apostle."** Early Shaker historian Calvin Green wrote in 1827 that, after Whittaker's death, "many of the Believers were . . . in doubt & fear, and some were quite weak, fearing that the gospel would come to an end." Green blamed this fear on the Shakers' believing "more in the person of Father James [Whittaker] than in the revelation of God in him." Believers looked to Joseph Meacham, his brother David, and fellow American convert Calvin Harlow as possible leaders. All had enjoyed close association with the English Shakers, were able speakers, and had been singled out by Ann Lee for special praise and affection. All three spoke at Whittaker's funeral; Green related that Meacham's address was especially moving—a sign, said Green in retrospect, that Meacham was God's choice to head the sect.<sup>24</sup>

This omen was not as apparent to Shakers in 1787 as it was to Green years later. For months following the funeral, "the Lead appeared to rest jointly on these three Elders; and it was hardly known which of the three were first in the Lead." Importantly for Meacham, he chose to remain at

New Lebanon while the other two candidates set out to visit Shakers in outlying locations to the east. In their absence, Meacham so sustained and impressed those Shakers at New Lebanon that all came to believe he was to lead. Green related that, after the return of the “other two Elders, they clearly saw that the anointing of the Lord was upon him [Meacham] . . . & came forward & acknowledged him as their Elder, and that he was chosen of God as the first in the lead, & that they could not keep the way of God without him; and this was now seen & felt by the spontaneous union of Believers.”<sup>25</sup>

It may never be known exactly what enabled Meacham to assume the leadership of the United Society. Shakers who knew him described him as “a verry able preacher,” and “though naturally of quite a bashful turn,” his “eloquence & understanding manner of speech” was such that Shakers thought “that few if any exceeded him.”<sup>26</sup> For these or some other reason, Meacham assumed control of the sect and proved himself an able administrator, effective organizer, and moving preacher. He presented his decisions as “revelation,” and Shakers acknowledged him as God’s mouthpiece to the faithful.<sup>27</sup> Esteemed as Shakerism’s “Apostle,” Meacham was able to pull the group’s theology and notions of community in a particular direction.<sup>28</sup>

### **Reasons for Building Zion**

Both Meacham and Smith claimed that God had revealed Zion’s structure and that they had simply followed his blueprints; as a result, neither offered extended explanations of his decisions regarding the communities. Even so, their decisions can be understood in several additional ways. One can regard, for instance, the historical development of each movement prior to major decisions about community organization to see if there existed internal or external conditions that made communitarian arrangements attractive or plausible. Alternately, understanding that Meacham and Smith identified their communities as standing apart from, and more holy than, the larger society leads one to assess the ways that their decisions constituted reactions to their received culture. Most helpful, though, is to compare the physical and social portraits of the communities themselves and, while juxtaposing both the founders’ statements about them and each leader’s theology generally, assess how holy community fit within each leader’s overall religious vision. This third avenue of inquiry provides the most insight into the founders’ aims, revealing that Meacham and Smith hoped their communities would facilitate the attainment of

theological goals. Despite broadly similar aims, though, Meacham and Smith nevertheless organized their communities very differently.

### **Historical Considerations for Mormon and Shaker Communitarianism**

Joseph Meacham assumed control of Shakerism at a precarious point of the sect's history, and the specific challenges Shakers faced at the time may have contributed to his ordering the community the way he did. Along with the successes of early Shaker proselytizing came almost constant opposition and persecution. Shakers had been jailed, denounced, threatened, and mobbed since their arrival in America; small, scattered groupings made Believers especially vulnerable to attack. Meacham was no doubt keenly aware of this problem—just weeks after Whittaker's death, two Shakers were attacked on their way to a public meeting near Pittsfield, Massachusetts.<sup>29</sup> Aside from the threat of persecution, Meacham may have worried about the time and resources it would take to continue the practice of visiting outlying areas to strengthen converts. Already stung by several exposés written by former members, Meacham and other Shakers may have been understandably concerned about dissension and defection. Stephen Stein speculates that communal organization increased economic stability through the sharing of resources and provided the group a much-needed sense of unity and shared purpose.<sup>30</sup> All of these factors probably contributed to the attractiveness of communitarianism for Meacham.

Historical considerations are less helpful as explanations of Joseph Smith's notions of religious community. Mormons, too, faced persecution almost immediately following the foundation of the Church. Smith and other converts faced harassment in New York, but on a scale much smaller than the opposition they would face in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. Perhaps Smith's first communitarian arrangements in Ohio were influenced by these New York troubles, but much of his foundational thought about Zion as a holy Mormon community was connected to the content of the Book of Mormon and early recorded revelations. Persecution no doubt helped refine and modify Smith's conceptualization of Zion, but it seems unlikely that opposition was constitutive of his vision.

### **Separation from the World**

Both Smith and Meacham clearly reacted to aspects of American culture by positing a more holy way practiced within their communities, and this posture undoubtedly contributed to the persecution they faced, but it is unlikely that they formed their communities with the sole purpose

of registering a cultural protest. Even so, through their construction of holy communities Smith and Meacham articulated alternatives to what they regarded as profane aspects of American culture. For example, both Shaker and Mormon communities featured administrative structures that were authoritarian, contrary to the model of a “democratization” of American Christianity that Nathan Hatch alleges occurred during the period.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Mormons and Shakers practiced communal or cooperative economic systems—Shakers did away with private property, and Mormons owned property but donated their surpluses to the poor—each at odds with the surging market capitalism of the early republic.<sup>32</sup> Atypical marriage and family arrangements—polygamy and celibacy—within both movements deviated from contemporary conventions of marriage and family life as well.<sup>33</sup> Still, despite these clear differences from contemporary society, Smith and Meacham addressed the ungodliness of the outside world within the context of a broader religious vision primarily concerned with the salvation of their followers and the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth.

### **Joseph Smith’s Intimations of Zion**

Early in the Mormon movement, Joseph Smith revealed the idea of Zion to the Latter-day Saints, and for the rest of his life he endeavored to realize those early visions. Calling the building up of Zion the “most important temporal object in view” of the early Latter-day Saints, Smith most often described his personal mission, and the aim of Mormonism generally, in terms of the “gathering” to Zion.<sup>34</sup>

Even before Smith published the Book of Mormon and formally organized the Church in 1830, his followers compiled, copied, and esteemed his revelations as extrabiblical scripture. Though Mormons were familiar with the word “Zion” from the Old and New Testaments, these new revelations introduced the word into a uniquely Mormon religious lexicon and established it as a key concept in Mormon theology. In 1829, a year before the publication of the Book of Mormon, one of the earliest usages of the terms appeared in a revelation admonishing the small band of Smith’s followers to “seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6). The Book of Mormon is replete with references to Zion, often equating it with a literal New Jerusalem that would be established “in this [American] land” (3 Nephi 20:22; 21:4, 24). The most detailed reference appears in an ancient prophecy about the coming forth of the gospel:

For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from



among my people, O house of Israel. . . . But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land [America] for their inheritance; And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst. (3 Ne. 21:20–25)

The topic of Zion is also addressed in the Book of Moses, part of Joseph Smith's revision of the Bible. The book expands on a brief biblical account of the antediluvian prophet Enoch, providing Latter-day Saints with a scriptural model for Zion. The Old Testament briefly describes Enoch: he "walked with God" during his "three hundred sixty and five years," and "was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:20–24). The New Testament book of Hebrews elaborates on the Genesis account: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Heb. 11:5). Enoch's final appearance in the biblical record relates his brief prophecy "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints" (Jude 1:14). In the Book of Moses, Enoch is given a divine commission to call the wicked to repentance and shown expansive visions concerning the last days. He gathers the righteous together and builds "a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION." The account relates that the "Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them." So great was the holiness of the ancient city that "Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven" (Moses 7:19, 21). A conversation between God and Enoch near the end of the account connects Enoch's holy city with Smith's latter-day work:

And righteousness will I [God] send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. (Moses 7:62)

Emerging from these and Smith's other teachings, Zion as a holy community had several meanings. First, Zion was often contrasted with "Babylon" to represent good and evil, the holy and the profane. Additionally, as was the case in the Enoch account, Zion was also a state of being and the name for God's people collectively, "the pure in heart." Finally, Zion and New Jerusalem were interchangeable names for a holy city to be built in America, reminiscent of one known by the same name in ancient times. Smith would draw on these multiple meanings to adapt the concept to changing circumstances and expanding vision.

### Joseph Meacham's Bold Undertaking

Unlike Smith, Joseph Meacham conceived of his holy communities in the context of previous leaders' visions. In part, he systematized impulses that had been a part of Shakerism from the beginning. Shaker tradition has it that Ann Lee "frequently prophesied of the gathering [of] the Church in Gospel Order; but thot it would not be her lot," but these accounts are almost "surely apocryphal"<sup>35</sup> because they include Lee's prophesying that it would "be the lot of Joseph Meacham" to accomplish such restructuring.<sup>36</sup> It seems unlikely that such uncertainty would

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*For both Shakers and Mormons, there was virtually no separation between spiritual and temporal concerns in Zion.*

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have accompanied Whittaker's death had the Shakers been accustomed to such prophecies about Meacham. Lee probably did seek greater consolidation of the Believers; clearly Whittaker did. Whittaker turned Shaker energies inward by closing the testimony of the Shaker gospel to the world, and he encouraged Believers to live together in groups where they could strengthen each other in the faith and share possessions. This sharing of resources made it possible for Whittaker to oversee the building of the first Shaker meetinghouse at New Lebanon in 1785.<sup>37</sup> These previous initiatives notwithstanding, it was Meacham who developed and implemented full-blown Shaker communitarianism.

Shaker histories pinpoint 1787 as a crucial turning point in the sect's history, the year Meacham "gathered" the "Church into gospel order."<sup>38</sup> Meacham established extensive administrative structures, provided Shaker communities with rules and codes of conduct, regularized Shaker worship, oversaw the construction of communal buildings, and reordered Shaker social life. Building on the inclinations of those leaders who

preceded him, Meacham erected the structures of Shaker communal life that persisted throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup>

### **A “Beautiful Outward Order”: Zion’s Physical and Social Characteristics**

The prophetic impulses of Meacham and Smith extended not only into the religious dimensions of community life, but also into the very social and physical details of their religious communities. For both Shakers and Mormons, there was virtually no separation between spiritual and temporal concerns in Zion.

**Physical Characteristics of Shaker Communities.** When Meacham assumed leadership of the Shakers, there were already several communities to which many Shakers had gathered. Meacham gathered the New Lebanon community “into order” first. Niskeyuna (later called Watervliet) functioned as the Shaker hub under Lee and Whittaker, but Meacham made New Lebanon Shakerism’s administrative center. Meacham himself had lived at New Lebanon, and the decision to establish it as the Shaker headquarters was made more likely by David Darrow’s donation of a large parcel of land, upon which Whittaker constructed the first meetinghouse. Meacham directed the building of structures, beginning with the “Great House” in 1788, designed to accommodate the large influx of Shakers to New Lebanon.<sup>40</sup> To serve Meacham’s aims for communal living arrangements, the new buildings were large and could be used for multiple purposes. No effort was made to construct living quarters for individuals or nuclear families.<sup>41</sup>

Meacham believed that physical forms and organization bespoke an approximation of things divine, that “the united order & interest of Believers both spiritual & temporal was an emanation from this Eternal order, [and] therefore was consecrated & sacred.”<sup>42</sup> The visual appearance of the community would serve as evidence that it was the earthly manifestation of the heavenly kingdom. Accordingly, Meacham instructed Believers that their gardens and crops should be planted in straight rows because “this will be preaching to the world for they admire the beautiful outward order of the people of God.”<sup>43</sup> Meacham’s concern for the orderliness of the community bordered on obsession. Walls and fences were constructed with precise straightness. Shakers even built roofs in a uniform shape. Meacham felt that “God created distinct spheres for the distinct species of both the vegetable & animal creation,” and as a result forbade the mingling of different species of animals or the grafting of branches to trees of a different kind. “So particular was he in this respect,” reported Calvin

Green, “that he would not even allow the eggs of one species of fowls to be set under another species, because it deranged their created order, & produced an unnatural anxiety & confusion which wronged the creature.”<sup>44</sup> Meacham probably understood that the visual power of such geometric precision and segregated organization came in its stark contrast with the haphazard villages and farms of the New England backcountry.<sup>45</sup>

**Physical Attributes of Mormon Zion.** Joseph Smith also had specific ideas about the shape of the city Zion, and he focused his energies on realizing the city throughout his life.<sup>46</sup> He first brought the Saints together in Kirtland, Ohio, which served as the Mormon headquarters from 1831 to 1837, but his attention was constantly straying west. Almost contemporaneous with the establishment of Kirtland, Smith revealed that the city of Zion, the Mormon New Jerusalem, would be built in Jackson County, Missouri, near the village of Independence. Though unrealized, Smith’s plans for the city Zion have been regarded as the foundational vision for his holy communities. It served as the model for the later Mormon communities in northern Missouri, Illinois, and the Great Basin.<sup>47</sup>

In 1833, Smith wrote to the fifteen hundred Saints in Missouri that their efforts to build up Zion should conform to the plans he enclosed.<sup>48</sup> He envisioned two concentric zones that encircled a third at the center of the city. Barns, farmland, and industry were to be built outside the city proper, and individual families would live in lots located in the grid-like intermediate zone. At the center would stand the temple complex of twenty-four buildings that were to serve as houses of worship, ritual, education, and public life. The overlap of spiritual and educational space differentiates it from the Shaker model. Whereas early Shakers renounced worldly learning as antithetical to spiritual truth and refused to educate children or adults in their communes, Smith’s revelations instructed Latter-day Saints to “seek learning, even by study” and to glean wisdom from the world’s “best books.”<sup>49</sup> And, unlike Joseph Meacham, who reportedly burned his valuable library when he converted to Shakerism,<sup>50</sup> Joseph Smith saw to it that the Mormon “school of the prophets,” a seminary of sorts for missionaries and leaders, taught German and astronomy along with theology.

The location of a temple or temples at the center of Smith’s planned city is foundational for understanding his vision of Zion and its place in the world. Smith never oversaw the building of a single chapel or meetinghouse, but he oversaw the construction of temples in Kirtland, Ohio, and Nauvoo, Illinois, and dedicated sites for temples in Independence, Adam-ondi-Ahman, and Far West, Missouri. Smith would later teach that certain ordinances required sacred ritual space, more holy than a

meetinghouse. Through ordinances performed in the temples, Latter-day Saints entered into covenants that ushered them into God's grace and gave them access to the blessings of Christ's redeeming atonement. Salvation itself hinged on baptism and the higher ordinances administered in Mormon temples. A temple-centered community, directed by the Mormon priesthood that administered essential ordinances, thus reflected Smith's ultimate theological hopes for his people; historian Richard Bushman is right to call the temple the "vortex" of Smith's Mormon community.<sup>51</sup>

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*The social organization of the Shaker communities reflected Meacham's ideal of an orderly gospel society. He invoked the Jewish temple as its organizing metaphor.*

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**Social Dimensions of Mormon Zion.** In like manner, the city of Zion functioned in Smith's mind as the hub for the church itself. Though the Missouri city of Zion was not built in Smith's day, other Mormon centers, especially Nauvoo and Salt Lake City, reflected his vision for a central place. He sought to establish a two-way motion around the Mormon nucleus, with missionaries going out from Zion, spreading the Mormon message across the world, and bringing back to the center the elect of God, and all else that was good or pure in the world that could enrich Zion.<sup>52</sup> Smith envisioned a city, quite unlike the small Shaker villages, with large streets and hotels where he and the Saints would entertain the world.<sup>53</sup> Zion would be a holy city apart from the world, but Smith intended that "all nations [would] flow unto it," to be taught of the Lord's ways and "walk in his paths" (Isaiah 2:2–3).

**Social Organization of Shaker Communities.** Meacham instituted an elaborate hierarchy to oversee the Shaker communities. He gathered a few prominent Shakers around him to constitute the "Ministry," who lived at New Lebanon and governed the sect. "It is a truth which ought to be supported <as> a principle of Faith in the Church," wrote Meacham, "especially by all that are called to office and oversight; that all true Church order and Law . . . is given by revelation and spiritual sensation, either in and by the Ministry, or by those that receive it by, and in relation to them."<sup>54</sup> The Ministry presided over lesser ranks of bishops, elders, and deacons who were to "see that the orders they give are according <to the principles> and the orders and counsels, which they have received."<sup>55</sup> Meacham instituted a parallel female line of authority, placing Lucy Wright over the female line. Meacham told her that she was "one whom I esteem my Equal in order & Lot according to thy sex / as it hath pleased

God to Create me for & Call me to the First Lot of Care in my sex & thee in thine.”<sup>56</sup> Meacham’s esteem for Wright was unfeigned; she was among his chief advisors, and he instructed that she replace him as the sect’s leader after his death. Meacham thus shifted Shaker authority from the person of the ecstatic leader to an office in the centrally located hierarchy. As Calvin Green explained it, the “Church [was] established as Mount Zion, & the believers were like the tribes of Israel round about, having received the Law from Zion, & the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”<sup>57</sup>

James Whittaker had instructed Believers that they were to conduct themselves in the meetinghouse with “reverence and Godly fear,” taking care that men and women entered separate doors and refrained from sitting together.<sup>58</sup> Meacham elaborated on Whittaker’s instructions, initiating more comprehensive reforms in Shaker worship. Early Shaker worship was described as outlandish by most who recorded their observations. One report of their religious exercises related members “dancing in extravagant postures” and whirling with “inconceivable rapidity” before collapsing to the floor.<sup>59</sup> Meacham discontinued these individualized ecstatic reveries, instituting instead a regimented performance of dances and chants. Believers were set in rows, separated by sex, and moved in unison to learned patterns (fig. 1). Calvin Green wrote that Meacham “had naturally no faculty in the dance” of the style promoted under Lee and Whittaker, “and for some time, after much struggle he could not gain a gift.”<sup>60</sup> Perhaps his own difficulty with the earlier style prompted his worship reforms, but, in any case, he designed the new patterns and ensured that any innovations in outlying areas were approved by the ministry.<sup>61</sup>

The social organization of the Shaker communities reflected Meacham’s ideal of an orderly gospel society. He invoked the Jewish temple as its organizing metaphor. Three concentric spheres, corresponding to the courts and interior of the ancient temple, organized the community. Those who of necessity had the greatest contact with the world, usually the least experienced and impious of the community, comprised the outer court. The second tier, made up of those intermediate Shakers neither inexperienced nor spiritually mature, dealt less directly with the outside, but nonetheless involved themselves heavily in temporal affairs. The inner circle of Believers included the most spiritually experienced. Meacham set this group almost entirely apart, circumscribing their contact with the world and other less-experienced Shakers as well.<sup>62</sup>

Meacham dissolved biological families, making the care of children an assigned, rather than natural, obligation. Believers thus organized into these large “spiritual” families worked together, strengthened one another, and worshiped together. These gospel families lived regimented



FIG. 1. *Shakers Near Lebanon State of N. York, Their Mode of Worship*, ca. 1830, artist unknown. The Shaker dance style pictured above, first developed under the leadership of Joseph Meacham, was unlike the more individualized, spontaneous expressions that predominated under earlier Shaker leaders. The precision and regimentation of this later form of worship is emblematic of the highly structured religious life Meacham sought to create within Shaker communes.

lives. Meacham regulated nearly every aspect of community life. Men and women slept and ate apart in spacious structures that could accommodate large numbers. Shakers awoke together, followed a rigorous daily routine, and observed a multitude of oral and written laws. For instance, men and women could not pass each other on the stairs, for fear that inadvertent touching might invite temptation. No Believer was to play with cats and dogs, lest they “corrupt the animals by raising them out of their order.”<sup>63</sup> Shakers were not to give nicknames.<sup>64</sup> Obedient Shakers closed gates, left nothing out of place, and refrained from walking noisily on the floor.<sup>65</sup> Meacham “expressly taught” Shakers to “show our union in all our proceedings.” “When walking together side by side,” Shakers were to “keep step, with the same foot, & when two were either walking or riding together, they should never suffer any person of the world, nor an animal of any kind to pass between them, it was a sign that such were not in that union, which the gospel requires.”<sup>66</sup> With these “millennial laws,” as they were known, Meacham hoped to unify Shakers and provide a setting in which they could best live out the ideals of Shaker piety.



Meacham and other Shakers understood salvation in terms of “spiritual travel.” Shakers were to learn doctrines and principles of the true gospel, render obedience to the laws and ideals of Shaker life, and thereby progress gradually in understanding and piety towards sinless perfection. Meacham ordered his community to serve this process. Because Meacham, like Lee and Whittaker, understood celibacy to be paramount in this spiritual journey, many of his organizational measures and millennial laws were designed to decrease the likelihood of the intermingling of the sexes to avoid fleshly temptation at all cost. Moreover, regular contact between presiding officers and each Believer (of the same sex) provided an intimate setting for instruction, encouragement, reproof, and the confession of sins, which Meacham regarded as crucial for salvation and community order alike.<sup>67</sup> Meacham’s concern for the salvation of his people is poignantly expressed in a letter to Lucy Wright, written just prior to his death in 1796. “I believe the Late & present troubles among the [young?] In the church is the Chief Cause of my Present Weakness & Sufferings,” he wrote. Because the “Principles of Gods grace to man in the Present day Were not Planted in them,” Meacham feared that “many may depart from The Faith.” Meacham’s final “hope & Expectation” was that his “Labours & Troubles” with the Believers would ensure that the “Great Number of the young will Keep their Faith.”<sup>68</sup>

Both Meacham and Smith credited their communities with promoting unity and order. Each was confident that non-believers would recognize the distinctive holiness of their Zions and be inclined to join with the faithful. In this way, the two leaders each intended that their community embody their unique religious message. In directing their people to live and work apart from non-believers, Smith and Meacham both drew on images of “coming out of the world” and “gathering to Zion.” These images coexisted within each movement, but were not identical: the sanctified community was both a haven from a wicked world as well as a beacon to a wandering one. Where the first notion, that of leaving the world, involved rejection and removal, the second, of gathering, entailed engagement and accommodation. Both notions went hand in hand for Mormons and Shakers, and the various strategies employed to serve both ideals largely dictated the ability of each group to sustain itself and expand. In the end, Shakers were increasingly drawn to the first idea, while Mormons opted for emphasis on the second.

At first glance, it appears that Meacham gambled much on the attractiveness of his reforms. During the ten-year period of his leadership, he continued Whittaker’s practice and strictly forbade any Shaker proselytizing. Shakers before and after him were ardent evangelists, experiencing



periods of explosive growth, leaving historians to puzzle over Meacham's decision. Perhaps convinced that Shakerism needed internal bolstering, or indeed supremely confident of the allure of his ordered, unified communes, Meacham brought Shaker numerical growth to a halt in the short term. Even more significantly, however, his model for the community in some ways set the sect in a direction that would hem-in future expansion.

Meacham's system provided that the farther one progressed in Shaker spirituality, the farther one's distance from non-believers. This strategy placed the best teachers, preachers, and examples of Shaker piety (those best able to represent Shaker ideals) away from positions of influence with the unconverted. This model, along with Meacham's restrictions on proselytizing and promotion of celibacy, seems entirely incongruent with Shaker rhetoric of the period predicting a vast flood of converts flocking to the truth. Smith's revelations also demarcated Mormons from a profane outside world, but nonetheless more explicitly acknowledged a certain engagement with it. The historical progression of each sect reflects this differentiation between Meacham's and Smith's conceptualizations. Shakers remained committed to a more radical separation from the outside world throughout the nineteenth century, though they found it increasingly difficult to maintain the distance.<sup>69</sup> When forced to choose between separatism and conversions, Mormons have historically opted for limited accommodation with the outside to achieve those conversions.

### **A "Fullness of Times": Zion in Sacred History**

Joseph Smith and Joseph Meacham set their respective communities within epochs of salvation history. Both connected their respective Zions to a distant, purer past and a triumphant millennial future. Accordingly, Mormons and Shakers believed they were participating in the work of the "last days," simultaneously a preparation for an apocalyptic millennium and the culmination of God's work throughout human history. Predictably, Smith's and Meacham's concepts of sacred time related to their sanctified communities. Both movements were primitivist; in other words, they looked back to the New Testament church as a model to be emulated. Both were also broadly premillennialist, meaning that they felt an appearance of Christ would inaugurate an apocalyptic change on earth and usher in a thousand-year reign of peace. Yet each lived a variation on these themes. Moreover, each adapted the connections between community and sacred time as they progressed in the nineteenth century. They never veered from their certainty that history had been providentially progressing toward their Zions and that the millennium would uniquely reward their

efforts, but they had to reassess earlier notions of sacred time as their own history presented unexpected circumstances.<sup>70</sup>

**Millennialism and the Shaker Community.** Joseph Meacham published Shakerism's first tract in 1790, reversing earlier prohibitions against theological or historical writing.<sup>71</sup> In it, he described four dispensations of God's work in human history. Abraham and the ancient patriarchs were granted the "first light of salvation . . . altho' they could not receive regeneration or the fulness of salvation from the fleshly or fallen nature in this life."<sup>72</sup> The second dispensation of salvation was offered to Israel by the "hand of *Moses*," but the truth made manifest at that time was only a "shadow of good things to come."<sup>73</sup> The third dispensation was "the gospel of CHRIST's first appearance, in the flesh . . . but . . . the measure of that dispensation" was still incomplete. "The mystery of GOD" was not finished, in Meacham's reckoning, as there "was another day prophesied of, called the second appearance of CHRIST, or final and last display of GOD's grace to a lost world." Before that last dispensation would come, however, there would be a general apostasy from true Christianity. Interpreting 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Meacham wrote that a "falling away began soon after the apostles, and gradually increased in the church, until about four hundred and fiftyseven years from CHRIST's birth (or thereabouts) at which time the power of the HOLY PEOPLE, or church of CHRIST, was scattered or lost by reason of transgression: and anti-christ, or false religion, got to be established."<sup>74</sup> Meacham testified that the Shaker gospel had inaugurated the culminating dispensation, and the visions, revelations, prophecies, and other spiritual gifts evident among the faithful revealed it as such. To conclude his brief summary of the dispensations of God's grace, Meacham entreated his readers to "believe the testimony of truth" and "obtain the mercy of GOD . . . before it be too late."<sup>75</sup>

Joseph Meacham thus believed that his communal order was not only "a resemblance of the kingdom of Christ in Heaven," but also a restoration of the apostolic church's purity.<sup>76</sup> Shakers consistently contrasted the unity of the primitive church with the proliferation of sects and denominations in early America, concluding that the era's Protestant pluralism was evidence that "they have not the holy Ghost."<sup>77</sup> Looking back at what was lost in the falling away since the time of Christ—the power of the Church having been destroyed by contention<sup>78</sup>—Meacham saw in the Shaker gospel the millennial hope for humanity. The power, order, and government by succession thus restored, wandering souls needed to come out from a corrupt world and an apostate Christianity to be saved.<sup>79</sup>

If Meacham endowed Shaker communitarianism with a sacred past, Shakers in general were ambivalent about its role in the future. For Shakers,

Christ's second appearance had already come in the body of believers (or in Ann Lee, according to later formulations), so there was no expectation of a coming kingdom.<sup>80</sup> They were premillennialist in the sense that they felt Christ's coming would initiate a new age, which they believed had been set in motion by their own movement, but passing years eroded the Shaker expectation of radical, apocalyptic transformation. Perhaps their ambivalence concerning evangelism is best understood in light of this waning belief that the millennial age had commenced. Early Shakerism was marked by urgency and the feeling that "God was moving *now* in the world."<sup>81</sup> There was even talk of constructing a large ship that would carry the converted from England and Europe to the American communes.<sup>82</sup> This fervor faded as the nineteenth century wore on, perhaps partly due to the realization that their work had not ushered in the apocalyptic change they had earlier expected. Certainly, Shaker writing moved away from the earlier, dire warnings that the end was very near. Their rhetoric continued to insist that they would take the Shaker gospel to the world, but nineteenth-century Believers were more concerned with "gospel order" than they were with warning others of an apocalyptic end of time. With millennial expectations and evangelical zeal both gradually cooling as the nineteenth century progressed, Shakers, it seems, channeled their spiritual energies into disengaging from the world, fostering internal order and unity, and progressing in their spiritual journey among other believers while the world passed by in ignorance.

**Mormon Millennialism.** Joseph Smith, too, focused his movement on the imminence of Christ's second coming, which provided the ideological energy for the proselytizing urgency characteristic of Mormonism throughout the nineteenth century. He connected his Zion to the past, but he went beyond comparing it to the New Testament church.<sup>83</sup> And as events that Smith had not expected unfolded in early Mormon history, he, too, reevaluated the idea of Zion and emphasized the more expansive aspects of the concept.

Zion was so important to Smith's millenarian timetable that he rarely spoke of Mormonism's mission in terms other than gathering Israel and building Zion. As he taught it, this gathering and establishment of Zion were central components of a premillennial crescendo that would culminate in the destruction of the wicked at Christ's second coming. The righteous, gathered safely in Zion, would occupy the earth during the thousand-year reign of peace. For early Mormons, then, the millennium itself hinged on the success of their ideal communities. "Unless Zion is built," wrote an early Mormon bishop, "our hopes perish, our expectations fail, our

prospects are blasted, our salvation withers, and God will come and smite the whole earth with a curse.”<sup>84</sup>

As the city of Zion was to be Smith’s geographic vortex for the church, so it was also centralized in time within sacred history. Smith identified Zion’s Missouri location with the deepest of pasts, proclaiming that it had been the spot of the biblical Garden of Eden. Having revealed the description of Enoch’s city that had been taken to God without any of its inhabitants tasting death, Smith’s revelations also foretold that at the end of time Enoch’s heavenly city would meet the earthly Mormon Zion.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Smith taught that the temple to be built in Zion would be the site of a pre-apocalyptic visitation of Christ, asserting it would be the temple to which the Lord would “suddenly” come.<sup>86</sup> The significance of the city of Zion was enhanced by the importance Smith attached to the site of a Mormon settlement he named Adam-ondi-Ahman, located north of the “center place” in Jackson County (D&C 57:3; 116:1). Like Zion, Adam-ondi-Ahman was sacralized in time, Smith having taught that it was the location of an ancient gathering where Adam, the “Ancient of Days,” pronounced blessings on his posterity and prophesied of things to befall the “latest generation” (D&C 107:56; 116:1). Additionally, Adam-ondi-Ahman was to be the site of a premillennial council to which Adam would return and present the authority over the earth to Christ before the priesthood of all ages assembled.<sup>87</sup> Sacred time and space thus merged in Smith’s revelations concerning the central holy city. The space was hallowed for Mormons by what had occurred there in the deep past and what would take place there in a triumphant millennial future.

Connections such as this between theology, time, and place are integral in the corpus of Joseph Smith’s teachings, in which promised lands are regularly connected with sacred vows and covenant peoples. For Smith, this latter-day gathering of scattered Israel was the culmination of the Abrahamic promises made in antiquity that provided the Holy Land as a gathering place for the Jews and America as a gathering place for other of Israel’s tribes. Gathering was thus not simply a concern of the “dispensation of the fulness of times”; rather, it was a part of God’s designs for his people throughout history. The purpose of gathering God’s people “*in any age of the world*” was to affect the building of a house “whereby he could reveal unto his people the ordinances . . . & teach the peopl[e] the ways of salvation.”<sup>88</sup> Joseph Smith and the early Saints understood that “the building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age,” and they infused their communities with sacred meaning that stretched back to Eden and forward to Christ’s millennial reign.<sup>89</sup>

Unfortunately for the Mormons, their neighbors did not see the Missouri frontier in the same light. Claims that Missouri land was holy ground reserved for the Saints intensified animosities posed by cultural, religious, economic, and political differences that culminated in the hostilities of 1833 and 1838. Mormons in Jackson County were removed by force in 1833. Dedicated to the idea of the Saints' duty to build the

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*Joseph Smith's vision for Zion had always been expansive, even global.*

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holy city, Smith led over two hundred men to reclaim Mormon property in 1834. State authorities worked out a settlement to avert violence, and Mormons were forced to look for temporary refuge elsewhere, hoping the courts would return their Zion to them. The courts did not, and Mormons settled Daviess and Caldwell Counties in northern Missouri and were joined by their prophet in 1838 when the Ohio communities collapsed. Tensions again flared up, and a virtual civil war in 1838 sent the Saints fleeing to Illinois while their prophet spent the winter in the dungeon of the Liberty, Missouri, jail. His captivity provided a period of contemplation, and he emerged with a new-found vigor to establish yet another Mormon center, this time in Nauvoo, Illinois.

It was in Nauvoo that Zion took on its final conceptual framework during Smith's life. Having been denied his Missouri Zion, Smith emphasized the expansive nature of the concept. His vision for Zion had always been expansive, even global. His 1833 plan for Zion contained the instructions that once the city reached its capacity of fifteen to twenty thousand people, other communities would be established "in the same way, and so fill up the world in the last days."<sup>90</sup> By 1844, Smith was teaching that all of North and South America constituted Zion.<sup>91</sup> He and the Mormon leaders who followed him stressed that the "Lord called his people ZION" in ancient times "because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness," not because of where they lived (Moses 7:18). Zion, in short, existed wherever one found true Saints. Utilizing meanings that had been subsumed in the concept of Zion from the outset, Smith shifted the primary meaning of the term from the name of the central Mormon city toward the notion of a promised land or state of mind. While the Latter-day Saints have never disregarded the importance of the Jackson County location, the term "Zion" has long since ceased to apply exclusively to that location.<sup>92</sup>

## A Meeting and Parting of American Zions

Brother Ashbel Kitchell, a Shaker of Union Village, Ohio, remembered that in “1829” [*sic*; it was 1830] a “new religion” came to northern Ohio, creating “a good deal of excitement among the people.” Kitchell reported that he and the other Shakers granted the newcomers, including Oli-

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*For all their similarities, Mormonism and Shakerism forever parted ways after a brief meeting in northern Ohio in 1830.*

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ver Cowdery, a forum to share their message. In Kitchell’s appraisal, the Mormons were “meek and mild, but as for light, or knowledge of the way of God, I considered them very ignorant of Christ or his work.”<sup>93</sup>

The Mormons, however, were undeterred. After Shaker Leman

Copley became convinced that the Mormons had the true Zion, he in turn convinced Joseph Smith that his former brethren might be similarly receptive to the Mormon message. Accordingly, Smith recorded a revelation and sent Copley, Sidney Rigdon, and Parley Pratt to deliver it to the Shakers at Union Village. Smith’s revelation, which Rigdon read to the assembled Shakers, related the voice of the Lord concerning the Shakers, conveying the message that “they desire to know the truth in part, but not all, for they are not right before me and must needs repent.” Rigdon went on to read that “whoso forbiddeth to marry is not ordained of God,” and, finally, “the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman” (D&C 49:2, 15, 22). As one might guess, the Shakers were unimpressed. Pratt’s recollection of the event is understandably succinct: “We fulfilled this mission [to the Shakers], as we were commanded, in a settlement of this strange people . . . but they utterly refused to hear or obey the gospel.”<sup>94</sup>

For all their similarities, Mormonism and Shakerism forever parted ways after this brief meeting in northern Ohio. Whatever comparable responses they offered to the world around them, they could scarcely begin to comprehend one another. In the end, each esteemed the other as one of the many groups blinded to the true light revealed anew in the early American republic.

Yet, as this essay has explored, it is not difficult to understand why the former Shaker Copley and the Mormon prophet were hopeful about the meeting of the two Zions. Both movements shared premises about the importance of sanctified communities, even if that commonality did little to produce identical Zions. Meacham devised a Shaker community wherein the faithful could come out from the world and embark on a spiritual journey that would take them in degrees from corruption to

perfection, and he set the group on a course toward more pronounced separatism. It was Smith's more grandiose set of plans and expectations, by contrast, that prompted his dispatching of the most gifted Mormon preachers to missionize in England and elsewhere beginning with apostle Heber C. Kimball's 1837–38 mission to England and culminating in the eminently successful British mission of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1839–41.<sup>95</sup>

In retrospect, Smith's curious strategy of sending his most talented and loyal followers away from the center of church affairs during a time of crisis appears to have succeeded brilliantly. The influx of thousands of European converts mitigated the effects of what might have been a devastating number of defections in Ohio and Missouri in 1837–38 and partially fortified the Church against similar problems in Nauvoo—to say nothing of the role played by European Saints in the trek to the Rockies and Zion-building in the West. It is the foreign mission that perhaps best delineates the difference in the Mormon and Shaker conception of holy community. While internal concerns prompted Meacham and later Shakers to turn inward and away from evangelism, Smith reinvigorated his Zion with an increasingly far-flung gathering of Saints. That both movements experienced remarkable success in the nineteenth century is a testament to the vision of the Mormon and Shaker prophets.

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1. Newell Knight, quoted in Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 1:199n (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*).

2. Priscilla J. Brewer, *Shaker Communities, Shaker Lives* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1986), 32–34.

3. Stephen A. Marini, *Radical Sects of Revolutionary New England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 175. Marini contends that Mormonism “repeated the growth and cultural development processes of the earlier rural movements.” *Radical Sects*, 7.

4. By invoking demographical differences, I do not mean to imply that the number of adherents is the only measure of religious success. It would be a



mistake, in other words, to make *failure* the master-narrative of Shaker history. Even so, both movements early on expected mass conversions and toiled to that end. Scholars agree that among Shakerism's pressing tasks since the Civil War has been the management of "decline." Historian Stephen J. Stein takes on the complicated notion of religious decline in *The Shaker Experience in America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), 337–54.

5. Clarke Garrett, *Spirit Possession and Popular Religion: From the Comisards to the Shakers* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987, reprinted in paperback as *Origins of the Shakers: From the Old World to the New World*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1998), viii (page citations are to both editions). The best one-volume history of Shakerism is Stein, *Shaker Experience*; of Mormonism, Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 2d ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

6. Smith related that prominent figures from the Old and New Testaments bestowed upon him the authority to perform baptism and otherwise act in the name of God. He said that John the Baptist restored to him a lesser priesthood, which included the authority to baptize, and that Peter, James, and John restored to him a higher priesthood, which included the authority to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost, perform marriages, and various other rites. Smith credited other prophetic figures with bestowals of various powers. On the reception of the lesser priesthood, see Doctrine and Covenants 13; on the higher priesthood, see Doctrine and Covenants 18, 20, and 27; for Old Testament figures and the bestowal of various powers, see Doctrine and Covenants 110; see also Doctrine and Covenants 20, 84, and 107 for Smith's primary revelations on priesthood. For recent discussions of Smith's conceptualizations of religious authority, see Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 143–79; Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 74–78; Dan Vogel, *Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988); D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 1–78; and Gregory A. Prince, *Power from on High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995).

7. *Virginia Gazette*, November 9, 1769, 1. All quoted material retains original spelling and grammar unless otherwise noted.

8. Records of the constables at Manchester, cited in William E. A. Axon, "The Early Shakers in Manchester," *Manifesto* 22 (1892): 193–94.

9. Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 4–7.

10. Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 7–8.

11. Valentine W. Rathbun, *An Account of the Matter, Form, and Manner of a New and Strange Religion, Taught and Propagated by a Number of Europeans, Living in a Place called Nisqueunia, in the State of New-York* (Providence, R.I.: Bennet Wheeler, 1781), 3.

12. Theodore E. Johnson, ed., "Biographical Account of the Life, Character, and Ministry of Father Joseph Meacham, the Primary Leader in Establishing the United Order of the Millennial Church by Calvin Green 1827," *Shaker Quarterly* 10, vols. 1–3 (1970): 26.



13. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 149.

14. The two most important early Shaker historical sources are Rufus Bishop and Seth Y. Wells, eds., *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of Our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with Her; Through Whom the Word of Eternal Life was Opened in This Day of Christ's Second Appearing: Collected from Living Witnesses* (Hancock, Mass.: J. Tallcott and J. Deming Jr., 1816); and Calvin Green and Seth Y. Wells, *Summary View of the Millennial Church, or United Society of Believers, (Commonly Called Shakers). Comprising the Rise, Progress and Practical Order of the Society; Together with the General Principles of Their Faith and Testimony* (Albany: Packard and Van Benthuyssen, 1823). Important early apostate accounts include Valentine Rathbun, *Account of the Matter*; Valentine Rathbun, *Some Brief Hints of a Religious Scheme, Taught and propagated by a Number of Europeans, living in a Place called Nisqueunia, in the State of New-York* (New York: n. p., 1783); Daniel Rathbun, *A Letter From Daniel Rathbun, from Richmond, in the County of Berkshire, to James Whittacor, Chief Elder of the Church, called Shakers* (Springfield, Mass.: Printing Office, 1785); Reuben Rathbun, *Reasons Offered for Leaving the Shakers* (Pittsfield, Mass.: Chester Smith, 1800); and Amos Taylor, *A Narrative of the Strange Principles, Conduct and Character of the People Known by the Name of Shakers* (Worcester, Mass.: Isaiah Thomas, 1782).

15. Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 9. Some historians have based their analyses of early Shakerism on the later Shaker compilations, without noting or perhaps perceiving possible problems with their accuracy. Examples are Marini, *Radical Sects*; and Marjorie Procter-Smith, *Women in Shaker Community and Worship: A Feminist Analysis of the Uses of Religious Symbolism* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1985).

16. Marini, *Radical Sects*, 89–90.

17. Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies*, 82–83, 309, 338–53.

18. Rathbun, *Account of the Matter*, 12; see also 5–7.

19. "Some Account of the Tenets and Practice of the Religious Society Called Shaker," *The American Museum* (February 1787): 148–50. See also *Albany Gazette*, September 9, 1784.

20. Benjamin West, *Scriptural Cautions against Embracing a Religious Scheme, Taught by a Number of Europeans, Who Came from England to America, in the Year 1776, and Stile Themselves the Church, &c. &c.* (Hartford, Conn.: Babil Webster, 1783), 3–8, 10–11, 13; see also Taylor, *Narrative*; Rathbun, *Account of the Matter*, 4–8.

21. Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies*, 82–83.

22. Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies*, 82–104.

23. See Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 33.

24. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 28–29.

25. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 29.

26. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 23.

27. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 61.

28. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 56.

29. Eli Root to Edmond Crane and Thomas Fuller, August 9, 1787, Shaker Manuscripts, IV A-19, Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio, microfilm copy at State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin; Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 41.

30. Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 43.

31. Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989). Hatch's work has garnered wide acceptance, though some historians have questioned its usefulness. Christine L. Heyrman, for instance, has shown Hatch's interpretation to be problematic with regard to the South. See Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998). Paul E. Johnson has cautioned that Christianity may indeed have been "democratized," but in the historically specific sense of the word. Early-republic-era "democracy," in other words, could foster broader participation and check some traditional means of power, but it could also buttress others, such as hierarchies of race and gender. See Paul E. Johnson, "Democracy, Patriarchy, and American Revivals, 1780-1830," *Journal of Social History* 24, no. 4 (1991): 843-50.

32. For a doctrinal explanation of Shaker economic practice, see John Dunlavy, *The Manifesto, or a Declaration of the Doctrines and Practice of the Church of Christ* (Pleasant Hill, Ky.: P. Bertrand, 1818), chapter 6. For Mormon cooperative economies, see Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation among the Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976; reprint, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

33. See Lawrence Foster, *Women, Family and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1991); and Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

34. *History of the Church*, 1:207.

35. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 222.

36. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 27-29; see also Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies*, 219. In this regard, many Shaker accounts, including Green's, are contradictory, relating both the prophecies and the uncertainty surrounding Meacham's ascendancy.

37. William Plummer (1783), "The Original Shaker Communities in New England," ed. F. B. Sanborn, *New England Magazine* 22 (1900): 304-6, 308-9.

38. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 29-30; see also Green and Wells, *Summary View*, 51-53.

39. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 214-42; Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 41-49.

40. "A Memorandum Kept by Jethro [Turner]," Shaker Manuscripts, V B-75.

41. Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 44.

42. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 66.

43. Quoted in Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 227.

44. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 62-63.

45. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 226-29.

46. Informing my discussion of the plan for the city of Zion are several important studies: Richard L. Bushman, *Making Space for the Mormons*, Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture Series Publications, no. 2 (Logan: Utah State

University Press, 1996); Leonard J. Arrington, "Joseph Smith, Builder of Ideal Communities," in Larry C. Porter and Susan E. Black, eds., *The Prophet Joseph: Essays on the Life and Mission of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988); Steven L. Olsen, "Joseph Smith's Concept of the City of Zion," in *Joseph Smith: The Prophet, the Man*, ed. Susan E. Black and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993); and C. Mark Hamilton, *Nineteenth-Century Mormon Architecture and City Planning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), chapter 2. Also helpful, though somewhat dated, is Richard H. Jackson, "The Mormon Village: Genesis and Antecedents of the City of Zion Plan," *BYU Studies* 17 (Winter 1977): 223-40.

47. See Hamilton, *Mormon Architecture*, for an extended discussion of Mormon community planning.

48. A facsimile of the original plan and transcription of the Smith's handwritten marginal notes (it also includes handwriting of Smith's confidante Frederick G. Williams) is provided in Hamilton, *Mormon Architecture*, 15-18, plates 1 and 2, found after page 31. Hamilton also includes a facsimile of another plan for Zion, in which Smith made various minor alterations, which he found in the LDS Church archives in the late 1970s.

49. Doctrine and Covenants 88:118. It should be noted that later, in the nineteenth century, Shakers were heavily involved in their own educational efforts, establishing their own schools.

50. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 198.

51. Bushman, *Making Space*, 4-7.

52. Bushman, *Making Space*, 5.

53. It is interesting to note that one of Smith's revelations relates the divine decree that a hotel be built in Nauvoo, "a house for boarding, a house that strangers may come from afar to lodge therein . . . that the weary traveler may find health and safety while he shall contemplate the word of the Lord" (D&C 124:23).

54. Rufus Bishop, ed., "A Collection of the Writings of Father Joseph Meacham, Respecting Church Order and Government; Evidently Intended for Way-marks, for All Who Were or Should Be Called in Spiritual or Temporal Care, in the Church," Shaker Manuscripts, VII B-59, 1. Angle brackets < > indicate words that were added above the line.

55. Bishop, "Collection of Writings," 2.

56. Joseph Meacham to Lucy Wright, ca. 1796, Shaker Manuscripts, IV A-30.

57. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 53.

58. Bishop, "Collection of Writings," 93-95.

59. James Thatcher, *Military Journal of the American Revolution* (Hartford, Conn.: Hurlbut, Williams, 1862), 141-42, cited in Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 162.

60. Johnson, "Biographical Account," 27.

61. Daniel W. Patterson, *The Shaker Spiritual* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), 73-74, 99, 107.

62. Meacham, "A Short Information of my Order and Family," Shaker Manuscripts, I A-8. On the reverse side of the first page of this manuscript, Shaker leader Alonzo Hollister wrote, "This was preserved in the Deacon's room of the third Family, or Outer court. Afterwards, the Second Order of the Church. Taken from there by A.G.H. When the Family moved away in July 1896. If not written by

Father Joseph, I think it must have been dictated by him, & written by <him or> one of his Assistants in gathering the Church. A.G.H. Mch. 4[,] 1911.”

63. Johnson, “Biographical Account,” 62–63.

64. “Millennial Laws, or Gospel Statutes and Ordinances Adapted to the Day of Christ’s Second Appearing,” August 7, 1821, revised October 1845, cited in full in Edward D. Andrews, *The People Called Shakers: A Search for the Perfect Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 268.

65. Some other early “Millennial Laws” are related in Thomas Brown, *Account of the People Called Shakers: Their Faith, Doctrines, and Practice, Exemplified in the Life, Conversations, and Experience of the Author during the Time He Belonged to the Society. To Which is Affixed a History of Their Rise and Progress to the Present Day* (Troy, N.Y.: Parker and Bliss, 1812); and William J. Haskett, *Shakerism Unmasked, or the History of the Shakers* (Pittsfield, Mass.: By the author, 1828).

66. Johnson, “Biographical Account,” 93.

67. Johnson, “Biographical Account,” 102.

68. Meacham to Wright.

69. Stephen Stein argues that the struggle to maintain cultural separation was the defining characteristic of Shakerism between the Civil War and the mid-twentieth century. See Stein, *Shaker Experience*, xvi–xvii.

70. For an analysis of Mormon millennial thought, see Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). For Shaker ideas about the millennium, see Warren Lewis, “What to Do after the Messiah Has Come Again and Gone: Shaker ‘Premillennial’ Eschatology and Its Spiritual Aftereffects,” in M. Darrol Bryant and Donald W. Dayton, eds., *The Coming Kingdom: Essays in American Millennialism and Eschatology* (Barrytown, N.Y.: International Religious Foundation, 1983), 71–109.

71. Joseph Meacham, *A Concise Statement of the Principles of the Only True Church According to the Gospel of the Present Appearance of Christ* (Bennington, Vt.: Haswell and Russell, 1790).

72. Meacham, *Concise Statement*, 3.

73. Meacham, *Concise Statement*, 5–7; emphasis in original.

74. Meacham, *Concise Statement*, 7–10; emphasis in original.

75. Meacham, *Concise Statement*, 17.

76. Bishop, “Collection of Writings,” 10–19.

77. Stephen J. Stein, “‘A Candid Statement of Our Principles’: Early Shaker Theology in the West,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 4 (1989): 516–17.

78. Green and Wells, *Summary View*, 59.

79. Meacham may have first developed the standard Shaker description of a prophetic “mantle” passing from Lee to Whittaker to him. He could have further legitimated his authority by connecting himself both to the apostolic church and Lee herself. See Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies*, 219–20, 355–56; Bishop, “Collection of Writings,” 12–13; Green and Wells, *Summary View*, 59; and Johnson, “Biographical Account,” 27–29.

80. See Lewis, “What To Do,” 71–109. For the status of Ann Lee in Shakerism, see Marjorie Procter-Smith, “‘Who Do You Say That I Am?’: Mother Ann as Christ,” in *Locating the Shakers: Cultural Origins and Legacies of an American*

*Religious Movement*, ed. Mick Gidley and Kate Bowles (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), 83–95; and Stein, *Shaker Experience*, 78, 93, 232, 237, 260–61. Neither of the two earliest Shaker theological documents, Meacham's *Concise Statement* and "Candid Statement," mention Ann Lee. Even more suggestive, when apostates attempt to expose Shakerism in the 1780s and '90s, they never mention her claiming to be Christ, only that she wielded inappropriate power within the group.

81. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 140; emphasis in original.

82. Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 217–18.

83. See Shipps, *Mormonism*, for a thoughtful analysis of early Mormonism's relationship with sacred history and, especially, the Old and New Testaments.

84. Newel K. Whitney (with Reynolds Cahoon and Vinson Knight), quoted in *History of the Church*, 2:517.

85. There is no first-hand reference from Joseph Smith about Zion's being the site of the garden of Eden, but evidence exists to connect the idea with him. At very least, several documents reveal how contemporaries internalized his logic of sacred time and space in their own conceptualizations. William W. Phelps, poet and editor of the *Evening and Morning Star* published in Independence, Missouri, consistently connected Zion and Eden in the *Star* and in his hymns (see *Hymns* [Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985], no. 48). Brigham Young maintained that "in Jackson County was the Garden of Eden. Joseph declared this, and I am as much bound to believe that as to believe that Joseph was a prophet of God." See *Journal History of the Church*, March 15, 1857, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, microfilm copy in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Heber C. Kimball, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. and S. W. Richards, 1854–86), 4:105, September 28, 1856. On Enoch's city meeting with the New Jerusalem, see *Moses* 7:62–63.

86. Doctrine and Covenants 36:8; 133:2. The connection between the Jackson County temple and Christ's appearance is also difficult to trace to Joseph Smith. Later leaders that knew him regularly associated the two. See Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:35, October 10, 1880.

87. *History of the Church*, 3:35; Doctrine and Covenants 116; 107:53–57; 117:8.

88. Joseph Smith Jr., as reported in Wilford Woodruff's journal, quoted in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 212; emphasis added.

89. *History of the Church*, 4:609–10.

90. From the city of Zion plat, transcribed in Hamilton, *Mormon Architecture*, 15–18, 34. The center place of Independence was to function not only as the location of the city of Zion, but as the central stake in the tent metaphor presented in the Old Testament (Isa. 54:2), much like the Mother Church in Shakerism.

91. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 363–64.

92. For more on multiple meanings of "Zion" in Mormon usage, see Richard J. Mouw, "What Does God Think about America? Some Challenges for Evangelicals and Mormons," *BYU Studies* 43, no. 4 (2004): 4–21.

93. Ashbel Kitchell, "Diary, 1831," L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; also quoted in Robert F. W. Meader, "The Shakers and the Mormons," *Shaker Quarterly* 2 (fall 1962): 87.

Kitchell's journal reports that the year was 1829, but Kitchell was one year off on the date. Cowdery and other missionaries arrived in Ohio in 1830.

94. Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 4th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 61.

95. Latter-day Saint missionaries baptized nearly eighteen thousand in the first decade of the British Mission alone. Over forty-seven hundred immigrated to Nauvoo during the 1840s. See Arrington and Bitton, *Mormon Experience*, chapter 7, and James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992).

# Building Zion

## The Latter-day Saint Legacy of Urban Planning

*Craig D. Galli*

As with the founding of Plymouth Colony, distinctive historical circumstances and theological beliefs converged to motivate early Latter-day Saint community builders. While the historic roots of Salt Lake City are well known to virtually every grade school student in Utah and to Church members around the world, aspects of our remarkable legacy of urban and transportation planning remain obscure. The physical design and community values underlying early attempts to build Zion provide useful perspective and inspiration as today's community leaders now grapple with managing urban growth along Utah's Wasatch Front (from Brigham City to Nephi and Grantsville to Kamas) and elsewhere.

### Physical Design

The basis for Salt Lake City's design was Joseph Smith's concept for the City of Zion. In 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith proclaimed from Kirtland, Ohio, that Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, had been "appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints" (D&C 57:1-4; see also 52:42). Joseph sought nothing less than the creation of "sacred gathering places" where the pure in heart would dwell in Zion in preparation for the second coming of the Savior.<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith did not leave the creation of Zion to chance.

**City of Zion Plat.** Building a "Zion society" required careful planning and selfless commitment on the part of the new community's leaders and citizens. To assist them, in June 1833, Joseph delivered to local church leaders in Missouri the "City of Zion Plat" (fig. 1), which was soon revised to correct minor oversights.<sup>2</sup>



ce of our wealth. During his stay at home we visited the  
neighboring country/lake - The scenery as usual in a  
the temples and the forest are lovely with

Richards and to include a two year paper our journal is so profitable for the use of the press  
the circular system two years are the places for the ten times per week as a continuous language  
C is for Tombs for the paper Priesthood to also in to contain 12 months the whole edition is a  
to contain them 10 to be necessary people can write mention as that it will require 24 buildings to  
each the them into a house of women's schools to move to there ten the see to be smaller than the one  
of which we could save the day to two temple is to be built in square number machine. Therefore we to  
be built where the circle is would have deep on it. On the front and back of it but where the line is  
the reason is to be laid of for house stables for the use of the city so that no house of stables will be in the  
city among the houses the ground to be reserved for them must be laid of according to common economy. In  
the third and fourth parts be laid off the farms for the agriculturists a sufficient quantity of land to do for the  
whole plot and it cannot be laid of without leaving great a distance from the city. There must also be  
a place for the city and not where the space is this kind of and supplied lay of ground in the same way and  
the words in their last above to let every man have the right for this is the best of them

**FIG. 1.** The City of Zion Plat, prepared by Joseph Smith in 1833. In the margins, Joseph explained that the large center lot for the temple would be surrounded by ten-acre squares. The deep individual lots would contain a stone or brick house and a garden. All barns, stables, and farmlands would be located outside the city, while farming families would reside within the city. Once the city was fully occupied, other towns would be constructed in the same manner to “fill up the world in the last days” (see bottom line).



While initially the plat would be used for the settlement of Jackson County, Joseph Smith intended that it also be used to build future communities elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> The City of Zion Plat included margin notes detailing the physical configuration and characteristics of the community. The city described on the revised plat would cover one and one-half square miles and be divided into a European-style square grid pattern with 2,600 half-acre lots.<sup>4</sup> The city center would consist of blocks to accommodate a temple complex and other ecclesiastical buildings. Located adjacent to the temple would be a bishop's storehouse, a repository of contributed tithes and offerings such as funds, food, and clothing to be dispensed to the poor. Nearby blocks were reserved for schools, parks, and stores, surrounded by individual family lots situated so that no single dwelling fronted another, thereby preserving "a sense of openness and privacy."<sup>5</sup> The four major streets had 132-foot widths, other streets had 82.5-foot widths, and all were oriented to the cardinal directions.<sup>6</sup> Houses, normally to be built of brick

### Craig D. Galli



Craig D. Galli, shown here with his youngest daughter, Laurel, at Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, practices environmental, land use, and natural resources law in Salt Lake City. Prior to moving west with his wife and four daughters, he worked at the U.S. Department of Justice, Environment Division, in Washington, D.C. After

moving back to Salt Lake City in 1993, Craig became interested in the history of urban planning in Utah when he began to notice the impacts of haphazard urban planning along the Wasatch Front. He is currently serving a four-year term on the Salt Lake City Planning Commission and sits on the Steering Committee of Envision Utah.

or stone, would be set back twenty-five feet from the streets with gardens and orchards for beauty and sustenance.<sup>7</sup> The Prophet Joseph intended that residents locate their barns and stables at the community's edge, surrounded by agricultural lands and open space.<sup>8</sup>

The density of the community when fully populated would be relatively high for a frontier town—eight people per lot. After achieving a population of between fifteen and twenty thousand inhabitants, growth into the immediately adjacent surrounding area would not be allowed.<sup>9</sup> Rather, a new satellite community would be settled beyond a buffer or greenbelt between the new and old communities. Margin notes reveal Joseph Smith's intentions to maintain a compact urban design: "When the square is thus laid off and supplied, lay off another in the same way, and so fill up the world in the last days."<sup>10</sup>

Joseph intended that all members of the community live within the city: "Let every man live in the city, for this is the city of Zion."<sup>11</sup> Farmers would live side by side with merchants and professionals, rather than on the outskirts of the community or on remote ranches and farms. The compact size of the community accommodated such living arrangements. Later, John Taylor, the Church's third president, instructed:

In all cases in making new settlements the Saints should be advised to gather together in villages, as has been our custom from the time of our earliest settlement in these mountain valleys. The advantage of this plan, instead of carelessly scattering out over a wide extent of country, are many and obvious to all those who have a desire to serve the Lord.

By this means the people can retain their ecclesiastical organizations. . . . They can also cooperate for the good of all in financial and secular matters, in making ditches, fencing fields, building bridges, and other necessary improvements.

Further than this they are a mutual protection and source of strength against horse and cattle thieves, land jumpers, etc., and against hostile Indians, should there be any; while their compact organization gives them many advantages of a social and civic character which might be lost, misapplied or frittered away by spreading out so thinly that intercommunication is difficult, dangerous, inconvenient and expensive.<sup>12</sup>

**Early Application of the City of Zion Plat.** Joseph prepared a revised City of Zion Plat in June 1833, but his plan to build a City of Zion in Missouri was frustrated by the expulsion of the Saints. Beginning in November of that year, vigorous opposition from mobs forced hundreds of settlers from their homes in and around Independence.<sup>13</sup> The Saints eventually regrouped in Clay County and Far West, Missouri, and later in Nauvoo, Illinois; each time eventually to be again driven by mobs from their homes, farms, and businesses. Nevertheless, in each location, Church

leaders loosely adapted the City of Zion Plat for use in settling these communities to build a temporary or “cornerstone” of Zion until the eventual return to Jackson County (D&C 124:2, 60). Before his martyrdom, the Prophet Joseph spoke of relocating to the Rocky Mountains as an interim gathering place until Zion could finally be reestablished in Jackson County, Missouri.<sup>14</sup>

Shortly after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, Church President Brigham Young and his associates made a number of land use and city planning decisions, remarkable for the time, using an adaptation of the City of Zion Plat.

Four days after their arrival, Brigham and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles proposed a new settlement with a temple lot, streets 132 feet wide, twenty-foot-wide sidewalks, and houses set back twenty feet from the street. Brigham dictated that the streets would not “be filled with cattle, horses and hogs, nor children, for they will have yards and places appropriated for recreation, and we will have a city clean and in order.”<sup>15</sup> In August of 1847, Brigham supervised the preparation of the first plat for the Salt Lake Valley. It largely followed the City of Zion Plat with modifications to accommodate topography and specific needs of the community. The temple would be located not in the valley’s center but near the northern foothills. Nevertheless, it represented the spiritual center of the community and the zero mile marker for city blocks in all directions. Five- and ten-acre tracts were aligned in a grid pattern for commercial, light industry, manufacturing, and residential use. Larger lots of up to twenty acres were available for those who wished to live on farms located on the edge of the community.<sup>16</sup>

By 1850, three years after the Saints’ arrival in the valley, Salt Lake City covered an area four miles long and three miles wide. Unlike the many western settlements that developed as agricultural villages or mining towns, Salt Lake developed from the start as an urban community supported largely by manufacturing and commerce. The 1850 census reported that only one-third of all heads of household considered themselves farmers, dropping to 16 percent twenty years later. Salt Lake’s population grew rapidly from 1,700 in the first winter, to 5,000 by the first anniversary, to over 6,000 in 1850. Utah saw an increase in population growth of over 50 percent during each subsequent decade between 1850 and 1890.<sup>17</sup>

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*Unlike many western settlements that developed as agricultural villages or mining towns, Salt Lake developed from the start as an urban community supported largely by manufacturing and commerce.*

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**FIG. 2.** Wide streets in Salt Lake City, ca. 1869. The city was laid out with streets wide enough for a wagon to turn around. This width made it easy for the city to adapt streets for automobile and mass transit use in later years.

Brigham admonished the pioneers to beautify and take pride in their temporary Zion in the Rocky Mountains: “Progress, and improve upon, and make beautiful everything around you. . . . Build cities, adorn your habitations, make gardens, orchards, and vineyards, and render the earth so pleasant that when you look upon your labors you may do so with pleasure, and that angels may delight to come and visit your beautiful locations.”<sup>18</sup> Similarly, George A. Smith counseled, “The plan of Zion contemplates that the earth, the gardens, and fields of Zion, be beautiful and cultivated in the best possible manner. Our traditions have got to yield to that plan, circumstances will bring us to that point, and eventually we shall be under the necessity of learning and adopting the plan of beautifying and cultivating every foot of the soil of Zion in the best possible manner.”<sup>19</sup>

In many ways, the pioneers succeeded (fig. 2). A visitor from Pittsburgh wrote in 1849, “I shall never forget the first sight of this valley. It shall ever remain on my mind as the most beautiful spectacle I ever beheld. . . . The bridges are all good, the streets and roads wide, and the fences very regular.”<sup>20</sup> Remarkably, this was just two years after the first settlers arrived. One traveler visiting the Salt Lake Valley in 1850 described what he saw as “a large garden laid out in regular squares.”<sup>21</sup> Historians Thomas Alexander and James Allen observed that the city fathers “paid

careful attention to planning and beautification, and their wide streets, with irrigation ditches running down either side, became a standard item for commentary from travelers.”<sup>22</sup> Passing through the Salt Lake Valley in 1877, renowned naturalist John Muir noted:

Most of the houses are veiled with trees, as if set down in the midst of one grand orchard. . . . [Homes] are set well back from the street, leaving room for a flower garden, while almost every one has a thrifty orchard at the sides and around the back. The gardens are laid out with great simplicity, indicating love for flowers by people comparatively poor. . . . In almost every one you find daisies, and mint, and lilac bushes, and rows of plain English tulips. Lilacs and tulips are the most characteristic flowers, and nowhere have I seen them in greater perfection.<sup>23</sup>

**Brigham Young’s Adaptation of the City of Zion Plat.** Brigham’s adaptation to the original City of Zion Plat to allow for extra-wide streets facilitated future urban design adaptations that enhanced the community in several ways as Salt Lake City’s population grew.<sup>24</sup> First, as the automobile arrived and became prevalent, many wide streets were modified to become high-speed, high-capacity arterial roads, some with as many as six lanes, while other streets located in quiet residential neighborhoods were converted to two-lane boulevard configurations with handsomely landscaped median strips. This flexibility has given Salt Lake City residents a degree of increased mobility and aesthetic appeal enjoyed by few metropolitan areas. Second, wide streets allowed for the preservation of historic homes and buildings. To accommodate the automobile, many other cities had to condemn developed strips along existing streets to widen streets in urban centers.

Third and most important, the wide streets accommodated the construction of future streetcar lines, usually located in street medians with relatively little disruption to existing structures. Salt Lake’s first trolley cars, drawn by mules and horses, appeared in 1872. The Church financially supported the fledgling trolley car company at various times when the company struggled.<sup>25</sup> By 1889, the Salt Lake City Street Railway Company had twenty-one mule- and horse-drawn trolleys covering approximately 14 miles of track.<sup>26</sup> To accommodate the transportation needs of a growing population, electric streetcars replaced animal-drawn trolleys. In 1889, Salt Lake completed construction of its electric street car system, just one year after the nation’s first system commenced operation in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>27</sup> By 1950, trackless trolleys and new rear-engine gasoline buses traveled over twelve thousand miles daily on 154 miles of streets, making an average of sixteen million passenger trips annually.<sup>28</sup> As early as 1914, approximately half of all adults living in Salt Lake City rode the streetcars



FIG. 3. Salt Lake City looking east, 1927. Laid out in a neat grid designed after the City of Zion Plat, the city benefits from a sense of order. The numbered streets make finding addresses simple.

on a daily basis, and 26 interurban trains carried over 800 passengers between Salt Lake and Provo each day.<sup>29</sup> In the late 1920s, as asphalt replaced most dirt roads to better accommodate automobile traffic, Salt Lake City was the first city in the world to outfit trolley cars with pneumatic rubber tires to be used without track. Delegations from twenty-six states and thirteen countries visited Salt Lake City to study the highly innovative design and operation of Salt Lake's trolley system.<sup>30</sup>

Over time, the automobile gradually displaced rail and trolley service; in 1941 the last streetcar in Salt Lake City was decommissioned.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, mass transit had played a significant role in economic growth and vitality in the Salt Lake Valley for a period of over fifty years at a critical time in the area's history (fig. 3).

### Early Mormon Community Values

The Mormon pioneers could make the transition from establishing Zion in Jackson County to establishing an interim Zion in the Salt



Lake Valley in part because Zion was more than a place: it was and is an ideal—an ideal community or society whose purpose “was to create unity and cooperation for the good of the whole” based on correct principles reflected in the attitudes and conduct of the community’s inhabitants.<sup>32</sup> The following values of a Zion community, derived from the sermons of early Mormon leaders and LDS scriptures, appear as relevant today as when they were first taught.

**Equitable Land Use and Environmental Stewardship.** Early Church leaders taught that the Saints would be judged by God according to their exercise of wise stewardship over the “land of their inheritance.” Joseph Smith taught that the Lord made “every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings,” decreeing that “the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare”; however, the Lord is not pleased “if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion . . . unto the poor and the needy” (D&C 104:13–18). Apostle Orson Pratt explained that “this land, about which I have been speaking, is called in some places in the revelations of God to the Prophet Joseph, the land of our inheritance. . . . If we shall be unwise in the disposition of this trust, then it will be very doubtful, whether we get an inheritance in this world or in the world to come.”<sup>33</sup>

Brigham spoke of keeping the natural and manmade environment pure just as one maintains personal purity: “Keep your valley pure, keep your towns as pure as you possibly can, keep your hearts pure.”<sup>34</sup> As the Saints did so, “the earth under their feet will be holy; . . . the soil of the earth will bring forth in its strength, and the fruits thereof will be meat for man.”<sup>35</sup> The earth itself is holy and we will be blessed for treating it as such: “Speaking of the elements and the creation of God, in their nature they are as pure as the heavens.”<sup>36</sup> “The Lord blesses the land, the air and the water where the Saints are permitted to live.”<sup>37</sup> Brigham taught that the study of nature would edify: “Fields and mountains, trees and flowers, and all that fly, swim or move upon the ground are lessons for study in the great school of our heavenly Father, . . . [in what] is open before us in good books and in the great laboratory of nature.”<sup>38</sup>

Brigham repeatedly warned against greedy and wasteful exploitation of natural resources.<sup>39</sup> “It is not our privilege to waste the Lord’s substance,” he preached.<sup>40</sup> “There is only so much property in the world. There are the elements that belong to this globe, and no more. . . . [A]ll our commercial transactions must be confined to this little earth and its wealth cannot be increased or diminished.”<sup>41</sup> He cautioned that exploitation and greed would have eternal consequences: “It is all good, the air, the water, the gold and silver; the wheat, the fine flour, and the cattle upon a

thousand hills are all good. . . . But that moment that men seek to build up themselves . . . and seek to hoard up riches, . . . proves that their hearts are weaned from their God; and their riches will perish in their fingers, and they with them.”<sup>42</sup>

To ensure good stewardship and equitable allocation of land upon arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham allowed residents to acquire land at no cost (except for a \$1.50 recording fee), but subdividing one’s lot was prohibited, and real estate “speculation” was expressly discouraged.<sup>43</sup> This system provided affordable housing for both newcomers and original settlers alike. Careful land use helped maintain the compact size of the city and a sense of shared community.<sup>44</sup>

**Education and Cultural Pursuits.** Joseph explained the connection between a compact urban design and the development of the educational and intellectual life of the Saints:

The farmer and his family, therefore, will enjoy all the advantages of schools, public lectures and other meetings. His home will no longer be isolated, and his family denied the benefits of society, which has been, and always will be, the great educator of the human race; but they will enjoy the same privileges of society, and can surround their homes with the same intellectual life, the same social refinement as will be found in the home of the merchant or banker or professional man.<sup>45</sup>

Even as crops were planted and new homes built, Brigham considered cultivating minds as important as cultivating crops to ensure the success of the new settlement. Within months of his arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham exhorted the members of the Church in a “General Epistle to the Saints” to compile their collective body of knowledge:

The Saints should improve every opportunity of securing at least a copy of every valuable treatise on education—every book, map, chart, or diagram that may contain interesting, useful, and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children, and cause them to love to learn to read; and, also every historical, mathematical, philosophical, geographical, geological, astronomical, scientific, practical, and all other variety of useful and interesting writings, maps, etc. . . . from which important and interesting matter may be gleaned.<sup>46</sup>

This early focus on education and cultural pursuits contributed to community cohesion and civic pride. Historian Linda Sillitoe characterized the early Mormon community of the Salt Lake Valley as “a thriving city, a county with expanding settlements, and multiplying social, intellectual, and cultural opportunities all boasted the value of planning and cooperation.”<sup>47</sup> The nineteenth-century Salt Lake community included a civic theater, orchestra, brass band, and Tabernacle Choir. Intellectual and



cultural societies—such as the Universal Scientific Society, Polysophical Society, Deseret Musical and Dramatic Association, Deseret Literary and Musical Association, and Deseret Philharmonic Society—developed to cultivate appreciation for literature, music, art, and science and to provide a forum for lectures, concerts, plays, and the reading of original poems and other literary works.<sup>48</sup>

**Civic Unity and Involvement.** While the image of the “rugged individual” may symbolize the taming of the West, it does not typify building Zion. Joseph taught that “the building up of Zion is as much one man’s business as another’s. . . . Party feelings, separate interests, exclusive designs should be lost sight of in the one common cause, in the interest of the whole.”<sup>49</sup> Brigham emphasized the need to build community through collective effort: “We have come here to build up Zion. How shall we do it? . . . I have told you a great many times. There is one thing I will say in regard to it. We have got to be united in our efforts.”<sup>50</sup> He also said:

Let every individual in this city feel the same interest for the public good as he does for his own, and you will at once see this community still more prosperous and still more rapidly increasing in wealth, influence, and power. But where each one seeks to benefit himself or herself alone, and does not cherish a feeling for the prosperity and benefit of the whole, that people will be disorderly, unhappy, and poverty stricken, and distress, animosity, and strife will reign. . . . Let every man and woman be industrious, prudent, and economical in their acts and feelings, and while gathering to themselves, let each one strive to identify his or her interests with the interests of this community, with those of their neighbor and neighborhood, let them seek their happiness and welfare in that of all, and we will be blessed and prospered.<sup>51</sup>

**Diversity and Tolerance.** Brigham valued cultural diversity within the community of Saints. He fondly characterized them as a “mixed” people, “gathered from so many of the nations of the earth, with their different customs and traditions, associating with a kind, filial feeling nowhere else to be found,” dwelling “together on the most friendly terms and with brotherly feeling. . . . Into whatever neighborhood you go throughout these valleys in the mountains, amid the great variety of nationalities, with all their different habits and traditions, you find the warmest affection pervading the people.”<sup>52</sup>

As Salt Lake City took shape in the 1850s, the neighborhoods reflected economic and ethnic diversity. Neighborhoods had a remarkably diverse and polyglot population. By 1870, with the influx of foreign-born Mormon converts, mostly British and Scandinavian, over 65 percent of Salt Lake residents were foreign born.<sup>53</sup> One could hear in the shops, streets, and churches the foreign languages and accents of immigrants from northern

Europe and elsewhere who had recently “gathered to Zion.”<sup>54</sup> Before long, economic opportunity attracted non-Mormons from inside and outside the United States.

**Caring for the Needy.** To establish a “Zion people,” Church leaders taught members of the community to “give of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them,” and be “united” because “Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom” (D&C 105:3–5). According to Brigham, this duty extended both to the poor within their community and in other lands. “The earthly means which we have been enabled to gather around us is not ours, it is the Lord’s, and he has placed it in our hands for the building up of his kingdom and to extend our ability and resources for reaching after the poor in other lands.”<sup>55</sup> He emphasized the need for social and economic unity and equity:

The earth is here, and the fullness thereof is here. It was made for man; and one man was not made to trample his fellow man under his feet, and enjoy all his heart desires, while the thousands suffer. We will take a moral view, a political view, and see the inequality that exists in the human family. . . . The Latter-day Saints will never accomplish their mission until this inequality shall cease on the earth.<sup>56</sup>

Brigham also warned, “If the people called Latter-day Saints do not become one in temporal things as they are in spiritual things, they will not redeem and build up the Zion of God upon the earth.”<sup>57</sup>

The early settlers had ample opportunity to practice caring for the poor. A steady stream of immigrants, aided by the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, continued to gather to the Salt Lake Valley often with little more than the shirts on their backs. Upon arrival, impecunious immigrants were warmly greeted at Emigration Square, fed and entertained, then dispersed among the various wards so that no one bishop or ward congregation would be unduly burdened supplying them with food, shelter, and sustenance until they became self-sufficient.<sup>58</sup>

### **Secularization of Growth and Development Patterns**

The specific vision of creating a compact community, patterned after the City of Zion Plat, did not persist. Various factors influenced changes in urban growth patterns. First, it eventually became necessary for settlers to subdivide and transfer land as families grew or moved on to form other communities, often being called to do so by Church leaders. Beginning in 1850, in order to accommodate property transfers, the territorial legislature authorized the surveyor general to issue surveyor certificates

to demonstrate legal possession and transfer of land. While the system of documenting real property possession through surveyor certificates functioned adequately for about a decade, the territorial government petitioned Congress in 1859 to include Utah in the National Land System so that legal title to property could be legally transferred, documented, and protected. In 1865, the federal surveyor for Utah agreed that the territorial government's petition to establish a federal land office and title system should be granted in order to encourage the emigration to the Utah Territory of a "population less hostile to the United States than the present."<sup>59</sup> Congress agreed, and a federal land office opened in March 1869. Soon after the land office opened, its services were heavily used by long-time Mormon settlers, recently arrived squatters, and mayors of newly established townsites, all seeking to quiet title.<sup>60</sup>

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*Over time, the plan for a compact community changed to reflect the wishes of a diverse and growing population.*

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Second, beginning in the 1870s, the Church's leadership relinquished much of its influence over land use policies and practices. Maintaining the preferred urban design took a back seat to the challenges Church leaders faced: the threatened seizure of Church assets (including temples), prosecution of Church leaders by means of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, and loss of political power in Utah's largest cities, Salt Lake City and Ogden.<sup>61</sup> Control over land use decreased as the population of the Salt Lake Valley grew more ethnically, religiously, and economically diverse. In 1870, over 90 percent of Salt Lake's population were Mormons. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in May 1869, the establishment of the federal land title system, and the growth of mining and other industries resulted in a dramatic demographic shift over the next twenty years. Between 1870 and 1890, Salt Lake City's non-Mormon population grew twice as fast as the Mormon population. By 1890 about half of Salt Lake City's forty-five thousand residents were not Mormons.<sup>62</sup>

Third, maintaining the original compact community design depended in part on a very high degree of social and economic cohesiveness. A diverse and growing population, combined with the decline of the United Order, resulted in the creation of a real estate market. In the early 1880s, there were virtually no real estate developers in Salt Lake City, but by 1888 seventy-five real estate developers, many from out of state, arrived in Utah, believing Salt Lake City to be the next Denver.<sup>63</sup> New subdivisions targeted upper-middle-class residents and offered the latest amenities, including hot and cold running water, electricity, and coal-burning furnaces.<sup>64</sup> Some of the

newcomers during this period began to amass great wealth, and a row of handsome mansions owned by mining barons sprouted up along South Temple Street.<sup>65</sup> Others purchased homes and farms from Mormon settlers or homesteaded the remaining undeveloped land along the Wasatch Front. As “Gentiles” (non-Mormons) moved in, the Mormon settlers and their descendants eagerly sold to newcomers and real estate developers as the value of their land rapidly rose. One out-of-state developer of a new residential subdivision in Salt Lake City observed in 1890 that Mormons eagerly sold their property at great profit but rarely purchased parcels in new housing developments.<sup>66</sup>

The selling of the Saints’ “land of inheritance” became a concern to Church leaders, as did the ever-increasing numbers of Church members leaving the Salt Lake Valley to acquire large tracts of land before the land was purchased or homesteaded by non-Mormons. It was one thing to be called by a prophet to settle a Mormon outpost, but quite another to leave the Mormon community to homestead for one’s own gain. Church leader George Q. Cannon spoke passionately on this subject at general conference in April 1889:

We hear that a good many of our young men are leaving this valley . . . to secure for themselves tracts of land . . . in places remote from their own homes. . . . We have been called to gather, not to scatter; we have been called by the Lord to build up Zion—to beautify the waste places . . . , not to spread out all over creation and become so thin and so weak that there is no strength or power with us. . . . We should concentrate ourselves and combine our efforts, and not look to the ends of the earth and see how much is going to waste that we are missing. . . . [T]here are a great many people who seem to have that idea in earnest, and because there are large tracts of land of which they hear in remote valleys they are anxious to strike out and take possession for fear that somebody else will get them. This is not wise. Let us be governed by wisdom in our movements. This is the way to build up Zion. It is not by scattering abroad or attempting to grow faster than our strength. . . . We can grow fast enough right along here in these valleys which are already occupied, by making use of the facilities within our reach.<sup>67</sup>

As noted by historian John McCormick, “By the turn of the century . . . Salt Lake was no longer the uniform city its founders had intended.”<sup>68</sup> The rapid growth that occurred to the south of the city often did not follow the established grid system. Within the city center, new streets and alleys were carved through original city blocks to accommodate a hodgepodge of hurriedly constructed housing and commercial properties. Some sections of downtown “degenerated into crowded back alleys of squalor.”<sup>69</sup> Filth, from dead animals and open cesspools, and prostitution in the city’s

hidden corners became constant problems by the turn of the century.<sup>70</sup> Such conditions motivated many to move to outlying settlements or to homestead in remote locations far from the Salt Lake Valley. Looking back on Brigham Young's design to build a City of Zion, George H. Smeath, an early urban planner who worked in Salt Lake, Weber, and Utah Counties, lamented that the "comprehensive approach to community problems was lost as decision-making passed from the hands of a centralized authority into the hands, generally, of private interests."<sup>71</sup>

As the population diversified, civic organizations formed to represent a cross section of the community working together to advance community beautification and development projects. From the 1890s through the 1920s, the Chamber of Commerce, the Improvement League, and women's clubs embraced the national "City Beautiful" movement, pressing elected officials to clean up the city.<sup>72</sup> Civic organizations and clubs, often with the backing of business leaders, lobbied for improvements in culinary water and sewage treatment, street lighting, mosquito abatement, and the creation of parks, playgrounds, boulevards, and other urban improvements.<sup>73</sup> These nonpartisan civic improvement societies were often headed by women and reflected growing religious diversity.<sup>74</sup> Thomas Alexander comments on the success of the men and women, LDS and non-LDS community leaders, who worked together, demonstrating early "environmental activism": "They achieved no civic Eden, but they realized some short-range and partial successes in solving several problems—controlling watershed erosion; providing parks, golf courses, water supplies, sewers, and street improvements; and cleaning the air of some pollution. . . . We could certainly learn from their experience."<sup>75</sup>

### **Post-World War II Development Patterns**

After World War II, restrictions on the sale of gasoline, tires, and automobiles were no longer needed to advance the war effort. New affluence found a willing automobile market, and many families began a tradition of owning two or more cars. Following the war, Salt Lake Valley experienced a significant housing shortage. Salt Lake City's mayor requested that developers place ten new homes on the market every day to meet the estimated shortfall of six thousand housing units. Developers accommodated the best they could, but often not within the Salt Lake City limits. They focused on constructing low cost homes in new subdivisions in the outlying suburbs where land was plentiful and less expensive.

With increasing congestion and virtually no mass transit, local officials concluded that new highways were needed to increase mobility in

the region. City and county commissioners proposed constructing an interstate highway bisecting Salt Lake City. Construction of Interstates 15 and 80 commenced in 1956 from the city center to the south. Initially, planners proposed a 2,000-foot-wide greenbelt adjacent to the highway, but this proposal never took hold, as real estate speculators acquired property along the highway to take advantage of the added mobility and convenience the new highway would bring.<sup>76</sup>

Highway and road construction aided the dispersion of the growing population. In 1950, 70 percent of the population of Salt Lake County lived within Salt Lake City limits. By 1960, only 50 percent lived within Salt Lake City; only 30 percent remained by 1970. With a more dispersed population and the elimination of the trolley system, transit ridership plummeted from 33 million annual riders in 1946 to only 12 million in 1960—a 64 percent decrease. Utah’s population grew by at least 25 percent during that period of steep decline in transit ridership.<sup>77</sup>

During the post–World War II period, the automobile, more than any other factor, changed and shaped the growth and character of the valleys along the Wasatch Front. Historian Dale L. Morgan observed in 1959: “The automobile came to Salt Lake City’s streets . . . soon altering the very character of those streets and ultimately banishing the streetcar, a development made final in 1941.” Morgan pondered: “Still we may hope that Salt Lake City will not lose itself in growth, that as it has preserved its unique identity through its eras as village, town, and city, it will not lose that identity in its transformation into a metropolis.”<sup>78</sup> Twenty years later, in 1979, historian Charles S. Peterson passed this judgment:

Whether in the satellite communities or the large centers of the Wasatch Front the problems of urban sprawl and industrialization are very much with Utahns today. Prime farm grounds are devoted to parking lots and subdivisions. Pollution and many of the social problems that attend urban growth are part of the scene. Visitors exclaim at how like other cities Utah’s population centers are, yet, urban Utah is the product of the interplay of natural and cultural forces found no place else and possesses qualities of its own.<sup>79</sup>

Today over 80 percent of Utah’s population lives along the 100-mile, 10-county Wasatch Front, making Utah the sixth most urban state in the country.<sup>80</sup> The population of the Wasatch Front is expected to grow from 2.4 million in 2003 to 3.8 million in 2030.<sup>81</sup> By the year 2050, there will be 5 million.<sup>82</sup> The Wasatch Front looks much like other sprawling western cities such as Denver, Phoenix, and Las Vegas. The prevailing development pattern here, as in other rapidly growing cities in the West and throughout

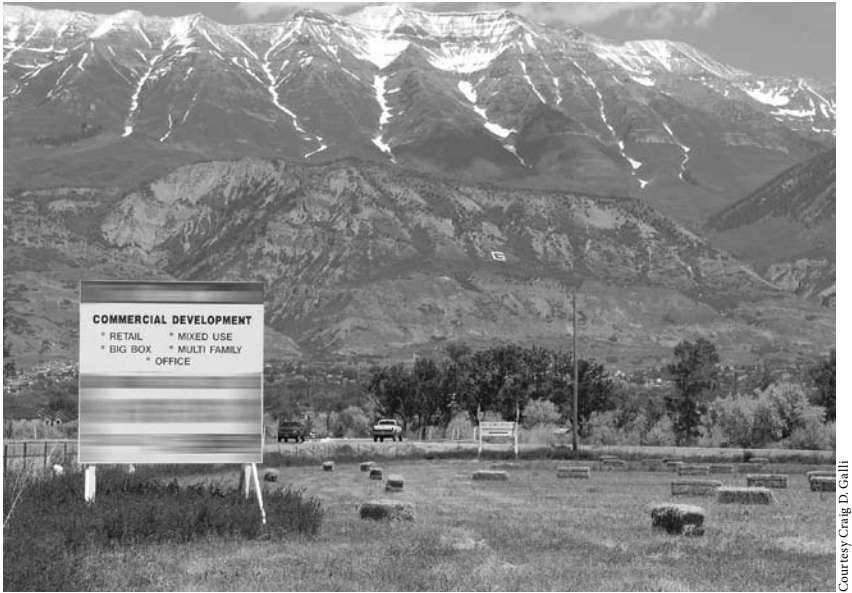


FIG. 4. New automobile-dependent developments creating urban sprawl in Utah County, 2005. Such development is consuming agricultural lands and open space along the Wasatch Front.

the nation, emphasizes automobile-dependent, low-density, single-use development expanding on the fringes of existing communities (fig. 4).

Utah's newspapers routinely feature articles relating to the undesirable effects of prevailing land use patterns along the Wasatch Front.<sup>83</sup> Tensions surrounding local growth patterns have captured national attention. On the eve of the 2002 winter Olympics, *National Geographic* published an article highlighting the impact of the rapid conversion of remaining agricultural lands on families who had farmed the Salt Lake Valley for generations.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, an article in the *New York Times* reported:

Salt Lake is on its way to becoming a Phoenix of the Wasatch Range, bordered by new suburbs whose only connection to one another are the highways. Few people here seem to want this. . . . But indirectly, Utah seems to be doing just that. . . . The Salt Lake metropolitan area is following a cycle that is well known to other cities. Atlanta, after building a ring of highways sliced by other highways, has one of the most traffic-clogged metropolitan areas in the country.<sup>85</sup>

While Salt Lake City's Trax lines (fig. 5) offer some relief, traffic congestion remains a serious problem.





FIG. 5. Salt Lake City, 2002. Trax trains provide mass transit today, as did animal-drawn trolleys and electric streetcars in earlier times.

### Building Zion Today

Today the Saints no longer “gather” to Zion in the Salt Lake Valley, but build Zion in the communities in which they live. Building Zion now emphasizes spiritually strengthening families, neighborhoods, wards, and stakes. Beyond that, does the Prophet Joseph’s City of Zion Plat merely represent a quaint utopian experiment long ago forgotten? Can the City of Zion Plat and the early Mormon community values of building compact, aesthetically pleasing communities provide inspiration for better managing growth and planning future development along the Wasatch Front and elsewhere?

The early Mormon values of equitable land use, environmental stewardship, providing

educational and cultural amenities, promoting civic unity and citizen participation, encouraging diversity and tolerance, caring for the needy, providing affordable housing, and integrating aesthetic qualities in urban design, all could serve as guiding principles to maintain quality of life for any community. In addition, the City of Zion Plat itself provides ideals for designing communities that are livable and sustainable.

**City of Zion Plat as a Precursor to Smart Growth.** Most planners agree that the size and configuration of the ideal “urban village” (a compact, high-density walkable community surrounded by open space) is more environmentally sustainable and socially beneficial compared to modern urban sprawl.<sup>86</sup> While they disagree somewhat as to the precise size of the ideal community or urban village (which usually forms part of a larger metropolitan area linked with mass transit), urban planners who follow the “New Urbanism” school of urban planning typically agree that “smart growth” communities exhibit the following common attributes, as listed by Peter Newman and Jeffrey Kenworthy:



- Mixed land use, with offices, shops, businesses, and community facilities integrated into residential development so that there is more local activity. . . .
- Considerable landscaping . . . and attractive gardens in public spaces.
- A mix of public, private, and cooperative housing with an emphasis wherever possible on families and thus large internal dwelling spaces, and spacious community [common] areas. . . .
- Community facilities, such as schools, libraries, child care centers, senior centers, recreation centers, and in some cases small urban farms. . . .
- Special areas for secure storage of equipment such as boats or other recreational gear to allow for those who may like the community focus of such high-density development but need a little extra space.
- Pedestrian and cycle links with parking facilities placed underground where possible and traffic calming on peripheral roads. The aim is a traffic-free, people-oriented environment, not one designed around the space demands of surface parking lots.
- Public spaces with strong design features. . . .
- A high degree of self-sufficiency in the community to meet local needs, but with good rail and bus links.<sup>87</sup>

The City of Zion Plat included virtually all of the above smart growth components: relatively high density (15,000 to 20,000 residents within 1.5 square miles or 960 acres), mixed commercial and residential development, community facilities and common areas, extensive landscaping, small urban farms and gardens, and surrounding open space. Once the community reached its population threshold, the Saints would “lay off another in the same way, and so fill up the world in the last days.”<sup>88</sup> The City of Zion Plat did not specify the distance between communities. However, sufficient distance between each compact community would exist to preserve open space and maintain separate community identities. In short, the City of Zion Plat and the urban design advanced by Joseph Smith and his immediate successors incorporated modern ideas of urban growth boundaries, land use regulation to direct growth, a town center, and surrounding protected greenbelt.

In recognition of this fact, in 1996 the American Institute of Certified Planners awarded Joseph Smith’s City of Zion Plat the National Planning Landmark Award, acknowledging it as one of the earliest examples of smart growth. A plaque, located at Brigham Young Historic Park at the corner of State Street and North Temple Street in Salt Lake City commemorates the award. It reads:

The Plat of the City of Zion, incorporated in a remarkable treatise on urban design addressed to the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Joseph Smith on June 25, 1833, guided the

development of over 500 settlements in the Intermountain West, establishing a continuing commitment to the building of well-planned and culturally nurturing cities.

**Theological Implications.** While today's society is vastly different and more complex than the pioneer economic system, the principles of living within our means, conserving natural resources for future generations, and avoiding wasteful exploitation of limited land and water resources resonate today. But what about building the City of Zion itself? Has the commandment to build the City of Zion been rescinded?

Brigham Young explained, "In the mind of God there is no such thing as dividing spiritual from temporal, or temporal from spiritual; for they are one in the Lord."<sup>89</sup> Some doctrinal teachings such as the Word of Wisdom have easily recognizable spiritual and temporal implications. Likewise, the City of Zion Plat and the emphasis on building compact, aesthetically pleasing communities reflect timeless community-building principles. These principles presage modern smart growth planning to build sustainable communities which, when followed, preserve a sense of place and enhance civic pride. But building communities patterned after the City of Zion principles teaches citizens to work together and sacrifice for the common good. One professional planner observed:

The Mormon village was an extraordinary example of a sustainable community. . . . Sustainability requires community, a critical ingredient that has almost disappeared in this country. The self-centered, me-first "individual in society" would need to be replaced by a group-oriented "person in community." Like the Mormon village, a sustainable community must have a clear strategy or master plan for survival, citizens who fully comprehend the strategy, and a dogged commitment to make it work. . . . The sustainable community must have a strong connection with nature and the sustaining land. Its members must have a strong connection with each other.<sup>90</sup>

For Latter-day Saints, building communities based on enlightened principles can have other significant spiritual implications. The commandment to build Zion, in its multiple layers of meaning, is still in effect. Brigham Young taught that the Saints must prepare to build the City of Zion in anticipation of the Lord's second coming:

Are we prepared now to establish the Zion that the Lord designs to build up? I have many times asked the questions, "Where is the man that knows how to lay the first rock for the wall that is to surround the New Jerusalem or the Zion of God on the earth? Where is the man who knows how to construct the first gate of the city? Where is the man who understands how to build up the kingdom of God in its purity and to prepare for Zion to come down to meet it?" "Well," says one, "I thought the Lord

was going to do this.” So He is if we will let Him. That is what we want: we want the people to be willing for the Lord to do it. But He will do it by means. He will not send His angels to gather up the rock to build up the New Jerusalem. He will not send His angels from the heavens to go to the mountains to cut the timber and make it into lumber to adorn the city of Zion. He has called upon us to do this work; and if we will let Him work by, through, and with us, He can accomplish it; otherwise we shall fall short, and shall never have the honor of building up Zion on the earth.<sup>91</sup>

Similarly, Wilford Woodruff stated in 1863, “The Lord requires of us to build up Zion . . . and prepare a kingdom and a people for the coming and reign of the Messiah. When we do all we can to forward and accomplish this Work then are we justified. This is the work of our lives, and it makes life of some consequence to us.”<sup>92</sup> In 1870, Lorenzo Snow further explained that progress towards building a Zion society would occur after the Saints learned how to build up cities acceptable to God:

By and by the Lord will have prepared the way for some to return to Jackson County, there to build up the Centre Stake of Zion. How easy this work can be accomplished, after we have learned to build up cities and Temples here to His divine acceptance! Our present experience is a very needful one. . . . As knowledge and efficiency are obtained gradually, we may expect that the experience that we are getting now in learning how to build up cities in our present condition, conforming as near as possible to the holy order of God, is, in order to prepare us by and by to return to Missouri, whence we were driven, and there build up cities and Temples to the name of the Most High, upon which his glory will descend.<sup>93</sup>

President Gordon B. Hinckley has echoed the same aspiration regarding the need to build Zion:

Our forebears dreamed of Zion. “Come to Zion,” they said. “Even if you have to walk all the way. Come to Zion. Leave Babylon and gather to the mountains of Ephraim.” No one can read the words of Brigham Young, John Taylor, or Wilford Woodruff without knowing that they thought of these mountain valleys as a great gathering place for people of one heart and one mind and one faith, a place where the mountain of the Lord’s house should be established in the tops of the mountains and where all nations would flow unto it.<sup>94</sup>

President Hinckley has also said, “If we are to build that Zion of which the prophets have spoken and of which the Lord has given mighty promise, we must set aside our consuming selfishness. We must rise above our love for comfort and ease, and in the very process of effort and struggle, even in our extremity, we shall become better acquainted with our God.”<sup>95</sup>

As community leaders and citizens alike contemplate contemporary growth management needs and the myriad of land use decisions that must be made, great benefit could come from studying the rich legacy of urban planning left by earlier generations of Latter-day Saints. That legacy is grounded in the responsibility to build a community based on enlightened principles and timeless values.

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# Dissent and Restoration in a Corner of London

## A Personal View of the Remarkable Religious History of the Parish of St. Luke's

*Peter J. Vousden*

I am an Englishman of forty-six years who was born under the covenant into a Latter-day Saint family. This is a comparatively unusual blessing in England. There are many men in their twenties who could claim such a blessing but fewer of my generation. As a child I observed my parents and was shaped by the power of their examples. My father was an enthusiastic and committed pioneering local leader, and my mother a quiet and gentle woman who lived more perfectly the Christian ethic than any other person I have personally known. As a teenager, I experimented with my faith and discovered the beauty of it for myself. I accepted the heritage of my faith and grew to feel that Joseph Smith was my prophet. When the time was right, I was happy to serve as a missionary and share my testimony in the England Manchester Mission among my own people. I felt excited to be treading in the footsteps of Heber C. Kimball who pioneered the work in the northwest of England starting in 1837. There was no other place in the world I would rather have served.

Years later, visiting the Salt Lake Temple for the first time, I just wanted to touch the stone walls, for I felt I was a part of it. I marvelled at the vision of Brigham Young in commissioning such a structure and felt that I, too, was a follower of Brother Brigham. More years passed and I had similar feelings when visiting Palmyra, Nauvoo, and Carthage. These were more than just interesting places; I felt a sense of propriety, an awareness that the history of the restoration of the gospel was my heritage. I was a part owner.

At the same time, as an Englishman, and more particularly as a Londoner, I have similar feelings for many of the institutions, buildings, and characters of my country's rich history. For example, I spent fifteen years



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FIG. 1. St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England, wherein thousands gathered after the World Trade Center atrocity.

working in the shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral in London (fig. 1), and I think of St. Paul's as my cathedral. It is an inspirational building that I never tire of viewing. After September 11, 2001, I stood on the pavement outside my cathedral with thousands of my fellow Londoners, who could not fit inside, to pay my respects to those murdered in the World Trade Center atrocity. It was a deeply poignant moment in which thousands of my fellows were outwardly showing solidarity with their American counterparts while inwardly silently pleading for God's help.

On less dramatic days, I have sat quietly in the side chapel of my cathedral or in its garden to pray. Although I have never been a member of The Church of England, which technically owns the cathedrals of England, I consider these, too, as partly mine. They inspire me. They are part of my heritage. St. Paul's, Coventry, Norwich, Winchester, and the rest, they are

all partly mine. I think of the Englishmen who built them and those who have worshipped in them as my fellows.

Similarly, the characters of English religious development are my people. I speak not of archbishops and court chaplains who shaped policy and manipulated kings—I cannot identify with them. I speak of the remarkable men and women who were prepared to fly in the face of severe official disapproval to practice their religion as they saw fit—Men such as William Tyndale, John Bunyan, George Fox, John and Charles Wesley, and the enigmatic but compelling Oliver Cromwell. I cannot sing nor listen to a Charles Wesley or Isaac Watts hymn without thinking that it's a part of my heritage. I cannot read Bunyan without identifying myself with him as an Englishman and a Christian. I cannot consider Cromwell's remarkable life without respecting his personal religious conscience and his tolerance of free thinking in regard to matters of personal faith.

And so, in matters of faith and belief, I have two heritages in which I see no contradiction. My personal commitment is concentrated on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My conviction that Joseph Smith was a prophet is real and important to me, and I subscribe to the message of the restoration of the true gospel. At the same time, I find strength and inspiration from the free thinkers of English history who bravely and sometimes recklessly flew in the face of official persecution in order to maintain their theological integrity. Indeed, if I understand my history and faith correctly, it is the work of religious reformers that prepared the ground for Joseph Smith. It was English and European religious independence that drove early-seventeenth-century pilgrims across the Atlantic Ocean to the new world where liberty could develop for two hundred years and eventually produced the ground from which the boy prophet sprang.

It was the commotion of a religious revival that aroused the interest of young Joseph. He leaned towards Methodism before his remarkable First Vision changed his life forever. I see no contradiction in a German Latter-day Saint feeling connected to Luther, or a Czech to Hus, or a Swiss to Zwingli, and likewise I see no contradiction in my connection to English Nonconformists. In my mind's eye, I see seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Nonconformists as the question-posers and the agents of the Restoration as the deliverers of answers. The former were deeply sincere theological wrestlers seeking for truth, and the latter were humble testifiers of revealed knowledge.

There is a small part of London that is special to me because it is where the two strands of this heritage interweave. This place is the parish of St. Luke's in the borough of Shoreditch. This parish consists of a

few churches and burial grounds which have strong ties to George Fox, Oliver Cromwell, John Bunyan, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts, Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Heber C. Kimball. Here are found some of the greatest religious thinkers and characters spanning a two-hundred-year period within an area of London covering no more than a square mile. This area of London I know and love, an area in which I have strolled, sat, prayed, and wondered. Although it is a mere parcel of the great city of London, its history has permeated my bones. The two currents of my religious heritage uniquely converge in this one localised spot on the northeastern edge of the city of London.

Over a fifteen-year period, I have walked the streets of St. Luke's parish, prayed in the churches of St. Giles Cripplegate and St. Botolph's-Without-Aldersgate, conversed with Anglican ministers, lingered in the burial grounds of Bunhill Row, and visited Wesley's chapel. I have retraced the steps of Brigham Young and his associates, located the street where they lived, the site of the pool where they baptized, and the site of their first successful meeting place in London—and all of these places are close enough to reach during a brisk lunchtime walk. With the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith burning in my heart and my mind turned to the history of religious thought in London, I feel that I might be uniquely placed to uncover a golden fragment of historical interest. I am not the only Latter-day Saint elder employed in the old city of London; there are probably a couple dozen. Perhaps I am not the only one to have discovered the peculiar history of St. Luke's, but I would be surprised if another has lingered longer, pondered more, imagined those giants of the past preaching and teaching more often, and generally felt more energized about those streets and buildings than I have.

For the purposes of this essay, I begin my tour of St. Luke's in the most restful place, the ancient burial ground of Bunhill Fields (fig. 2). Situated between Bunhill Row and City Road, the ground is a four-acre oasis of tree-shaded calm amidst the bustle of the modern city. The London plane trees, planted in Victorian times, are statuesque and magnificent. These giant hybrid trees, known in America as sycamore or buttonwood, thrive in polluted air and so are perfect for the location. But beneath their fabulous limbs, in the cold London earth, rest the remains of human giants whose faith, intelligence, courage, and determination helped break the rock-hard theological soil into which the seeds of the Restoration would fall and grow.

Bunhill Fields, once a pit for the victims of plague, occupied an extensive area of the ancient manor of Finsbury and was never consecrated by a Church of England minister. To be buried in Bunhill Fields became

a badge of honour for the religious dissenters and Nonconformists of England. The site was the first freehold property owned by Quakers who possessed it from 1661 to 1855. George Fox, founder of the Quakers, is buried there. Quakers studiously avoid marking graves with any form of memorial, so the exact location of Fox's grave is unknown. George Fox is remembered as the Nonconformist *par excellence*. As my grandmother would have put it, he was at the front of the queue when stubbornness was handed out. He refused to bend his conviction and was imprisoned eight times on purely religious grounds. Fox summed up his objection to conformity in passionate prose.

The Papists, they cry conform. And the Turk, he cries conform. And did not the heathen emperors cry conform? And the Presbyterian, he cries conform. And the independents . . . so all these cry conform. So every-



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FIG. 2. Bunhill Fields. Buried here are some of the great religious thinkers and Nonconformists of England: George Fox, John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, William Blake, and Susanna Wesley, mother of John and Charles Wesley.

one that gets the uppermost, and gets the staff of authority commands people. . . . But no law of Jesus requires it, who said “freely you have received, freely give.”<sup>1</sup>

John Bunyan (1628–88), itinerant preacher and writer whose *Pilgrim’s Progress* stands as one of the greats, not only of religious literature, but of all English literature, is buried in Bunhill Fields. His grave is marked by an impressive monument depicting the character Christian carrying his burden on the way to the Celestial City. *Pilgrim’s Progress* is a classic that retains its vibrancy and passion three hundred years after it was written. President Ezra Taft Benson referred to it as “a great book.”<sup>2</sup> It is saturated with unforgettable religious imagery such as Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Giant Despair, the Delectable Mountains, Vanity Fair, the Slough of Despond, Doubting Castle, the Plain of Ease and the Hill of Lucre, to mention a few. A work of vivid imagination and deep sincerity, *Pilgrim’s Progress* is as useful to the Christian seeker in the first years of the twenty-first century as it was the last years of the seventeenth. I am sure Latter-day Saint readers would immediately identify with it. But there remains one major difference between the time it was published and now, and that is its original novelty. It was the first attempt, and quite a daring attempt, to portray religious themes in a fictional manner. Some scholars argue it was the first English novel.

In life, Bunyan, a self-taught man, refused to stop preaching and teaching in the open air and was twelve years in Bedford prison for refusing to bend. He remains an inspiration to me not only as a writer but as an ordinary working man who had the vision to educate himself and live and die true to his conscience. In all of his writings, not just the *Progress*, the reader feels the sincerity and intensity of the author as he attempts to explore his faith in the written word. There are passages raw with pain and struggle and others where hope and healing are palpable. Bunyan’s works are full of passion and honesty and, to borrow a contemporary Quaker phrase, they speak to my condition.

Isaac Watts (1647–1748), Congregationalist preacher and hymn writer, was born into a family that was familiar with the price of religious independence—his father was in prison for dissenting when he was born. Watts stands as a giant of hymn writing and hymn singing and can claim to have revolutionized Christian worship, for it was traditional only to sing Psalms in church. Watts’s hymns were loved by Nonconformists and loathed by the establishment, who viewed them as subversive. His hymns were taken up by common people, who often sang them accompanied by folk instruments. For the modern Christian, the notion that hymn singing is subversive seems ridiculous. But that was exactly how it was before

Watts. For modern renditions of folk hymns in the traditional style, the great English folk singer Maddy Prior and the Carnival Band have produced several albums, notably *Sing Lustily and with Good Courage*.<sup>3</sup> These renditions convey not only the beauty and power of the Christian message but also the sincerity of common folks who indeed sang them lustily and with good courage in the face of official disdain.

Watts's hymns became popular in both England and America. Many of his hymns were featured in the first edition of the LDS hymnal and nine of his hymns remain in the current (1985) edition. Karen Lynn Davidson, a recognized hymn scholar, has called Watts "the single most important figure in the history of English hymnody."<sup>4</sup> When Watts died, his body was laid in a grave in Bunhill Fields.

William Blake (1757–1827), poet, artist, and visionary whose anthem "Jerusalem!" momentarily poses the question loved by so many Englishmen—"And did those feet in ancient time, walk upon England's mountains green?"—is also buried in Bunhill Fields. So, too, are Susanna Wesley, mother of John and Charles, and Daniel Defoe, Nonconformist and author of *Robinson Crusoe*. Countless less gifted or less renowned individuals who lived and died with an independent religious conscience are buried in Bunhill Fields.<sup>5</sup>

For a long time the burial ground was left to nature and became overgrown. Only in Victorian times when the great reformer of social conscience, Lord Shaftesbury (1801–1885), raised some money was the value of the site remembered and restored. It was Shaftesbury who collected money to build a suitable memorial for John Bunyan, which remains to this day. Somehow the site survived the Second World War blitz, when most of the streets surrounding it were demolished by the Luftwaffe (German air force). There is nowhere quite like Bunhill Fields in all of London. For any person with an interest in religious freedom it is an inspirational place. To me it is hallowed ground.

Right across the road from the front entrance to Bunhill Fields on City Road stands Wesley's chapel (fig. 3), a monument of legacy to John Wesley, founder of Methodism. Not far from the chapel are the two separate places John Wesley and his brother Charles received their deeply spiritual experiences calling them to minister. The conversion of John is well documented and forms part of Methodist lore. There is a bronze monument on the High Walk in Aldersgate Street, right outside the Museum of London, commemorating the day of May 24, 1738, when John declared, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt that I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."





FIG. 3. Wesley's chapel. The monument in the foreground commemorates the conversion of John Wesley, who went on to establish Methodism. Reproduced with the permission of The Trustees of Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London.

John's "strangely warmed heart" proved to generate a phenomenal heat that sustained a most remarkable life of service and teaching. The Wesleys were ordained Church of England priests and never left the church. It was not their intention to start a new church; rather they just wanted to apply their beliefs and, in a methodical way, serve as they felt Christ would serve. John was warned by his superiors in the Church of England that to pretend to gifts of the spirit was a "horrible thing" and that he should confine himself to his own parish. But John would have none of it and declared, "The world is my parish." True to his word, he preached in all parts of England, taking the message to the poor coal miners of Northumberland and Wales, visiting prisoners condemned to die, and ministering to the people whom the Church of England bishops regarded as unworthy of their attention. Even today the coal mining areas of South Wales remain strongholds of Methodism. In the common parlance, people were either "Chapel" (Methodist) or "Church" (Church of England), and South Wales was and still remains "Chapel."



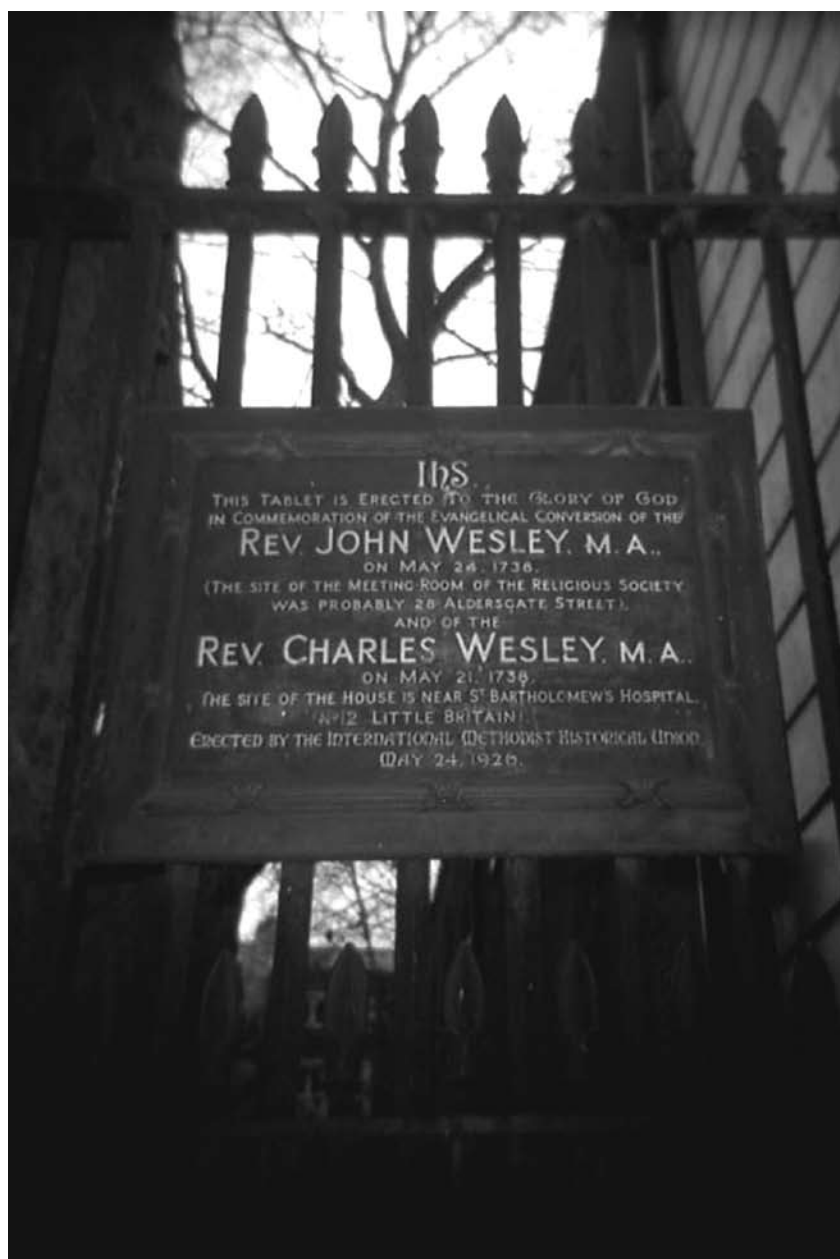
John Wesley travelled far and wide, but his conversion was on the same streets of London that Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Wilford Woodruff would tread one hundred years later. There is a fine Georgian church nearby called St. Botolph's in Aldersgate Street, London EC1, which commemorates the Wesley conversions (fig. 4) and boasts a unique stained glass window depicting John Wesley preaching in the open air in Moorfields.

Charles Wesley, the poet of Methodism, also received his call to serve while staying in the same area of London. His conversion preceded his brother's by three days, taking place on May 21, 1738. He was staying with some Moravian friends (disciples of the reformer John Hus) in a house in Little Britain. He was recovering from a period of illness when he felt not only the administration of his fellows but of Christ himself. Charles Wesley became a prolific and brilliant writer of hymns, six of which are in the 1985 LDS hymnal.

Another history-shaper associated with the area is Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), who polarizes opinion as few other characters in English history. Farmer, soldier, Parliamentarian, puritan, regicide, and the major force during a period of immense upheaval, Cromwell remains an enigma. On the one hand he was a man of religious tolerance who allowed all sorts of Christian sects into his army and who ended three hundred years of Jewish exile from England, and on the other hand he is remembered with horror in Ireland as a merciless enemy of Irish Catholicism. Cromwell was a man driven by his religious conviction. It was his liberal attitude toward religious belief that encouraged the flowering of dissent, and it was the attempt by the advisors of the restored Charles II to reestablish the Church of England by force of law that put so many dissenters in prison after Cromwell's demise. Cromwell is connected to St. Luke's in that he was married in the church of St. Giles Cripplegate to Elizabeth Bourchier in August 1620.

John Milton (1608–74) also worshipped in St. Giles Cripplegate and lived in rooms in Aldersgate. Milton, one of the great English poets, was a prolific pamphleteer for republicanism and was a tireless supporter of Cromwell. Upon the restoration of King Charles II, Milton went into hiding, and many of his books and pamphlets were burned in the streets. However, in time even he was embraced by a general amnesty. He came out of hiding and resumed a normal life. Milton's epic poems *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* deal with the eternal relationships between God, man, and our common adversary.

Another aspect of the unique religious history of St. Luke's was the establishment of the French Hospital in Bath Street. The hospital was



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FIG. 4. Sign at St. Botolph's, commemorating the Wesley conversions. Charles Wesley is known as the poet of Methodism, and six of his hymns are in the current LDS hymnal.

provided by a wealthy Huguenot for poor French Protestants and their descendants residing in Great Britain. Following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, many French Protestants fled persecution and sought refuge in London. The hospital was built as a place of healing for those Frenchmen who fled their own land to avoid persecution.

On August 18, 1840, George A. Smith, Heber C. Kimball, and Wilford Woodruff arrived in London with designs to

convert the inhabitants of the world's greatest city to the message of the restoration of the true gospel. They were enthusiastic and emboldened by their recent and significant successes in other parts of Britain. The recently arrived missionaries followed the pattern the missionaries established when they first trod on British shores in 1837. That pattern was to gravitate towards relatives of established church members. In 1837 the Lancashire missionaries first looked up the family of Joseph Fielding, and when in Liverpool they called on the Cannon family who were related to John Taylor by marriage. At London in 1840 the same practice was adopted, and the missionaries went south of the River Thames to Borough, where relatives of Theodore Turley lived. They found little success and their fortunes did not change until they went to St. Luke's in Shoreditch.

Those same streets trodden by Cromwell, Milton, and John and Charles Wesley were to be walked by some of the greatest of all Latter-day Saint missionaries. Brigham Young, who joined his brethren Heber C. Kimball and Wilford Woodruff in London on December 1, 1840, would pass on a daily basis the burial ground where the remains of great ones such as George Fox, John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, and others silently slept. Brigham Young grew into an inspirational prophet-leader who commands respect from all Latter-day Saints, but in England Heber C. Kimball and Wilford Woodruff are special. To English members they remain the greatest of all missionaries ever to have preached the gospel in our land. Yes, they are my missionaries. Before I am accused of hyperbole, let me add a note of justification. Heber C. Kimball was the first mission president in the British Isles, and in the first nine months thousands were baptized, with most of the converts coming in Lancashire County, where Heber labored. Wilford Woodruff would later baptize 599 people in a few days in Herefordshire. These records are hardly likely to be surpassed.

So imagine my excitement at discovering that my missionaries had stumbled into my special area of St. Luke's. Did I say stumble? Well, I think

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*The same streets trodden by Cromwell, Milton, and the Wesleys were to be walked by some of the greatest of all Latter-day Saint missionaries.*

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they were led, but they remained oblivious to the significance of the area. They arrived in the area after being moved along by a constable who did not want them preaching in Smithfield Market. However, one man who did want to hear them preach was Henry Connor, a watchmaker who lived in Ironmonger Row, St. Luke's. Mr. Connor took the elders to Tabernacle Square, where a crowd of four hundred were listening to preachers. Henry Connor became the first London convert, baptized in the famous public bathing pool named Peerless Pool, located in St. Luke's.

The missionaries moved into lodgings on the same street as Brother Connor. He lived at 56 Ironmonger Row and they at number 40. Today Ironmonger Row is a mixture of offices and public swimming baths. These baths have been there a long time but were not there when Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Wilford Woodruff lived there. Sadly, no buildings of 1840s vintage remain, but on the site where the missionaries lived, two-bedroom apartments in a converted warehouse are selling for close to half a million pounds each.

So the proclaimers of the restored gospel lived and baptized in the parish of St. Luke's, and they also established the first successful congregations there, first in Pump Court and more successfully in J. Barratts Academy, Kings Square, Goswell Road. Kings Square (fig. 5) is just a few minutes' stroll from Ironmonger Row. It was at Barratts Academy that Brigham Young preached his first sermon in London on December 1, 1840. One week after this sermon the missionaries baptized their landlord's family. The first conference of the London Saints was held at Barratts Academy on February 14, 1841.

Brigham Young kept Joseph Smith informed of the progress of the British mission by letter. His letters included notes on seeing the sites of London. For example, this is an extract written December 5, 1840.

No 40 Ironmonger Row, St. Lukes

Dear Brethren, I have just returned from a walk with brothers Kimball and Woodruff. We have only been as far as St. Pauls and returned by Smithfield Market, about three miles.<sup>6</sup>

Such a walk would have taken the missionaries past the overgrown Bunhill Fields cemetery where the great Nonconformists were buried, the places where the Wesley brothers were converted, and the church where Cromwell was married.

In other letters Brigham informed Joseph of seeing the Houses of Parliament, the Queen's Royal Horse Guard, and other sites of historical interest. It seems inconceivable to me that had he known of the history of the parish in which he sojourned, Brigham Young would not have



FIG. 5. King's Square. Brigham Young preached his first London sermon in this area.

mentioned it. I am convinced that he and Elders Kimball and Woodruff were unwittingly adding to the remarkable religious history of St. Luke's.

Of course, in 1840 London was the biggest city in the world and had been populated since Roman times. One might make an interesting historical case in any of its parishes, but the fact remains that Fox, Bunyan, Watts, and colleagues were all buried in one place. John and Charles Wesley preached all over England but they stated that their conversions occurred in one specific place. The French Protestant hospital started in St. Luke's and nowhere else. Cromwell was married in St. Giles Church within the parish and not one of the dozens of other churches the city had to offer. Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Heber C. Kimball might have found success in any other part of London, but the fact remains that they did not. They found success and started establishing the Church in St. Luke's, an uncommonly fertile field of spirituality.

I am really not in a position to make a cast-iron historical case arguing that the history of St. Luke's demonstrates a spiritual continuity, or that there was a pattern of religious phenomena culminating in the presence of three of the greatest Latter-day Saint missionaries in 1840. That doesn't matter very much to me because I remain convinced that the religious history of St. Luke's is no coincidence. I find it remarkable that the latter-day work flourished in this small parish soaked in religious history. I feel

that the God of Watts, Bunyan, Fox, and Wesley is the God of Brigham, Wilford, and Heber and that God himself took the latter-day missionaries into St. Luke's for his own purposes.

Today, St. Luke's is not the most glamorous part of London, nor the prettiest. In fact, to the uninitiated it might seem worthy of no merit at all. But to me its streets resonate with the voices of Fox and Kimball, Wesley and Woodruff, Bunyan and Smith, Cromwell and Young. What a cacophony I hear as my mind plays out open religious meetings featuring these passionate and eloquent men. I wonder what the Nonconformists would have made of the testimonies of the Latter-day Saint elders—those great swimmers against the stream, those dissenters whose sincere, intellectual, and spiritual energy would put many modern Latter-day Saints to shame—what would they have made of the simple and straightforward testimony that God the Father and our Lord and Savior had appeared to a boy prophet? Of course, there are no answers to be had to such questions, but that in no way diminishes the fun of posing them. I remain grateful for my parish of St. Luke's and the wonderful men associated with it.

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1. Cecil W. Sharman, *George Fox and the Quakers* (London: Quaker Home Service, 1991), 240.

2. Ezra Taft Benson, "Do Not Despair," *Ensign* 4 (November 1974): 65.

3. Maddy Prior with The Carnival Band, *Sing Lustily & with Good Courage: Gallery Hymns of the 18th and Early 19th Centuries*, Saydisc & Valley Recordings, CD-SDL 383 (CD, UK, 1990).

4. Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 455.

5. Others buried at Bunhill Fields include: Thomas Bayes, Presbyterian minister, philosopher, and statistician whose theorem (Bayes Theorem) is still used in learned papers; Thomas Fowell Buxton, prison reformer; several descendants of Oliver Cromwell; Lt. General Charles Fleetwood, parliamentary army officer during the English civil war; John Owen, Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, a brilliant theologian who was a personal minister to Oliver Cromwell and still allowed to preach by the restored Charles II; and Richard Price, collaborator with Thomas Bayes and defender of the American colonists and the French Revolution. *The Official Guide to Bunhill Fields* published by the Corporation of London estimate 123,000 interments took place in the burial ground over a 200 year period.

6. 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), 4:237.

# Reality through Reflection

Marilyn N. Nielson

The only times I find a chance to write in my journal are those times when I have nothing interesting to write about. I used to write in my journal all the time before I got married, and it's full of all this meticulous detail about the dates I went on, who said what, what we ate, who won the basketball game, and so on. Interesting, in a morbid sort of way, I suppose, but certainly not anything I'd like published in "Inspiring Stories of our Pioneer Forebears." But then in my journals from the time I met my husband, Sam—covering all the fantastic times I had getting to know him, and getting married, and going to the temple, and giving birth to our astonishing son, Abraham, who does something new to amaze me every ten minutes—practically every entry starts with, "Well, a lot has happened in the last five months . . ." and then proceeds to hit a few highlights in absolutely meager prose because I can't replicate or remember or even stir up much enthusiasm for any details at that point.

I suppose I could give up writing in my journal completely, and just dedicate myself to pure "living." But I'm convinced that writing, or reflection, can't be dismissed so lightly. My father the physicist once explained to me that if I were to fire an electron at a screen, I could think of it in terms of a wave before it hit the screen. As long as it was unobserved, it would act like a wave, called a wave of probability. However, as soon as I observed the electron, it would no longer be a wave, but a particle, landing in one precise place. The process works as if some cosmic dice-thrower simply threw the dice to decide which of all the *possibilities* (which, in the wave, make peaks and valleys of *probability*) will actually become reality. The really interesting thing here is that there is no reality until the electron is *observed*. I can

draw no conclusions about an unwatched electron. It is as if my observation *creates* the reality.

Like that electron-bombarded screen, my life is constantly being hit by a barrage of experiences. In fact, so many things are always happening that I run the risk of forgetting to “observe”—to think about, talk about, write about—in short, to *reflect on*—what’s going on. And if I fail to reflect on my experiences, they never become truly real. If I want to live the fullest kind of life, I *must* find time for reflection.

Of course, finding time to reflect is easier said than done. The most reflection-worthy experiences are also usually the most energy-consuming—thus my frustration with journal-writing. And all of us face this dichotomy—between living life, and reflecting on it—all the time. For instance, just this minute, Abraham was standing here holding a duck in one hand and a cup in the other, and he said, “One cup, and one duckie.” And then he sighed and said “*Two* so many things!” So then I had to stop typing this and go write that down in his “cute sayings” book so I wouldn’t forget it. But while I was gone I probably missed three more cute things that he said. So, I’m convinced, there must be a balance. If I give myself totally over to the moment, and never record or reflect on anything, then I’ll either forget it all or it won’t mean anything to me. But if I’m too busy reflecting on life, I’m not really living it, either, and pretty soon I won’t even have done anything *worth* reflecting about.

How can we resolve this conflict between reflection and experience? For God, maybe there is no conflict. He can probably do both at once. I imagine that he can experience everything fully, and completely enjoy it, while at the same time thinking and making connections in his head, about what it means, and how it all fits into the divine pattern, and what his logical next step should be. Maybe that’s what he meant when he said that “all things are present before mine eyes” (D&C 38:2). But, all things *not* being present to us here in mortality; we have to choose, at any given moment, whether to *experience* or to *reflect* on experience. The closest thing to simultaneity I can achieve seems to be a kind of rapid flip-flop between experience and reflection. Maybe if I learn to do it fast enough it will be like those revolving functions you learn about in calculus, which actually could hold a volume of, say, water, even though they’re two dimensional, because they’re spinning so fast around the axis.

I think the difference between the two ways of seeing, between experience and reflection, are paralleled in the difference between running and walking. When I go running, I catch glimpses of things, snatches of other people’s lives. I never really have time for a full examination of anything. But then, while running, I also have plenty of time to think. I amuse myself



by making up stories, filling out the things I've seen. Everything is in pieces: the bloodstain on the street, the blue light of a television flickering at five a.m., the suitcase leaning against a screen door. Everything takes on some kind of significance, and suddenly I'm seeing connections everywhere. Things make sense to me, but in a sort of unearthly, detached way. But even though running is a great time to reflect, it's also a time when I'm not really *part* of anything. I'm just an observer, outside of real life, not getting involved.

On the other hand, when I take walks with Abraham, I'm totally involved with real life. I'm so involved that I don't have time to reflect at all. Instead I'm pointing out stop signs and dump trucks and doggies, and trying to avoid the puncture weeds in the empty lot, and deciding if we have time for just one more trip down the slide before we have to go home and make lunch. I'm experiencing it all, even though I'm not exactly aware of it. The sun on my back, a train whistle, the sound of backhoes digging up pipes on the mountain.

Maybe there's no way to say which way—running or walking, reflection or experience—is more “real.” Of course the experience itself is what all reflection must start with. But I'm convinced that *meaningful* reality comes most often after reflection. In other words, only after writing about it, thinking about it, do the experiences start to mean something. Thinking back on those summer walks I just described, I can almost see it—the shape, the pattern of our summer. Walking, lying on the grass, blowing bubbles. What seemed like merely a collection of sensations at the time has somehow taken on shape, has become “summertime”—which it didn't become, really, until the summer had passed. When I reflect on past experiences, they gain a significance they didn't possess before.

Abraham feels the weight of reflection too, I know, even at age two. We went to the Monte Bean museum and he ran around gleefully, exclaiming about the elephant, running up the stairs, pressing all the buttons to make the animal pictures go on. But that night when we were telling Sam about it, I kept reminding Abraham of things—“And then we saw . . . Remember, Abe? What was the hippo doing?” “Hippo opening big, big mouth!”—and I think he enjoyed *that* even more. Somehow, talking about it was making the experience more real, more permanent, for him. Now he says to me five times a day, “Mommy and Abey talk about Bean Museum again?” And we go through it all over again. As we reflect on the experience, it solidifies in our minds. It becomes a “better,” or a more full, a more permanent, memory.

Even more important, perhaps, is that without reflection, we might not have memories at all. That's why my journal is often so boring just when it

ought to be the most exciting. I was too busy *experiencing* to *reflect*, and by the time I do reflect, I've forgotten the little things. Yes, without reflecting on it, I would remember that I *had* a baby. I would remember the hospital and how much he weighed. But the first time I heard his meowing baby cry, saw his blue fishy body, the way the sun came over Timpanogos like hope coming into the world, the way his tiny hands had dimples instead of knuckles—that would all be lost to me if I hadn't reflected on it.

There are probably a million experiences I've never reflected on, and therefore forgotten (and thankfully so, in some cases). But I shudder to think of others that might have been lost in the well of unremarked memory. For example, once my brother Karl and I were at the dentist waiting for my mom in the waiting room. A couple of older ladies walked in and settled themselves in the two chairs next to Karl. "How are you, young man?" said one. (People like Karl. He has an honest face.) Karl murmured a reply and the two old ladies started to converse discreetly. A look of intense pain came over Karl's face as he looked over at me. "Marilyn! I have a problem!" he hissed.

"What?" I hissed back.

"I can't really say!" he whispered.

"Then tell me later," I said, laughing.

"It needs to be solved before we leave!" breathed Karl urgently.

"Then what *is* it?" I said.

Karl leaned closer. "That lady is . . . sitting . . . on . . . my . . . *toothbrush!*" he howled silently. I stifled a snort of laughter. A hurt look appeared on Karl's face. "It's not *funny*," he said.

"You'll think of something," I choked out. The lady rearranged her legs, and Karl winced. My mom finished paying the bill and walked over to us. "Shall we go?" she said. "I can't," said Karl, in what was actually quite a calm voice for someone in his current circumstances. So we sat and waited for the ladies to leave. I read three *Sport's Illustrateds* in the time it took. I don't think Karl was ever quite the same again.

Maybe it wouldn't matter much if I forgot that. Maybe Karl doesn't even remember. But if I hadn't written that down at some point, it would all be lost to me, and I'm glad it isn't.

Of course, we shouldn't *neglect* experience in favor of reflection. I want time to think about the philosophical questions of life, but I don't want to plunge myself into a theoretical haze. If Abraham and I talk about our Monte Bean museum trip for the rest of our lives without ever going for another visit, or to another museum, the act of reflection will probably lose its value for us. Anyway, there's no guarantee that my reflections on some experience will necessarily be *more* valuable than the experience

itself. Sometimes I think I see some kind of pattern in my life, and then something happens that throws it all off. I suppose that until we're in the ultimate reflective mode—postmortal life, I assume—we won't really have the whole picture and so won't be able to draw unshakeable conclusions. Our reflection will be limited because our experience is limited, and any inferences we draw will be partially just guesses.

Still, I'm convinced that even those guesses have value. It's like those "Interpreting Historical Data" questions you have to write for the AP history tests in high school. One time I was complaining about them to my brothers; the questions ask you to compare the weirdest things sometimes, and it frustrated me. They sympathized, and I then forgot all about it until history class a few weeks later, when a piece of white paper fell from between the pages of my history book. I picked it up. *Interpreting Historical Data*, it said. I read further:

The Civil War started exactly 77 years before the Bolshevik Revolution. Using the world map, analyze the relationship between the distance between St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and South Carolina and relative latitudes and the date of each historical event. Your answer should take into account the ancestral relationship between John Brown and Karl Marx as well as historical attitudes towards Negroes and Jews.

What does your answer teach you about the historical importance of the Federalist Papers, the Communist Manifesto, and the Magna Carta? Does this apply to the price of tea in China? Hint:  $e^{(m77x)} = x + 77$ .

I started laughing. The paper was in Karl's handwriting, not that I couldn't recognize his hand in it a mile away. The scary thing was, at that point I'd gotten so good at "interpreting the data" that if it had been a real test question, I probably could have come up with something pretty good, and gotten a high score on it too. Sometimes I feel like I'm doing the same thing with my life. It's like an English literature test, and I'm making all these broad, bold statements ("Frost's sparse use of water imagery in the poem symbolizes his anger at Christ, the 'Living Water'") without really knowing if they're true. But the point is, I don't think it's harmful to make those kind of self- or life-summarizing statements, as long as I'm giving them actual thought. English teachers don't usually care about the interpretation nearly as much as the process you used to arrive there. The process of reflecting on my life, writing about it and talking about it and thinking about it, even just *speculating* about it, helps me make sense of it according to my current understanding.

As my life cycles along, bouncing back and forth between the exciting times where I'm so busy living I have no time to think about anything, and the unexciting times when all I'm doing is mentally reliving and digesting

past events, I progress. I experience, I reflect, I draw conclusions. I experience again, and it contradicts my conclusions, so I reflect again. And so on. Ideally, I suppose, the whole cycle would happen each day, so that it could be more substantial, experience and reflection constantly feeding off of and sustaining one another, becoming almost one entity, like that function that holds water because it spins with infinite speed. In this ideal cycle, perhaps the reflection would happen in my evening prayer, or in a time (someday I'd like to actually do this) which I have set aside daily, specifically for writing. But I'm convinced that going through the cycle at all, even weekly or monthly, is valuable. And as we step back and reflect—by writing, thinking about, and talking about our experiences—we will find our lives taking on a new and deeper reality.

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David M. Goldenberg. *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*.

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003

Stephen R. Haynes. *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002

Reviewed by Stirling Adams

Two recent books explore how the Genesis account of Noah cursing his grandson Canaan came to be used as a primary justification for enslaving black Africans. In doing so, the books add to the understanding of how this and other biblical stories were previously viewed within Mormonism as support for race-based classifications. Genesis tells of Ham finding his father Noah drunk and uncovered in his tent. Ham informs his brothers Shem and Japheth. They, walking backward so as not to see their father's nakedness, cover Noah with a garment. After Noah awakes from his drunkenness, he curses—not Ham, and not himself—but Ham's son Canaan by pronouncing: "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (see Genesis 9:20–27). There is no reference to dark skin, to any skin color, or to Africa, and Noah does not say the curse applies to Canaan's descendants. Yet this story, as it was amplified and changed in extrabiblical interpretations, became the ideological cornerstone used to justify the slavery of black Africans thousands of years afterwards.

David Goldenberg is a Jewish studies scholar and has been editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, President of Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, and Associate Director of the Annenberg Research Institute for Judaic and Near Eastern Studies. In *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Goldenberg seeks to answer how and when the Genesis story became a "curse of Ham" condemning black Africans to slavery.

Of the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian cultures that viewed the Hebrew Bible as scripture, Goldenberg writes that "biblical exegetical traditions moved freely among the geographically and culturally contiguous civilizations of the Near East. It is precisely the fluidity of the various

interpretations and legends that provides a unique opportunity for cross-cultural investigation” (5). His book is the result of thirteen years of steady research and presents what is often highly technical scholarship and linguistic analysis in a readable, cogent manner. His index of hundreds of primary ancient sources include Targum texts,<sup>1</sup> apocryphal and pseudepigraphal works, Greek and Latin authors, Hellenistic-Jewish, rabbinic, early Christian, Islamic, ancient Near East, Qumran, and Samaritan writings; this list does not even include ancient works that he cites infrequently or does not discuss at length (413).<sup>2</sup> He also cites 1,478 writers in his “Index of Modern Scholars.”<sup>3</sup> As these indices imply, Goldenberg’s research has been thorough. Though I find his analyses and typically carefully drawn conclusions compelling, I am unable to competently evaluate his multilingual, cross-cultural scholarship, and so look forward to following scholarly responses to *The Curse of Ham*.

The book is focused around answering four questions: How did biblical-era Jews view black Africans? What was the attitude of biblical and early post-biblical-era Jews towards dark skin color in general? When did slavery of blacks first become prominent? And, once trade in black slavery became established, was the Bible reinterpreted to reflect the new historical situation?

These questions, and Goldenberg’s voluminous research, might sound dry in the abstract, but in answering them his text often reads like a fast-paced whodunnit mystery novel. For example, many biblical commentators, including some Mormons, believed Ham’s name meant “hot,” “dark,” or “black.”<sup>4</sup> The meaning was assumed to support the conclusion that Ham had black skin. Did the name have that meaning? See chapter 10, “Was Ham Black?” for a thorough answer of “no,” and for how and almost exactly when and where the mistranslation first occurred. Goldenberg reviews the etymology of “Ham” in the languages involved (including Arabic, Aramaic, Coptic, Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew, Old South Arabian, Semitic, Syriac, and Ugaritic), and concludes that the word used in Genesis did not mean “black,” “dark,” or “heat,” and that as of now the word is of unknown origin. He believes mistaken interpretations may have developed in large part because in reducing spoken Hebrew to written form two different phonemes were represented with one graphical symbol, thus leading to confusion between words that in oral Hebrew were distinguished (141–56).<sup>5</sup>

The book of Numbers reports that Moses married an Ethiopian woman. The text makes it clear that the Lord does not disapprove, but the question arises, would the marriage have resulted in stigma for Moses, his wife, or any of their children? (Num. 12: 1–8). And in the biblical era,

was there generally a proscription against miscegenation? In chapter 4, "Postbiblical Israel: Black Africans," Goldenberg reviews commentary on Moses' wife, again using biblical, Targum, Hellenistic-Jewish, and early rabbinic texts. He concludes there is no evidence that biblical and post-biblical Judaism saw "anything denigrating in African origin or in miscegenation" (56; see also 26–40, 52–59, 163).<sup>6</sup> Goldenberg also discusses alternative interpretations of this story, one of which suggests that here "Kushite" should have been used to describe the woman instead of "Ethiopian," and that the verse refers to Moses' wife Zipporah who may or may not have had black skin (28–29, 52–59). His analysis of the broader question of whether there was a cultural reproach with regards to black Africans yields a similar conclusion: he finds no evidence of such a stigma and concludes, "Apparently Kushite ancestry did not matter one way or the other" (75).<sup>7</sup> This conclusion may remind Mormon readers of Hugh Nibley's similar findings in *Abraham in Egypt*.<sup>8</sup>

The Genesis 4 account of Cain killing Abel reports that Cain was cursed so that "when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength," and "the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." Though this account makes no reference to skin color, why did many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Americans believe Cain was cursed with black skin, and when did that belief originate? In chapter 13, "The Curse of Cain," Goldenberg reports that the evidence suggests an Armenian author of an apocryphal "Adam-book" from between the fifth and eleventh centuries made the initial mistake: he mistranslated the Genesis 4:5 statement that Cain's "countenance fell" as meaning Cain's face and skin turned dark. This interpretation was repeated infrequently until it gained momentum in seventeenth-century Europe and eighteenth-century America. Goldenberg comments briefly that both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young shared an assumption that Cain was cursed with dark skin and was the ancestor of black Africans (178). Without reading the early Mormon record closely, Goldenberg would not be aware that though many of Joseph Smith's followers adopted Protestant folklore that tied black Africans to Cain, there is little to show that the radical, reformation-minded Joseph Smith held the same view.<sup>9</sup>

Most importantly (especially to a book entitled *The Curse of Ham*), when and how did the story of Noah's curse become associated with black slavery? While the Genesis text explicitly states it was Ham's son Canaan that was cursed by Noah, many commentators, including Mormons, applied the curse to Ham, and through him to all of Ham's children.<sup>10</sup> How, why, and when did readers redirect the curse at Ham? See chapter 11, "Ham Sinned and Canaan was Cursed!" for the history of that

interpretative leap. In that chapter and in chapter 12, “The Curse of Ham,” Goldenberg reports that he found no link between skin color and slavery in Jewish sources from antiquity and late antiquity or in early Christian sources. Instead, a commentary thread referring to Canaan as having black skin first appeared among Muslims in the second century before Christ. An explicit link between blacks, slavery, and the curse is made later, in the seventh century after Christ, also in Arabia. This link occurred precisely “when the Black became strongly identified with the slave class in the Near East, after the Islamic conquest of Africa” (170). Goldenberg summarizes this time period:

In sum, in regard to Noah’s curse, four factors were at play during the first six or seven centuries of the Common Era: explanation—an attempt to make sense of the Bible; error—a mistaken recollection of the biblical text [that Ham was cursed]; environment—a social structure in which the Black had become identified as slave; and etymology—a mistaken assumption that Ham meant “black, dark.” The combination of these factors was lethal: Ham, the [assumed] father of the black African, was cursed with eternal slavery. The Curse of Ham was born. (167)

The curse was born but still had not gained currency among Christians. It first appeared in the Christian West in the *fifteenth* century as Europe discovered Africa and started to trade slaves. Then, “as the Black slave trade moved to England and then America, the Curse of Ham moved with it” (175). This book’s focus is not on modern sources, but another work by historian Benjamin Braude corroborates the conclusion that among Christians the curse of Ham was not commonly applied to blacks until after the sixteenth century (Braude demonstrates that, up to that point, Christians more commonly used the curse to express animus towards Jews), and not prominently applied until the eighteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

In his introduction, Goldenberg reports that in the context of racialized readings of the Bible both biblical and extrabiblical sources have been misinterpreted “ultimately due to an assumption that the way things are now is the way things were in the past,” failing to realize that “our perceptions of the Black have been conditioned by the intervening history of centuries of Black slavery and its manifold ramifications” (7). *The Curse of Ham* represents an important step towards increasing the ability of those who view the Bible as scripture to avoid continuing this error.

### **Review of *Noah’s Curse***

A second book picks up with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America—where Goldenberg’s *Curse of Ham* ends and where Mormons were first introduced to the idea of the curse. Stephen R. Haynes holds the



A. B. Curry Religious Studies Chair at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. His book, *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery*, is a history of interpretation of the curse in the American South. His focus is on the several decades prior to the Civil War through 1901, picking up again in the 1950s during a resurgent national debate over segregation. As such, readers will find the book illuminating to the Mormon experience, as the Mormon community was influenced by some of the same historical events and interpretative trends as Southern Christians.

After providing a brief history of interpretation of the curse from early Judaism and Christianity through the twentieth century (chapter 2), Haynes gives a detailed analysis of how the curse was used in the South (chapters 4 and 5). Then he devotes chapters 7 and 8, "Noah's Sons in New Orleans" and "Palmer's Biblical Imagination" to how the prominent Presbyterian leader Benjamin Palmer used the curse in his voluminous sermons and writings from 1855 to 1901.

Haynes describes Palmer, a New Orleans pastor, as the emotional and intellectual leader of Southern American Presbyterianism and one of the South's most popular and influential clergymen (relevant to his research for this book, Haynes served as Parish Associate for a Memphis Presbyterian church). Palmer's sermons and writings were prominently published and widely read, and he founded the *Southern Presbyterian Review* and *Southern Presbyterian* periodicals. After the war, Palmer was elected to chair or moderate church committees charged with establishing church policies. "In this way," Haynes writes, "Palmer was able to make the church a mouthpiece for his own reading of scripture" (138). In his prominent status as a church leader, orator, and writer, and in his organizational leadership as well as in his longevity in these activities, perhaps the man that played a role within Mormonism most similar to Palmer was Joseph Fielding Smith.<sup>12</sup>

One of Haynes's themes is that the American racialized interpretation of the Genesis 9 curse significantly influenced how Southerners interpreted the Genesis 10 "Table of Nations" (a list of Noah's descendants) and the Genesis 11 account of the Tower of Babel. He argues that in a manner unique to Christian Americans, each chapter of Genesis 9 through 11 became a story first useful in justifying slavery, then in supporting racial segregation.

Palmer was a prominent case in point. He viewed the Genesis 9 story of the curse as Noah's "camera" of the future. Palmer preached that "the outspreading landscape of all history is embraced within the camera of Noah's brief prophecy; showing how from the beginning God not only distributed them [the races of man] upon the face of the earth, but

impressed upon each branch the type of character fitting it for its mission” (133). What Palmer and other Americans saw through the lens of the “camera” was a guide for assigning each race a place and position. With that guide in mind, readers would turn to the following chapters of Genesis and consequently find a racial meaning in them also (125–46).

In various of his writings exploring ancient traditions, Nibley recounted mythic lore set in Ham’s or Abraham’s era that gave a prominent role to Nimrod.<sup>13</sup> But Mormons, who have heard relatively little of Nimrod in our own preachings, may be surprised at the assertion that Nimrod, the “mighty hunter before the Lord” mentioned in Genesis 10:9, was after Noah himself “the most imperial figure, literally and figuratively, in the ancient and medieval imaging of the Bible” (49).<sup>14</sup> Haynes shows that Nimrod played a large role in Southern racial teachings. Despite the positive description of Nimrod in Genesis, he was portrayed as a black African who, much like Cain, introduced disorder and rebellion, thus providing another justification for enslaving or segregating black Africans. In chapter 3, “Unauthorized Biography: The Legend of Nimrod and His Tower,” Haynes summarizes the embellishing given the story of Nimrod (scant details are provided in Genesis), beginning with the early rabbinic and Christian eras. Some early stories portrayed Nimrod as the builder of the Tower of Babel, a detail that came to be consistently adopted by the Middle Ages. By the middle of the nineteenth century in America, the story had been fleshed out with substantial extrabiblical (and often contradictory) details, including: Nimrod founded and ruled the major cities of Mesopotamia (but was a black African), he was an accomplished and great leader of men (but could not speak coherently), he built the Tower of Babel to ascend to heaven (and built it over the mouth of hell), he introduced fire worship, set himself up as a god, had magical clothing, established a satanic religion, and introduced tyranny (41–61).

A second theme is that the history of the interpretation of Genesis 9 through 11 in the pre- and post-war South adumbrates American and Southern core values. Haynes spends considerable time comparing the uses to which Southern Christians put these scriptures before the Civil War (pro-slavery, anti-federalism, criticizing abolitionists as anarchists and anti-Christ) to the decades after the war (pro-segregation, anti-federalism, anti-internationalism, anti-ecumenism, pro-traditional values). In chapter 6, “Grandson of Disorder,” after summarizing how the legend of an African Nimrod was used in the South, he concludes, “This is illuminating evidence of the process by which Bible readers have seized upon Ham’s mysterious grandson to interpret their experiences and project their fears. In the portrait of Nimrod that emerges in American

readings of Genesis between the antebellum period and the end of the twentieth century, his character and career are transparent expressions of American cultural concerns" (121).

Haynes finds that Palmer used Noah's curse in the same way,

first to justify the enslavement of blacks; then to discover divine sanction for the law of separation as it applied to political secession, civic segregation, and ecclesiastical separation; and finally as a warrant for the "practical extinction" of Native Americans. Palmer's use of these biblical narratives over a period of 50 years elucidates both their role in American racial discourse and their remarkable flexibility in the hands of someone in search of a transcendent warrant for racial hierarchy. (145)

Haynes reports that while the stories of Noah's curse, Nimrod, and the Tower of Babel were heavily used in the South before and around the time of the Civil War, their use in political discourse for racial purposes was largely discontinued during the first half of the twentieth century. Then, he explains, "racial readings of Genesis 9–11 reemerged with a vengeance during the segregation debates of the 1950s and 1960s" (116). In particular, the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954,<sup>15</sup> and the debates leading up to the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s, spawned vigorous defenses of segregation based in the scriptures (see 85–86, 103–4, 114–21, 165–66).

Haynes gives numerous examples of conservative Christians arguing during this time period that the lesson of Genesis 9 is that segregation follows "God's established order" (116–21). In doing so, he provides perspective for one of the most prominent—and surprising—cases of segregationist preaching within Mormonism. In 1958, Bruce R. McConkie published his encyclopedia-style book *Mormon Doctrine*. Although McConkie introduced the subject of segregation by stating that caste systems "are contrary to gospel principles of equality and fair treatment," especially when these systems "impose restrictions, slavery, and denial of natural rights," he went on to preach that, in a broad sense, caste systems and racial segregation originated in the gospel (particularly in regard to marriage), and that blacks are spiritually and physically inferior to the original race of Adam and Eve.<sup>16</sup> In the context described by Haynes, these and similar teachings of McConkie can be seen largely as a somewhat typical reaction by racially conservative American Christians to the growing phenomenon of racial integration.

Haynes believes honor and order were core Southern cultural values that played a significant role in how the text of Noah's curse was interpreted. In chapters 4 and 5, "Original Dishonor" and "Original Disorder," he argues that, unlike other readers, most Southerners did not see the

story as recounting some sort of sexual indiscretion: Ham had either dishonored his father, created disorder, or both. Where dishonor was the charge, he shows that many Southern readers understood the transgression as “a violation of familial loyalty that marked Ham and his African descendents as utterly devoid of honor and thus fit for slavery” (67). Haynes explains the concern for order that animated the worldview of white Southerners as resulting in part from a “dread of slave insurrection that periodically seized the Old South” (96).

As one example of this influence on the interpretative tradition, he writes that Southern Christians consistently retold the story of the curse as centered on vengeance for Ham’s laughing at his father’s nakedness (the biblical text contains no reference to laughter). Though other cultures included laughter or mockery by Ham in their telling of the curse, only in the South (with a fear of black rebellion) was the laughter considered behavior sufficiently wrong to justify a perpetual curse of slavery (94–97).

In the final part of the book, Haynes turns from the historical to the present. In chapters 10 and 11, “Challenging the Curse: Readings and Counterreadings” and “Redeeming the Curse: Ham as Victim,” he argues that because it is used to transmit antiblack sentiment in twenty-first century America, the story of Noah’s curse still requires a cure. He offers his own attempt, starting with advice to read the story in “the context of the biblical canon and its message of redemption” (203). He reviews other events recounted in Genesis (the Fall, Abel’s murder, general human wickedness) accompanied by “specific expressions of divine displeasure” and notes that in the story of Noah’s curse, “for the first time in biblical history, God remains curiously silent in the midst of human ‘sin’” (204). As such, Haynes suggests readers should not, as has been typical, assume Noah’s statement was divinely sanctioned.

Then, he offers a reinterpretation using Catholic anthropologist and literary critic René Girard’s theory of mimetic rivalry and a scapegoat effect.<sup>17</sup> Haynes assumes a central competition among Noah’s oldest sons Shem and Japheth. He finds a canonical link between Ham and Jesus, both of whom he views as innocent victims chosen within a cultural practice of sacrificing a scapegoat upon which communal blame can be projected. Haynes explains that “the object of the brothers’ desire—their father’s blessing—is shared in exchange for their complicity in scapegoating a third party” (211). Although the sacrificial Ham is not killed, “he becomes a perpetual human sacrifice, surviving as a target for whatever postdiluvian corruption must be accounted for. Abandoned to dishonor but never consumed, Ham is available for literary lynching whenever needed” (212). Haynes reads the story of Noah and his sons as a type of “the willing

victimhood of God's Christ" (217), with Ham as an innocent victim and the curse as teaching "we are all victims, all victimizers, . . . all in need of rescue and redemption, all loved and favored by God, all revealed in our depravity by God's truth. Seen in this light, the designation 'Noah's curse' not only displaces the stigma of guilt from Ham the innocent victim but also implies that the curse and responsibility for redeeming it belong to all" (218).

As a side note relevant to Mormons, I have suggested to Haynes that he misunderstands the Mormon impact on American racial readings of the Bible. He writes in passing that "the suggestion that Cain's mark was blackness was advanced in eighteenth-century Europe and was popularized a century later in America by Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism" (15). However, while some of Smith's followers did understand Cain's mark to be the genesis of the dark skin of black Africans, the evidence does not establish that Smith himself held that view (see note 9). Also, this teaching was already common among American Christians by Smith's time (see Goldenberg, 178–79), and Joseph Smith was hardly in a place to influence popular opinion on such theological matters. As Naomi Felicia Woodbury wrote of the early Mormons, "The church was in its infancy: weak, disliked, and ridiculed. It was in no position to affect American thought."<sup>18</sup>

Together, Goldenberg's and Haynes's books reinforce the importance of reading and interpreting scripture with careful attention to the text itself and due consideration given to possible translation complexities or errors and to interpretative glosses that may have been introduced over time. Both books can be useful in assisting modern readers in identifying and avoiding the distorting impact cultural mistreatment of black Africans appears to have had on how biblical stories were understood and utilized in recent centuries. Readers with a continuing interest in the topic of racialized readings of Genesis will want to keep an eye out for Benjamin Braude's forthcoming book, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism: The Secret History of Noah and His Sons* (to be published by Alfred J. Knopf). Until that is released, portions of Braude's work on the topic are accessible in previous journal publications or conference presentations.<sup>19</sup>

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1. The Targum were early Aramaic Jewish translations or paraphrases of the Old Testament from the first and other early centuries AD. Goldenberg, *Curse of Ham*, 391.

2. For example, Goldenberg cites Maimonides and David ben Abraham Maimuni five times each, but neither author is on the list of ancient sources, as they were not primary sources.

3. If Goldenberg can take the time to research 1,478 authors, I can at least count them. Readers familiar with scholarship on Mormons and race matters are likely to recognize at least a few of the modern scholars listed, particularly Newell Bringhurst and Naomi Felicia Woodbury.

4. For Mormon instances of this belief, see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 343: “Through Ham (a name meaning black);” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1958), 2:176: “It is likely that Ham’s name was changed because he had a black wife, for *ham* is an adjective in Egyptian for black”; LDS Bible Dictionary in *Holy Bible* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), sv. Ham—“Ham. *Hot*. Son of Noah” (all italics in originals).

5. Hugh Nibley suggested the biblical name “Ham” may be linked to the Egyptian deity Min through mistaken readings of “Min” as “Khem” or “Khm.” Hugh Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, ed. Gary P. Gillum, vol. 14 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 557–78, esp. 562, 566–67.

6. See chapters 1, “Biblical Israel: The Land of Kush,” and 2, “Biblical Israel: The People of Kush,” and appendixes I “When is a Kushite not a Kushite? Cases of Mistaken Identity,” and II “Kush/Ethiopia and India,” for a discussion of biblical use of the terms “Kush/Cush,” “Cushite,” and “Ethiopia.”

7. Goldenberg explains in chapter 4 and in the conclusion that this finding does not mean he found an absence of positive or negative symbolic references to skin colors.

8. In the subchapter entitled “No Prejudice,” Nibley discussed whether there existed in the Abrahamic era a prejudice against skin color. He concluded there did not: “In the drawings and texts, which are numerous, the proportion of black to white seems to follow no pattern but that of a society in which the races mingle freely and equally.” He agreed with Heinrich Brugsch that in records of the “four races” of the period and geography (Egyptian, Asiatic, Black, European-Berger), there was not “the slightest indication of race distinction.” From reviewing numerous royal portraits and royal mummies, “from the earliest dynasties right down to the end,” Nibley determined that if black skin “did not prevent one from becoming pharaoh, neither was it a requirement. There was simply no prejudice in the matter.” He concludes the subchapter with the statement that in the Abrahamic era it is “clear that there is no exclusive equation between Ham and Pharaoh, or between Ham and the Egyptians, or between the Egyptians and the blacks, or between any of the above and any particular curse.” Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, 585–87.

9. See, for example, Lester Bush, “Mormonism’s Negro Doctrine,” *Dialogue* 8 (Spring 1973): 16 (evidence that Joseph Smith believed Negroes descended from Cain is “not very convincing” and “Certainly there is presently no case at all for the idea that he ‘taught’ this genealogy”). Joseph Smith’s writings do show that he had at least temporarily accepted some elements of American racial folklore. Perhaps in part because of this, Goldenberg errs, as did many Mormons after Smith’s time, in interpreting Smith’s teachings and revelations through a lens shaped by the wrong assumption that the Church’s race-based practices were

initiated either by Smith or during his lifetime, with a corollary assumption that Smith therefore subscribed to all the racial folklore soon cited by Mormons to explain those practices.

Abraham 1:25–28 was revealed to Joseph Smith, which was later used by many Mormons to support race-based practices. But though this text reports that Pharoah was ineligible to hold the priesthood, that condition was not tied to race or skin color. And Pharoah is described as righteous, wise, just, and blessed by Noah with the “blessings of the earth” and “blessings of wisdom.” Similarly, in Moses 8:27, also revealed to Joseph Smith, Ham is described as righteous enough to “walk with God.” These verses contrast sharply with nineteenth-century lore portraying all of Cain, Ham, and their presumably Negro descendants as physically and intellectually inferior, thus suggesting that these verses are based on something other than a simple Mormon recasting of Protestant racial teachings. See Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, 426–28 (rejecting Abraham 1 as basing priesthood restriction on race or skin color); 583–87 (questioning the tie between blacks, Ham, and Pharoah and offering various interpretations from ancient texts of the Genesis 4 “mark of Cain”—none of which were based on skin color).

10. See, for example, LDS Bible Dictionary, sv. Ham, 698: “Ham. *Hot*. Son of Noah . . . ; cursed (Gen. 9: 18–22).” Also, the 1958 and 1966 editions of McConkie’s *Mormon Doctrine* included the following in the “Ham” entry: “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren’ (Gen. 9:25), said Noah of Ham’s descendants.” *Mormon Doctrine*, 1958 ed., 314; 1966 ed., 343. In 1979 that sentence was removed from the entry.

11. See Benjamin Braude, “Michelangelo and the Curse of Ham: From a Typology of Jew-Hatred to a Genealogy of Racism,” in *Writing Race across the Atlantic World: 1492–1763*, ed. Gary Taylor and Phil Beidler (New York: Palgrave Academic Publishing, 2002), available at [www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/research/rapl/events/braude\\_abstract.html](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/research/rapl/events/braude_abstract.html), last visited March 25, 2005. For further discussion of the timing of the curse as applied to black Africans and the conclusion that in Euro-American Christianity “it was not until the eighteenth century, the height of the slave trade, that the curse of Ham came to gain broad acceptance,” see Benjamin Braude, “Ham and Noah: Sexuality, Servitudinism, and Ethnicity,” Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Gilder Lehrman Center International Conference at Yale University, Collective Degradation: Slavery and the Construction of Race, November 7–8, 2003, Yale University (available at [www.yale.edu/glc/events/race/Braude.pdf](http://www.yale.edu/glc/events/race/Braude.pdf), last visited March 25, 2005).

12. Joseph Fielding Smith was influential as Apostle (1910–72), President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles (1951–70), Church President (1970–72), Church Historian (1921–70), president or vice-president of the Church’s Utah Genealogical and Historical Society (1925–61), and author of numerous books, Church lesson manuals, and Church magazine and newspaper articles. See 2004 *Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Morning News, 2004), 57; Joseph F. McConkie, *True and Faithful: The Life Story of Joseph Fielding Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), 38–47.

13. See, for example, Hugh Nibley, *Temple and Cosmos*, ed. Don E. Norton, vol. 12 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 127–32 (Nimrod becomes invincible with receipt of Adam’s garment stolen by Ham, Cush, Nimrod, Esau, Jacob, and Jacob’s sons); Nibley, *Abraham in*



*Egypt*, 171, 195–97 (Nimrod challenges Abraham to a duel, builds a tower, sacrifices victims by fire), 226–232 (Nimrod is conflated with Pharaoh as Abraham’s rival, is Great Magician, is priest, casts Abraham into furnace, puts male children to death, locks up all expectant mothers, daughter falls in love with Abraham), 564 (shoots arrows to claim rule of world), 577 (marries mother, claims priesthood through stolen garment); Hugh Nibley, *The Ancient State: The Rulers and the Ruled*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and Donald W. Parry, vol. 10 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 6, 14–16, 63 (claims world rule, mad hunter, challenges God to duel), 93–94 (founder of first state, first walled city, first army), 115 (hunter of men, founder of king-ruled state); Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert; The World of the Jaredites; There Were Jaredites*, ed. John W. Welch, Darrell L. Matthews, Stephen R. Callister, vol. 5 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 165–170 (mad hunter legend, claims priesthood through stolen garment of Adam, magical giant that established false priesthood and kingship, made all men sin, first to kill beasts for food), 265 (leads attack on God, builds tower).

14. Citing Benjamin Braude, “The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (1997): 131.

15. *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) (striking down the “separate but equal doctrine” created in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896), and mandating desegregation of public schools).

16. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (1958 ed.), 107–8: “In a broad general sense caste systems have their root and origin in the gospel itself. . . . All this is not to say that any race, creed, or caste should be denied inalienable rights. But it is to say that Deity in his infinite wisdom, to carry out his inscrutable purposes, has a caste system of his own, a system of segregation of races and peoples”; 554: “Racial degeneration, resulting in differences in appearance and spiritual aptitude, has arisen since the fall. We know the circumstances under which the posterity of Cain (and later of Ham) were cursed with what we call negroid racial characteristics. . . . If we had a full and true history of all races and nations, we would know the origins of all their distinctive characteristics. In the absence of such detailed information, however, we know only the general principle that all these changes from the physical and spiritual perfections of our common parents have been brought about by apostasy from the gospel truths.”

In 1979, following a revelation to President Spencer W. Kimball and the Quorum of the Twelve (of which McConkie was a member) restoring priesthood and temple privileges to all worthy members independent of race, McConkie made a few changes to the race-based teachings of *Mormon Doctrine*. The teachings quoted in this note were retained in the updated version. *Mormon Doctrine*, 1966 ed. (1979 and later printings), 114, 616.

17. One summary by Girard of the theory is: “According to the mimetic theory, no existence is free from imitation, and the alternative to imitating Christ or Christ-like models is the imitation of our neighbors whose rivalrous impulses are usually as easily aroused as our own. As soon as we pattern our desires on our neighbors’ desires, we all desire the same objects and we become entangled in mimetic rivalries. Comically as well as tragically, human beings keep turning each other into obstacles to the fulfillment of the very passions they keep transmitting mimetically to one another. This is why peaceful relations among neighbors



[and older brothers in the Old Testament] are rare." See *Violence Renounced: René Girard, Biblical Studies, and Peacemaking*, ed. Willard M. Swartley (Telford, Penn: Pandora Press, 2000), 310–11.

Girard describes the scapegoat effect as "that strange process through which two or more people are reconciled at the expense of a third party who appears guilty or responsible for whatever ails, disturbs, or frightens the scapegoaters. They feel relieved of their tensions and they coalesce into a more harmonious group. They now have a single purpose, which is to prevent the scapegoat from harming them, by expelling and destroying him." René Girard, *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1996), 12.

18. Naomi Felicia Woodbury, "A Legacy of Intolerance: Nineteenth Century Pro-Slavery Propaganda and the Mormon Church Today" (master's thesis, UCLA, 1966), 6–7.

19. See notes 11 and 14 above for some of Braude's writings on this topic. See also Benjamin Braude, "Cham et Noé. Race, esclavage et exégèse entre Islam, Judaïsme, et Christianisme," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 57 (January–February 2002): 93–125, unedited English original available at [www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/research/rapl/word/braude01.doc](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/research/rapl/word/braude01.doc) last visited March 25, 2005.

*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, edited by Dennis Largey (Deseret Book, 2003)

The *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* strives to do for the Book of Mormon what generations of encyclopedic Bible dictionaries have done for the Bible. The work of eight editors (including a graphics editor who has assembled hundreds of fine color pictures) has led to an attractive tome of over nine hundred entries by over one hundred contributors on the “peoples, places, doctrines, books, historical topics, general topics of interest, and important words and phrases in the text” (xi).

This volume will serve as a ready reference for personal scripture study as well as a handy resource for answers to academic questions about the Book of Mormon. Some past guides to the Book of Mormon have emphasized devotional topics, leaving those searching for rich scholarly context wanting more; others have been thick on scholarship but thin on aids to gaining inspiration through scripture study. Drawing on the efforts of top CES educators as well as the work of FARMS and BYU scholars, the *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* offers something for everyone, and the volume succeeds as both a devotional aid and as scholarly reference work.

Numerous esoteric tidbits such as the medical implications of Shiz’s rising up after decapitation (722) and explanations of such commonly read—but sometimes not fully understood—Book of Mormon figures of speech such as “hiss and a by word” (332–33) will delight the curious reader, as will more weighty topics such as the Book of Mormon doctrine of repentance (676–78) and an examination of Chief Judge Pahoran’s example of

how to deal with false accusation in a Christlike manner (626–27).

In case you were wondering what the difference between “dregs” and “dross” is, see the particularly handy appendix of definitions from Webster’s 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* (829–35). This reference shows how the first readers of the Book of Mormon were likely to have understood words whose meanings may have changed or become unfamiliar to us today.

Studies of the historicity of the Book of Mormon are not neglected. An entry on the Spaulding theory explains why even most anti-Mormons have largely abandoned the idea that Joseph Smith plagiarized Solomon Spaulding’s writings in translating the Book of Mormon (734–35). External evidences of the Book of Mormon are represented, such as interpretations of the Mesoamerican monument Stela 5, which apparently parallels Lehi’s vision of the Tree of Life (740–44). Also included are internal evidences such as Hebraisms in the translated language of the Book of Mormon text (321–25).

However, not all of the volume’s entries reflect the latest scholarship. For example, the work by Latter-day Saints in the late 1990s on Stela 5 suggests that its connection to the Book of Mormon is tenuous. One of its significant figures, for example, is a female “holding a serrated spine from a stingray which she is using to jab a hole in her tongue to extract blood for an offering to the gods” (*Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 8, no. 1 [1999]: 28). It is difficult to imagine a connection between this representation and anything in Lehi’s dream.

Generally, the editors preferred breadth and comprehensive coverage of topics over exhaustive treatment of any particular issue, but most entries

have ample bibliographies for readers wanting to know more. While future work will continue to enhance our reading of the Book of Mormon, it seems likely that the *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* will become a regular first stop for reference information on many topics related to the Book of Mormon.

—Eric A. Eliason

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*Voices from the Dust: Book of Mormon Insights*, by S. Kent Brown (Covenant, 2004)

Listening carefully to the fine points of every text, Kent Brown ruminates over the real life settings and personal qualities of several personalities who left their lasting imprints on the pages of the Book of Mormon. Few know the trail from Jerusalem to Arabia better than Professor Brown, who has studied, traveled, and filmed that region extensively. The first two of six chapters in this book vividly walk the reader alongside Lehi's caravan. The remaining chapters bring to life the main experiences and legacies of King Benjamin (Mosiah 1–6), the four missionary sons of Mosiah (Alma 17–26), the resurrected Christ (3 Ne. 11–26), and Moroni (Morm. 8–Moro. 10). In every case, insights are drawn out of the text as readers strive to hear the voices of these towering figures.

Brown brings years of experience to bear on his task. He is always attentive to the literary feel of each text, and he is keenly in tune with relevant cultural practices from antiquity. Whereas his previous *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla* (BYU Religious Studies Center, 1998) included several previously published pieces, this volume offers entirely new material. It continues very con-

structively in the style and trajectory of Brown's many previous Book of Mormon projects.

Readers are repeatedly rewarded by clear and engaging descriptions. Details are plentiful, such as information on the three votive altars from around 600 BC south of Wadi Jawf that attest to the use of the name Nahom (Nihn or Nehem), where Ishmael was buried. People come to life, especially with the human dimensions of women, children, and family. Themes reverberate, especially those of revelation, deliverance, ordinances, and redemption. But most of all, through these insights, readers become hearers of voices that speak throughout the pages of the Book of Mormon.

—John W. Welch

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*On Human Nature: The Jerusalem Center Symposium*, edited by Truman G. Madsen, David Noel Freedman, and Pam Fox Kuhlken (Pryor Petten-gill, 2004)

This modestly packaged book delivers a royal banquet of human understanding. In 1993 the BYU Jerusalem Center hosted a conference on human nature. Speakers from major religious traditions around the world were invited to address the question "In the approaches to human nature throughout world faiths, is there any common ground?" Very engaging answers then were offered by nine prominent articulators of views found in Asian religions, the Hebrew Bible and Jewish rabbinics, as well as among the Greek Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Latter-day Saints.

Each essay is quite distinctive, not only in content but also in approach. Altogether, the topic of human

nature is approached theologically, ontologically, psychologically, metaphysically, historically, literarily, and ethically. Thematic areas encompass the transcendental substantive self, innate inclinations toward goodness or depravity, detachment or connectedness, the creation of humanity, the concept of the human family, individuality, freedom, power, hope, love, and eternal potentials.

Anyone interested in comparative religions, interfaith dialogue, missionary work, or the philosophy of religion will find these one hundred pages filled with insight. Anyone focusing on the Golden Rule, on being created in the image of God, or on the joys and challenges of the human condition around the world will see human nature more clearly in light of these enduring perspectives.

—John W. Welch

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# Charles C. Rich

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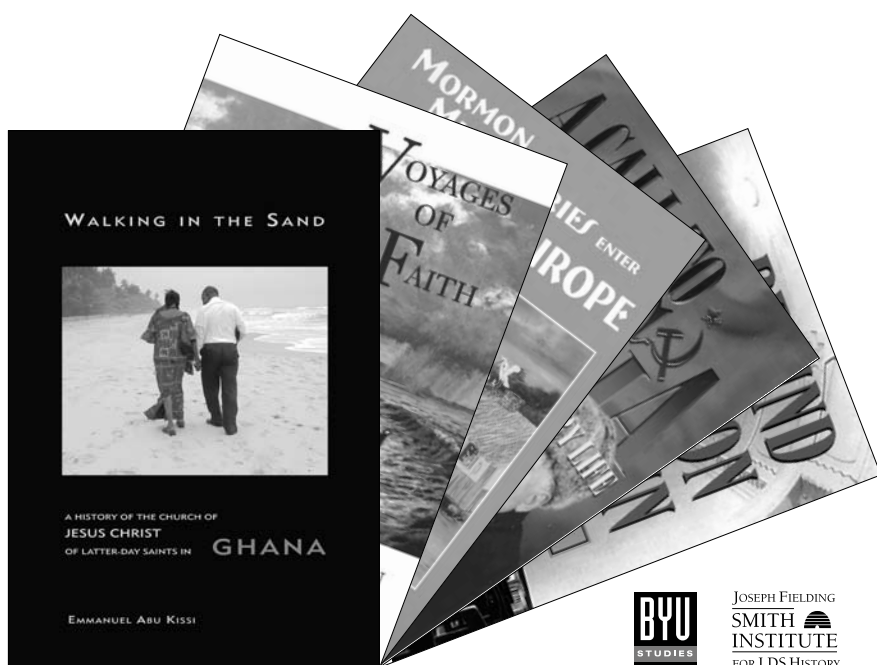
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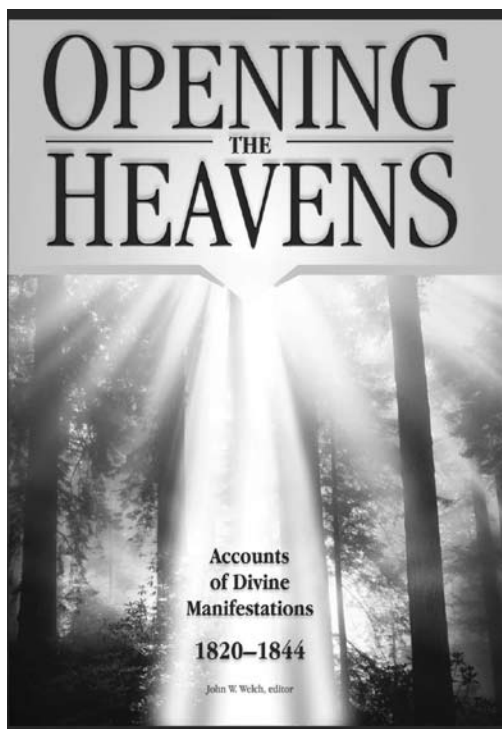


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