

OUR FATHER ADAM.

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The subject of the personality of our Father Adam has been discussed in many circles recently, and calls for some explanation for the information of the Latter-day Saints. A learned professor of theology has obtained notoriety by the assertion of his conviction that Adam, as spoken of in the book of Genesis, is a myth. The gentleman has a right to his opinion, no matter how much it may be at variance with the beliefs of other people; but such notions when indulged in, particularly if not grounded upon the most positive evidence, tend to unsettle people's minds as to the reality of everything historical in holy writ, and lead to the repudiation of the scriptures as containing anything authoritative and divine.

There has been much discussion in Mutual Improvement associations, and in theological classes of the Sunday schools, over the exact status of "the first man Adam" in the doctrines of our Church. Some remarks concerning him by President Brigham Young, in a discourse delivered in this city many years ago, have been commented upon, added to, and sometimes misinterpreted, in a manner that has led to considerable confusion and misunderstanding. The views then expressed were uttered in a single sermon, which created so much comment that the speaker did not afterwards enter into further details or explanations. He probably felt as did the Savior, who exclaimed, when talking to His disciples on points that they did not understand, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

The substance of President Young's declaration was, that the

person who was placed in the Garden of Eden and became the great progenitor of the human race, is "our Father and our God." He said further, "and is the only God with whom we have to do." Careful reading of the entire address will show that President Young comprehended much more on this subject than he then made known, and that he regarded our Father Adam as the being who will stand, in eternity, at the head of the human family as the great Patriarch and ruler over all his posterity, and the Parent with whom they will have personal association and intercourse, as the representation and embodiment to them of all that constitutes the individuality of the Godhead.

The question, who was Adam previous to his earthly career? is answered by direct revelation. There need not be any dubiety on that point. He was Michael, the Prince, the Archangel. At the great gathering of his earthly descendants, three years previous to his departure, in the valley of Adam-Ondi-Ahman, the Lord appeared to Adam and administered comfort unto him, saying: "I have set thee to be at the head—a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever."—Doc. & Cov., Sec. 107: 53, 55. It is also declared by revelation that he is the "Ancient of days," spoken of in Daniel vii: 13-22.

If we were fully informed as to the status and names in their pre-existent state of persons who have figured prominently in the affairs of this earth, as prophets, high priests, statesmen, rulers, warriors and leaders among their fellows, we would understand better than we do now the reasons for their distinction, and be able to give them their proper recognition. But a veil is drawn between us and our former estate, and while the doctrine of our pre-existence has been clearly revealed, our history, position and cognomens are not made manifest. Joseph Smith, the prophet, often told his brethren that they did not know him, and the same may truly be said of his successors and their associates in the great work of this dispensation. But we know by revelation that Adam was Michael before he came into this world as the Father and head of the human race, as Jesus was Jehovah before he was born of the virgin Mary and became the babe of Bethlehem.

When we speak of Adam, we talk merely about a man, whose body was fashioned out of the earth and who was subject to the

laws that govern this globe. He accomplished the work for which he came here. With Eve his wife, whom God gave to him in the garden, he commenced the peopling of this earth; and in partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he knowingly disobeyed the commandment not to eat of it. Eve had already partaken of it. The sentence of banishment from Eden would consequently fall upon her. Adam would then be left alone in the garden. He, therefore, chose what he deemed the least of two evils, and broke the prohibitory command, that he might fulfill the greater law: "Increase and multiply and replenish the earth." As the Book of Mormon declares, "Adam fell that man might be, and men are that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the meridian of time that he may redeem the children of men from the fall."—II Nephi, ii: 25.

There has been some questioning as to the meaning of Paul's statement: "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."—I Cor. xv: 45. The Apostle was speaking of Christ as the quickening power of the resurrection. Adam was the beginning of the natural generation of man. Christ was the beginning of the regeneration. In this initial position Adam was "the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v: 14. But "the first man," (in this connection) was "of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." Paul made this simile merely to show that as Adam was first in the order of the earthly creation, so Christ is first in the resurrection and in the work of the redemption of Adam's race.

The penalty of death came to Adam and Eve as the wages of sin. The effects of "the fall" came upon all their posterity. Thus it is written, "As in Adam all die," but it is added, "so in Christ shall all be made alive." The death pronounced upon Adam meant the same as it means to his descendants. It was the returning to dust of that which came from the dust. Therefore, when the man Adam was no more, the great Michael still lived, and was the greater for the experiences through which he had passed, in mortality. He left nothing on earth but that which came from the earth, and even that belongs to him through the atonement of Christ, who is "the resurrection and the life," and who will bring forth from the graves every one who, in this world, has obtained

a material body and breathed the breath of life. Adam will then, with Eve at his side, stand at the head "of a multitude quickened and raised from the dead." "Thousand thousands will minister unto him, ten thousand times ten thousand will stand before him," while he who was the Son of Man will also appear in his presence, and there will be "given him dominion, and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages shall serve Him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."—Dan. vii: 14.

It will be argued, doubtless, by persons who do not understand, that the death which was to be the penalty upon our first parents for breaking the commandment as to the forbidden fruit, could not be that which is called "the temporal death," because the word was, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and Adam did not die until he was nine hundred and thirty years of age. But modern revelation explains this, by showing that the "day" spoken of was one of the Lord's days, measured by the diurnal revolution of the great planet nearest to the throne of God, which takes a thousand of our years. Thus Adam and all the patriarchs in the early generations died within the limit of "one day with the Lord." The spiritual death, which also followed disobedience, was "banishment from the presence of the Lord." Redemption from both the spiritual and the temporal death comes through the atonement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The important position occupied by that Being who stands at the head of the human race, ought to be recognized by all his posterity. It was on the principle of the patriarchal order, in which the father is the priest and chief of the family, and will hold that place to all eternity, that President Young proclaimed the supremacy of that person who is our Father and our God, because of our personal relationship to him. Michael who, in his earthly career was Adam, was one of the three exalted persons who engaged in the formation of this globe. Elohim, Jehovah and Michael were associated in that mighty work. When God spake "in the beginning," he gave direction to other divine persons and said, "Let US do thus and so," and they obeyed him and acted in harmony with Him. The Eternal Elohim directed both Michael and Jehovah, and

the heavenly hosts obeyed them. When Adam was formed "out of the dust of the earth," he worshiped the great Elohim, the Eternal Father of us all. So do we. Our prayers are offered to that Almighty Being who is "God over all, blessed forever."

President Young so taught the Church. He made frequent references to that supreme Deity in numerous discourses that are published. In the same sermon wherein brief allusion is made to the position occupied by Adam, or Michael, he used this language: "I was trying to think of the place where God is not, but it is impossible, unless you can find empty space; and there I believe he is not. If you can find such a place, it will become useful for a hiding place to those who wish to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord in the great day of accounts." He quoted and endorsed the sayings of the Psalmist beginning: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" This shows that he fully believed in a Being who is above and superior to all such individuals as Adam, or Michael, no matter how great may be their power and authority on earth or in heaven.

President Young, in a discourse published in Vol. I Journal of Discourses—the same volume as that to which we have alluded, made this remark: "All creation, visible and invisible, is the workmanship of our God, the supreme Architect and Ruler of the whole, who organized the world and created every living thing upon it to act in its sphere and order." He said further: "The Lord Almighty is in the midst of all his creatures that are scattered abroad among the nations of the earth, and does his pleasure among them. His scrutinizing eye will not suffer a hair of your head to fall to the ground unnoticed; his attention is at once so minute and so extensive. He presides over the worlds on worlds that illuminate this little planet and millions on millions of worlds that we cannot see; and yet he looks upon the minutest object of his creations; not one of these creatures escapes his notice; and there is not one of them but his wisdom and power has produced." We might quote extensively from the discourses of President Young to show that he believed in a supreme, all-governing, all-seeing, all-knowing Deity, who is to be worshiped and implicitly obeyed, by our Father Adam as well as by all his posterity over

whom he will preside as the head of the human family on this earth.

Jesting is very common about our Father Adam and our mother Eve, and their names are frequently bandied about with ribald remarks. These are entirely out of place, when we consider the dignity which truly attaches to those exalted beings as the progenitors of the human race. They may be regarded as myths by the uninformed, and as mere characters in an allegory, but we shall find in eternity that they are veritable persons, with whom we shall feel highly honored to associate, and who will command our respect and obedience as the great father and mother of us all. God's house is a house of order, and the time will come when every individual will stand in his or her own place and authority, and then our regal father and mother will be properly recognized. With this understanding, we shall at least treat them in the present with due respect.

The question is sometimes asked, "Do we worship Adam?" The answer is, we honor him in his station. We expect to be associated with him in eternity. We shall look to him as our father and personal director "with whom we have to do." But the "Omnipotent Deity to whom even Jesus Christ the Redeemer shall bow, that He may be "all in all," is the Being whom we worship and serve in the name of Jesus Christ his beloved Son, who gave life to Adam, to whom Adam prayed, and whom we address as God the Eternal Father. In a revelation given in September, 1830, the Lord said: "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 man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created." In the same revelation God said: "But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I the Lord God should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine only begotten Son."—Doc. and Cov., section 29.

It is noticable that opponents of the religion of the Latter-day Saints are very fond of quoting isolated passages, from the discourse delivered by President Young concerning our Father Adam, for the purpose of ridiculing our religion and of represent-

ing to the world that we worship a human being for God; and at the same time they say nothing about the hundreds of allusions by the same speaker to that Supreme Being who, by his omnipresent Spirit, gives life and light to all things spiritual and physical, and whom we adore and strive to obey. President Young stated in that discourse that he knew a great deal more about the subject on which he very briefly touched, but that if he were to tell it all, many very pious people would be terribly shocked.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has never formulated or adopted any theory concerning the subject treated upon by President Young as to Adam. The express declaration of the Church is: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." We believe that these are separate persons, but that they are one as to the Godhead. The Father is the Creator of all things in heaven and on earth. The Son is the Savior of mankind, the firstborn in the spirit, the only begotten in the flesh. He is our elder brother, the express likeness and image of him who is the Father of our spirits. The Holy Ghost is "a personage of spirit," who bears witness of the Father and the Son. The Spirit of God, by which he is omnipresent, proceeds from Deity and extends throughout the boundless domain of illimitable space, giving life and light to all things animate. There are many persons who are called gods, both in heaven and on earth, as the Apostle Paul declares, but "to us there is one God, even the Father of whom are all things, and one Lord, even Jesus Christ, by whom are all things."

There are also great and mighty spirits who were and are in authority on high, many of whom have dwelt on earth in the flesh as did God's beloved Son. They will all stand in their lot and place when the earth and its inhabitants are redeemed, and will rule and reign as kings and priests unto God, and their glory will be eternal. They will be one with the Father and with the Son, and enjoy their immediate presence and execute their behests, among the intelligences who shall inhabit the different spheres in the dominions of the Eternal Father. And when the work of redemption is accomplished, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to God, Adam our Father, as Michael the Prince, the Archangel, the Ancient of days, will sit on his throne and receive

the allegiance of his innumerable sons and daughters, over whom he will preside by virtue of his patriarchal and royal authority. But he himself will be subject to the great Elohim, the Lord God Almighty, the Supreme Ruler over countless universes peopled with his own children, who are passing through various grades of being, tending to their development in everything that elevates and exalts and prepares them for glory, and immortality, and eternal lives in worlds without end!

REST.

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[By way of explanation, the author writes that he penned these lines, one day, among the cliffs and crags of the Sierra Madre mountains, while running a survey line: "I was utterly exhausted, climbing precipices and descending almost impassable gorges, and was resting in a prehistoric cave which showed evidences of its ancient inhabitants. Upon the wall was engraved the form of a serpent about fifty feet long, with a human head and face. I thought, as I reclined, that perhaps I was then surrounded by the spirits who dwelt there—wondering who I was, and why in their ancient abode. I felt, but did not see them."—*Editors.*]

Rest for the weary hands, folded across the breast,
 Now that are severed life's silver strands, rest from thy labors—rest!
 Rest for the weary feet, treading so long 'mong thorns!
 Bruised and torn at every step; rest in the coming morn!

Rest for the weary eye, tired with piercing the night!
 Shineth now brightly the light on high—darkness hath taken its flight.
 Rest for the silent tongue! Long hath it plead for right!
 Now shall its song of triumph be sung: Truth hath put Error to flight!

Rest for the weary heart, throbbing so oft in pain!
 Never again shall the tear-drop start, never, oh never again!
 Thou who wast weary and faint, rest, for earth's labor is done!
 Open to thee is the heavenly gate. Now is thy glory won.