

Adam Is Not the Father of Jesus Christ

Question: “In the Journal of Discourses Brigham Young is quoted as saying, ‘Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven.’ I am unable to harmonize this with your statement that Adam is not ‘the father of Jesus Christ. . . .’ Will you please clarify this discrepancy of opinion?”

Answer: I have before me your letter in which you raise questions in relation to the remarks made by President Brigham Young as recorded in the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1:50-51, and which you cannot harmonize with a statement made by me. You quote:

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And *who* is the Father? He is the *first* of the human family; and when *he* (Christ) took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve.

Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven.

Now, remember from this time forth, and for ever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost.

After quoting this, which I take for granted as correct without verifying it, you say, "I am unable to harmonize this with your statement that Adam is not "the Father of Jesus Christ."

"Neither can I see the harmony between the last quotation from the *Journal of Discourses* and Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34, 35."

STATEMENT EASILY EXPLAINED

The statement by President Brigham Young that the Father is the *first* of the human family is easily explained. The expression that he was the same character that was in the Garden of Eden has led to misunderstanding because of the implication which many place upon it that it had reference to Adam. Unfortunately President Brigham Young is not here to make his meaning in this regard perfectly clear. Under the circumstances we must refer to other expressions by President Brigham Young in order to ascertain exactly what his views really were in relation to God, Adam, and Jesus Christ. Let me comment first upon the expression that God is the "first of the human family." This same doctrine was taught by Joseph Smith. It is a fundamental doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. According to the teachings of Joseph Smith, he beheld the Father and the Son in his glorious vision, and he taught that each had a body of flesh and bones. He has expressed it in these words:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh

and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.¹

He also taught that, literally, God is our Father. That men are of the same *race*—the race called humans, and God the progenitor, or creator, is the Father of the human race.

In the image of his own body, male and female, created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created and became living souls in the land upon the footstool of God.²

It is a doctrine common to the Latter-day Saints, that God, the Great Elohim is the first, or Creator, of the human family.

GOD, THE FATHER, WALKED WITH ADAM

In discussing the statement by President Brigham Young that the Father of Jesus Christ is the same character who was in the Garden of Eden, I maintain that President Young was *not* referring to Adam, but to God the Father, who created Adam, for he was in the Garden of Eden, and according to Mormon doctrine Adam was in his presence constantly, walked with him, talked with him and the Father taught Adam his language. It was not until the Fall, that the Father departed from Adam and from the Garden of Eden.

Surely we must give President Brigham Young credit for at least ordinary intelligence, and in stating this I placed it mildly. If he meant to convey the thought that the character who was in the Garden of Eden, and

¹D. & C. 130:22.

²Moses 6:9.

"*who is our Father in Heaven,*" was Adam, then it would mean that this expression was in conflict with all else that he taught concerning God the Father, and I am bold to say that President Brigham Young was not inconsistent in his teaching of this doctrine. The very expression in question: the same character that was in the Garden of Eden, and "*who is our Father in Heaven,*" contradicts the thought that he meant Adam.

Now let me present one or two expressions in other discourses by President Young—of course, the critics never think of referring to these.

EXPRESSIONS FROM BRIGHAM YOUNG

How has it transpired that theological truth is thus so widely disseminated? It is because God was once known on the earth among his children of mankind, as we know one another. *Adam was as conversant with his Father who placed him upon this earth* as we are conversant with our earthly parents. *The Father frequently came to visit his son Adam*, and talked and walked with him; and the children of Adam were more or less acquainted with him, and the things that pertain to God and to heaven were as familiar among mankind in the first ages of their existence on the earth, as these mountains are to our mountain boys. . . .

How did Adam and Eve sin? Did they come out in direct opposition to God and to His government? No. But they transgressed a command of the Lord, and through that transgression sin came into the world. . . .

The human family are formed after the image of our Father and God. After the earth was organized the Lord placed *his children* upon it, gave them possession of it, and told them that it was their home. . . . Then Satan steps in and overcomes them through the weakness there was in the children of the Father when *they were sent to the earth*, and sin was brought in, and thus we are subject to sin. . . .

Our Lord Jesus Christ—the Savior, who has redeemed the world and all things pertaining to it, is the Only Begotten of the Father pertaining to the flesh. He is our Elder Brother, and the Heir of the family, and as such we worship him. He has tasted death for every man, and has paid the debt contracted by our *first parents*. (that is Adam and Eve.) . . .

The Latter-day Saints believe in Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of the Father, who came in the meridian of time, performed his work, suffered the penalty and paid the debt of man's original sin by offering up himself, was resurrected from the dead, and ascended to his Father; and as Jesus descended below all things, so he will ascend above all things.

EXPRESSIONS ARE VERY CLEAR

It is very clear from these expressions that President Brigham Young did not believe and did not teach, that Jesus Christ was begotten by Adam. He taught that Adam *died* and that Jesus Christ redeemed him. He taught that Adam disobeyed the commandment of the Father, or God, and was driven from the Garden of Eden. He said that Adam was conversant with his Father in the Garden of Eden. This is believed by all members of the Church, and that the Father *was* in the Garden of Eden until Adam was driven out for his transgression.

Again, I repeat what I said in the former letter: President Brigham Young was fully conversant with the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants and accepted the teaching which they contained. He had read, I may presume, a thousand times, the statement in the 29th section of that book: "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any men, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, *whom I created*. . . ." "And it came to pass that Adam,

being tempted of the devil—for, behold, the devil was before Adam,” etc.

“And when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve.” This has reference to the body of Jesus Christ.

There is no harmony between the saying in Matthew 1:18 and the declaration of President Brigham Young, but there is perfect harmony between his declaration and the statement in Luke 1:34-35. I maintain that in this President Brigham Young is consistent with the facts and with the teachings in the scriptures, and therefore the translation in Matthew does not convey the correct interpretation of the fact. I shall endeavor to prove my point.

THE BIBLE IS PERFECTLY CLEAR

No matter what the sectarian world today believes about the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Bible is perfectly clear on this fact that these three constituting the Godhead, are *three separate personages*. I declare this as a clearly stated fact and am not presenting any argument. The fact being true that the Father has a tangible body and the Holy Ghost does not, then it stands to reason that the Holy Ghost is *not* the Father of Jesus Christ. If he is, then Jesus is not the Only Begotten Son of the Father, as the Bible informs us to be the fact. If it is true as Joseph Smith clearly declared, that the Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit only, then he did not create a body of flesh and bones for Jesus Christ, while, on the other hand, the Father having such a body, could, and did,

create such a body and Jesus is in very deed the Only Begotten Son of God the Father in the flesh. We do not refer to the Holy Ghost as the Father. Jesus did not pray to him as the Father, but acknowledged him as the third and least personage in the Godhead.

Again, when the Savior was teaching his disciples shortly before his crucifixion he told them that the Holy Ghost would be sent *from* the Father to them to teach and guide them in all truth. In the same chapter (John 14) he declares that his Father is greater than he; but no place in the Bible is there an expression that the Holy Ghost is greater than Christ, but subordinate to him. It stands to reason if the Holy Ghost begat Jesus Christ, then the Holy Ghost is greater than Christ. That is the only logical conclusion. Further, Paul arguing on the resurrection says:

For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.³

CHRIST REFERRED TO AS SON OF THE FATHER

All through the scriptures Jesus Christ is spoken of as the Son of God the Father. When he spoke to Mary at the tomb following his resurrection, he said:

³I Corinthians 15:25-28.

... Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.⁴

Surely he was not referring to the Holy Ghost. President Young's statement is perfectly consistent with that which has been revealed, and where we have a correct translation this fact is established.

I stated that the account in Luke is in harmony with the view expressed by Brigham Young. Now what did the angel say:

... The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the *power of the Highest* shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.⁵

According to my understanding as I read the scriptures, the Holy Ghost is the messenger of the Father and the Son. Mortal beings could not endure the presence of the Father without the Spirit overshadowing them, and that was the mission of the Holy Ghost, but not to beget the Son of God, that was the business of the Father. Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God the Father in the flesh, and in holding to this doctrine President Brigham Young is in perfect accord with the teachings in the Bible. If there is a statement contradicting this fact we must conclude that something is lacking and that we have a faulty translation. This I maintain, is the fact with the passage in Matthew.

⁴John 20:17.

⁵Luke 1:35.