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The Greatest Seer of the Ages

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WHEN our Father began his work anew in this dispensation it was assailed with unjustifiable bitterness. If men had taken Gamaliel's advice to the Jewish Sanhedrin and suspended judgment until "Mormonism" had died of its own weakness or had been vindicated in the earth as God's own cause, this nation would have been spared much humiliating history.

When God reveals a truth the longer it is in the earth the truer it appears, for science and experience proclaim it. But the longer the theories of science are before the thinking world the more they are modified or eventually abandoned, for nothing kills or vindicates a theory so quickly as working it for all it is worth; but he who studies and works eternal truths proclaims their divinity and finds they need no modification.

I am not disparaging science for I am a student and a lover of the same. When science discovers a truth it declares the Almighty's work. Science is an unsafe guide for men to stake their all and all on, but in divine revelation men can rest their cause—their hopes, their beliefs, their salvation. Yet an earnest scientist is a son of God trying to find out earth's truths. He is often in error but eventually science may discover all that the Almighty has revealed, and all that he may reveal for man is destined yet to discover every law by which he became God and by which the earth was formed.

Science is the ox-cart method of discovering truth, for often centuries after the Lord has proclaimed a truth, science, through her slow and belated methods, finally appears on the scene with the proof of the revelation of long ago. Unfortunately some withhold their wholehearted belief in heavenly revelations until they have heard the voice of science on the matter. None such can stand in the vanguard of thought and progress. Pure intelligence far outruns the belated utterance of proof. Yet our hearts rejoice when our beliefs are vindicated through collateral evidence.

Science is a good servant but an unreliable guide when measured by the whole truth and nothing but the truth. So far, science has been the false Messiah, for it led men from our Father in heaven

and his revelations with a promised hope, but now science with her truer vision is turning, in many cases, men's minds back to their Creator.

Blessed is he who has the will to believe for he outruns science; he stands on the mount of inspiration and revelation. He then can feel more than he can prove, and thus becomes the forerunner of science.

I shall attempt to verify this claim, that time and the intellectual advancement of the race will vindicate the Lord's revelations, in whatever garb or questionable form they may come.

With this in view, I wish to turn to the Book of Abraham found in the Pearl of Great Price. The parchment from which this book comes was found in one of the catacombs of Egypt. It was translated by Joseph Smith and now constitutes part of the Pearl of Great Price.

The truths set forth in this book are looked at askance by the world. Some years ago an attack, led by a noted minister of this city, aided by eight Egyptologists, was made upon the truth of the Book of Abraham. I haven't the time to review that controversy, but I desire to point out some unmistakable proofs of the verity of this book.

The translation of the parchment was begun in 1835, by Joseph Smith, the "Mormon" prophet, but due to the mobbings and drivings of the people the translation was not published until 1842.

Joseph's critics claimed he did not understand Egyptian and that his pretensions were a "farrago of nonsense." Whether he did or did not understand the Egyptian characters, Joseph Smith must stand or fall upon what he gave to the world in the Book of Abraham.

The Lord told Moses that when he spoke through a prophet that which the prophet uttered would come true and to him ye should give heed. I desire to measure the prophet from this standard, for truth has never gone in partnership with error.

The most rigid test possible to put upon the prophet is the system of astronomy set forth in the Book of Abraham. For there is told in simple narrative that God, through the urim and thummim, showed Abraham that: (1) All the heavenly bodies move in their spheres, (2) that the more advanced a world becomes from start to a dead world like our moon, the slower are its movements, (3) that all stars not only move in their own orbits, but groups of them revolve around mightier stars, (4) that some stars revolve around one center and some around others, (5) that stars are mighty in size and some are enormously large; (6) that other stars than the sun have planets like our own; (7) that the stars are innumerable to man yet Abraham's seed should be as numberless as the stars of heaven; (8) that

some groups of stars are close together and others far removed and, (9) finally, all stars revolve about the planet on which God dwells; that is, they all revolve around one common center. Let me say here the above truths set forth in the Book of Abraham were totally unknown by the astronomical world, for these facts lay shrouded in the vast unknown. At that time we had no means of measuring the size of a star; in fact, the first accurate measurement was not made until six years ago. Astronomers then did not know the stars moved and thus they were called fixed stars. Neither did they know the stars moved in orbits and much less that groups of them revolved about common centers.

Up to 1835 Herschel's telescope, the greatest in the world, had only revealed 100,000 stars. It was a bold utterance for Joseph Smith to declare that the stars were innumerable to man, while those stars were still hidden in the infinite night of space. The thought was so far beyond human conception as to be almost staggering.

Since that date astronomers, bombarding the heavens from every quarter of the globe, have discovered that, as the Book of Abraham claims, every star in the universe moves. Dr. Hill said that were one star to stop it would again be set in motion by the drag of the stellar universe.

Since Kirchoff (1859) perfected the spectrum analysis, astrophysics has advanced by leaps and bounds. The astronomers find now, as the Book of Abraham claims, that stars not only have their own centers around which they revolve, but that great groups of stars revolve around common centers. Hoeffler found that five out of the seven stars of the Great Dipper lie in the same plane and have equal motion in one and the same direction. The Pleiades of over 30 stars also move around a common center.

The Prophet Joseph in his translation says our sun with its planets revolves around Kolob, one of the mightiest stars. At the time Joseph revealed this fact the astronomers believed the sun stationary, though William Herschel had surmised that there was a slight displacement of the sun. But since then, astronomers now assume that the sun, with its planets, is plunging through space at the rate of 156 miles a second. This dizzy speed was not discovered until about three years ago. Before that, its speed had been computed as 12 miles a second. We have not yet discovered its orb, though it is known that it is hurtling towards the constellation of Draco. They are waiting to get enough of the sun's arc so they can compute its orbit.

What proof have we of the stupendous thought revealed in the Book of Abraham that the entire stellar universe is revolving around a common center? For over three-quarters of a century data have been gathered tending toward this view; and now all astronomers

are quite agreed that the vast mass of billions of stars revolve about one center.

Professor Kapetyn, a noted Dutch astronomer, says the visible universe consists of two distant parts which move at an angle of 115 degrees with each other and that one of these streams moves three times as fast as the other. The late Sir Alfred Russell Wallace and others declare the stellar universe is revolving like a mighty wheel.

If the Book of Abraham is not what it claims to be, where did Joseph Smith get these astronomical facts which antedate more than half a century the modern discoveries?

The assertion in the Book of Abraham that other suns or stars like our own have planets revolving around them is now strongly believed by many of our great astronomers.

Again, the Book of Abraham reveals that the stars are mighty in size. God in revealing these truths to Abraham did not say the sun was mighty, though it is 1,300,000 times larger than our earth. At the time Joseph Smith gave these facts to the world, we had no means of telling the size of stars and not until 1859 did astronomers devise ways of measuring them. Of recent years astronomers have found some stars a million times greater than our sun. Some stars are so large that one of them would fill the entire orbit of the earth, across which is 186,000,000 miles.

A noted astronomer, Dr. J. J. See, says some stars have a luminosity two trillion times that of the sun. If their intensity of light is any where near comparable, then there are stars at least a trillion times larger than our sun.

As I said in the beginning, the longer revealed truths are in the world, the more completely do time and experience vindicate their claims. Can any living soul doubt that Joseph Smith translated the parchment correctly? Can the most ultra-skeptical doubt the truth of the Book of Abraham? It holds in its open palm truth of its own declarations.

“When a man speaketh in the name of the Lord and things follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

To return again to my subject: Joseph Smith as seer and revelator claims that God had destroyed many worlds, yet many now stand which are innumerable to man. Such a statement seemed the wildest conjecture in 1832, as far as the slightest proof was to be had, but today astronomers have beheld the destruction of worlds off in the infinite deeps. Further, they now find our own earth is made of fragments of disintegrated worlds. This truth was revealed to the Prophet Joseph in 1832.

Now comes probably the most stupendous of all Joseph's declarations as a translator of the Abrahamic parchment: The Lord showed Abraham the stars and he said that they multiplied before his eyes and he could not see the end thereof. Yet he was promised that his seed should be as numberless as the stars of heaven.

Remember that in 1835 only 100,000 stars had been discovered. If there were any more no one knew it. It was impossible to know another one until the astronomers improved their telescopes, discovered the spectroscope and invented the photo-telescopic methods. Recently astronomers have announced that there are probably from 30 to 40 billion stars in our universe and there is no astronomer audacious enough to say they have discovered them all.

Staggering as this number is, it is only a small fraction of God's universe, for the telescope now reveals that there are over seven hundred thousand stellar universes as large and even larger than our own.

Some of these are so far removed from our universe that it takes light a million years to reach it from there, though light travels 186,000 miles a second. Aye, there are some of those universes so far removed that it takes from ten to a hundred million years for light to pass over the measureless void between us.

Suppose we take only 700,000 of those stellar universes that lie out there in the limitless space and multiply them by 30 billion, the estimated stars of our universe, and we get the meaningless number of twenty-one quadrillion blazing worlds. This does not reckon with the myriad dark stars or the numberless planets that revolve about the stars.

I can now vaguely understand what the Almighty meant when he said to Abraham that his creations were numberless to man.

I have briefly reviewed the astronomical facts couched in the Book of Abraham. I have pointed out wherein science has since discovered their accuracy. Conjuring, guessing, faking has never revealed a system of truth as given to the world by Joseph Smith. Of all facts that were put beyond human imagination they are the astronomical truths which I have reviewed, for they lay shrouded in the hidden creations of God's endless works. It was this revelation that stamped Joseph the transcendentalist.

No other seer of the ages has been put under so severe a test of his seership as was Joseph Smith and yet in this survey science affirms his declarations. No other seer of the past has revealed so many scientific truths which far antedate the discoveries of science.

If we are to judge a seer by the accuracy of his utterances, then eventually the world must proclaim Joseph Smith the greatest Seer of the ages.