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## ANSWERING QUESTIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS TO THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

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*“For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.” (1 Nephi 10:19)*

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Jacob Vidrine  
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<http://OneEternalRound.org/>  
Phone: (801) 882-4754  
Email: [Admin@OneEternalRound.org](mailto:Admin@OneEternalRound.org)

## INTRODUCTION

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To many Mormon Fundamentalists the Adam-God Doctrine is one of the most beautiful doctrines in the Restoration — to them it brings humanity closer to God, contributing to bridging the gap between Heaven and Earth and makes our relationship to Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother more tangible and real. In a nutshell: the Adam-God Doctrine is the teaching that God is not only the father of our spirits but also the father our bodies, and that mankind are both spiritually and physically the “offspring of God.” (Acts 17:29)

But to many mainstream Latter-day Saints the Adam-God Doctrine sounds silly, confusing, and contradictory to scripture. How do we reconcile it with scriptures that appear to contradict the belief that Adam is God the Father, that describe Adam being created by God out of dust, and that appear to describe Adam as a sinner in need of a Savior?

This issue of *One Eternal Round* is written to try to comprehensively address these questions and offer new perspectives and insight into how the Adam-God Doctrine fits with what is taught in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and other revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

# ANSWERING QUESTIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS TO THE ADAM–GOD DOCTRINE

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by  
*Jacob Vidrine*

## ELOHIM AND JEHOVAH

One of the first issues that arises when answering questions about the Adam-God Doctrine with mainstream LDS, especially with those who are familiar with the Endowment ceremony given in LDS Temples, are the identities of Elohim and Jehovah. “Isn’t *Elohim* the God we pray to and worship? Don’t we clearly have the Temple teach that this world was created by God the Father as Elohim, Jesus Christ as Jehovah, and Michael as Adam? How can Adam be God then?”

The reality is that scripturally, and as understood by early Latter-day Saints, “Elohim” and “Jehovah” are name-titles that apply to all the

Gods in Heaven. While God the Father is “Elohim” and “Jehovah” to us, and Jesus Christ is referred to as Jehovah in some contexts, in the Endowment ceremony those titles were used to refer to Gods above God the Father: a Grandfather God and a Great-Grandfather God.

According to Brigham Young, Michael-Adam is God the Father, Jehovah was Adam’s Father, and Elohim was Jehovah’s Father. In other words, the creation of this Earth was by God the Father (Adam), *his* Father (Jehovah), and his Grandfather (Elohim). Brigham taught in 1871:

“Elohim, Yahova and Michael, were father, son, and grandson. They made this Earth and Michael became Adam.”<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, John Hyde, who was endowed on February 10, 1854, recalled being taught:

“Joseph is the God of this generation, Jesus is his God; Michael, or Adam, is Jesus’ God and Father; Jehovah is the God of Adam, and Jehovah is inferior to Elohim, who is in turn, subject to the grand council of assembled gods of infinity.”<sup>2</sup>

Elohim and Jehovah are name-titles that Father Adam holds in relation to us, and which all the Gods in Eternity hold. Brigham Young on many occasions expressed that Father Adam is God the

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<sup>1</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <17 June 1871> page 2856.

<sup>2</sup> John Hyde, *Mormonism: Its Leaders and Designs* <1857> page 198.

Father. For instance, on February 19, 1854 he preached:

“I will notice another idea touching the Holy Ghost begetting the Son of God. **Who was it that spoke from the heaven and said ‘This is my beloved Son, hear him’? Was it God the Father? It was.** The Apostles bear testimony that such a voice was actually heard. This is my beloved son, and if it is true the Holy Ghost begat him I would add, which was begotten by one of my neighbors, hear ye him. Who was the Savior begotten by? O, by his Father or his brother, or some other person. So [that is what] the Holy Ghost begetting the Savior looks to me.

It makes me think of a story I heard in a dramatical performance once, that a certain individual was born of one of his Aunts, but he had no mother. It appears as reasonable to me to say a cousin or a fellow laborer of the Savior’s begat him, as to say the Holy Ghost begat him. **Who did beget him? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is Father Adam. Michael, the Ancient of Days.**

Has he a father? He has. Has he a mother? He has. Now to say that the Son of God was begotten by the Holy Ghost, is to say the Holy Ghost is God the Father, which is inconsistent, and contrary to all the revelations of God both modern and ancient. I silenced this erroneous doctrine a year ago last fall conference it was I think, when a dispute arose among some of our best Elders, as to who was the Father of the Son of man pertaining to the flesh. Some contended it was the Holy Ghost; and some that it was Eloheim. When I spoke upon it in this stand before a conference of Elders, I cautioned them

when they laid their hands upon the people for the gift of the Holy Ghost, according to the instructions of the Savior; to be very careful how they laid hands upon young women, for if it begat a child in the days of the Virgin Mary, it is just as liable to beget children in these days. It has all the power in this day that it had then, it has lost none.”<sup>3</sup>

At the October 1854 General Conference Brigham Young again preached a powerful sermon on Adam-God, and stated:

“I tell you, when you see your Father in the Heavens, you will see Adam; when you see your Mother that bear your spirit, you will see Mother Eve.”<sup>4</sup>

At that same General Conference, Brigham Young referred to Adam as “Yahovah Michael” indicating that he recognized that Michael also held the title of Jehovah.<sup>5</sup> On other occasions he referred to God the Father as both Elohim and Jehovah, demonstrating that he knew those titles both applied to our Father in Heaven:

“We obey the Lord, Him who is called Jehovah, the Great I AM, I am a man of war, Eloheim, etc. We are under many obligations to obey Him. How shall we know that we obey Him? There is but one method by which we can know it, and that is by the inspiration of

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<sup>3</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <19 February 1854> page 763, emphasis added.

<sup>4</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 October 1854> page 852.

<sup>5</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 October 1854> pages 849–850.

the Spirit of the Lord witnessing unto our spirit that we are His, that we love Him, and that He loves us.”<sup>6</sup>

This is keeping with Joseph Smith who also referred to God the Father as both “Elohim” and “Jehovah”:

“Jehovah — God — Thou Eloheim, that sittest, as saith the Psalmist, ‘enthroned in heaven,’ look down upon Thy servant Joseph at this time; and let faith on the name of Thy Son Jesus Christ, to a greater degree than Thy servant ever yet has enjoyed, be conferred upon him, even the faith of Elijah.”<sup>7</sup>

This understanding that both titles apply to God is fitting with many scriptures in the Old Testament that reference God the Father as “the Lord your God” which in English correctly translates as “Jehovah your Elohim.” Speaking of God being referred to by many different titles in the scriptures, Brigham observed:

“We begin with the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our spirits. Who is he? Do you know anything about him? Can you find out who he is? Suppose we go to the scriptures and enquire who he is. At one time he says, ‘I am that I am.’ At another time when the question was proposed by someone he replied, ‘I am the Lord your God.’ At another time he is spoken of as a ‘man of war,’ ‘a general,’ and so on. You may trace the scriptures through and you will find that he is known to one people

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<sup>6</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <11 November 1867> page 2504.

<sup>7</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 5 <22 August 1842> page 127.



[by] one title today and tomorrow and the next day by another and there he leaves it.”<sup>8</sup>

It should also be recognized that Jesus Christ inherits the title Jehovah from his Father, as Hebrew 1:4 says “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” One rare occasion in the New Testament where Jesus Christ affirmed his name-title as the Son Jehovah was John 8:44: “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” “Jehovah” / “Yahweh” in Hebrew literally translates to “I am the one who is” or more simply “I am,” so Jesus in this verse identifies himself as “Jehovah.” It was for this reason that Proverbs asks the rhetorical question:

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? **What is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?**”<sup>9</sup>

In most places in the Old Testament, when speaking of the Son of God’s relationship to the Father only the Father is referred to as Jehovah. Yet Genesis 19:24 is a rare instance in the Old Testament where both the Son and Father are referred to as Jehovah:

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<sup>8</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 April 1855> page 937.

<sup>9</sup> Proverbs 30:4, emphasis added.

“Then Jehovah [i.e. God the Son] rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah [i.e. God the Father] out of heaven.”<sup>10</sup>

John Taylor recognized this reality that sometimes Jesus Christ can be referred to as Jehovah, and so in *Mediation and Atonement* observed:

“‘His name shall be called Immanuel,’ which being interpreted is, God with us. Hence He is not only called the Son of God, the First Begotten of the Father, the Well Beloved, the Head, and Ruler, and Dictator of all things, Jehovah, the I Am, the Alpha and Omega, but He is also called the Very Eternal Father.”<sup>11</sup>

## JESUS CHRIST’S ROLE IN THE CREATION

**“If the Jehovah in the Endowment was not Jesus, was Jesus involved in creating the Earth?”**

While some Mormon Fundamentalists teach that Jesus could not have participated in the Creation of this world because he did not yet have a physical body, according to both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, Jesus Christ held power over the elements and participated in the Creation of this Earth. Joseph Smith on March 10, 1844 preached:

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<sup>10</sup> Genesis 19:24, American Standard Version.

<sup>11</sup> John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement* <1882> page 137.

“Messiah is above the spirit and power of Messiah, for **He made the world**, and was that spiritual rock unto Moses in the wilderness. ...There are some important things concerning the office of the Messiah in the organization of the world, which I will speak of hereafter.”<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, Brigham Young taught:

“When the only begotten Son of God was upon the earth, he understood the nature of these elements, how they were brought together to make this world and all things that are thereon, for he helped to make them.”<sup>13</sup>

It was likely for this reason that Jesus was briefly added as a fourth God in the Endowment ceremony in early Utah. From available sources, it appears that by the 1870s Jesus was removed from the Endowment and the ceremony went back to only depicting Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael in the drama performing the Creation.<sup>14</sup>

It is my view that the reason for not including Jesus in the Endowment *is that the Endowment was not meant to be a comprehensive depiction of the Creation, but was merely to convey the knowledge that God the Father had Gods above Him who directed and helped him to create this Earth.* This essentially is a “Higher Trinity” involved with the Creation, while the

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<sup>12</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <10 March 1844> page 254, emphasis added.

<sup>13</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <14 August 1853> page 270.

<sup>14</sup> For more on this see *One Eternal Round* issue #23 “The Adam-God Doctrine in the Endowment” section “Jesus as a Fourth God in the Endowment.”

Endowment does not go into detail about the “Lower Trinity” under Michael. The Lower Trinity is laid out in the scriptures and revelations, which clearly state that Jesus Christ participated in the creation of this world:

“And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary.”<sup>15</sup>

“And also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and that ye might know of the signs of his coming, to the intent that ye might believe on his name.”<sup>16</sup>

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”<sup>17</sup>

We also learn from Genesis that the Holy Ghost also participated in creating the world:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”<sup>18</sup>

While the Endowment focuses on depicting the “Higher Trinity” of Gods who managed and directed the Creation of this world, the scriptures

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<sup>15</sup> Mosiah 3:8.

<sup>16</sup> Helaman 14:12.

<sup>17</sup> Colossians 1:16.

<sup>18</sup> Genesis 1:1–2.

instead primarily focus on the “Lower Trinity” of the Godhead: The Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost both participated in the Creation and assisted God the Father in creating this world.

## ADAM’S FATHER ACTED IN HIS STEAD

**“If Adam is God, then who was talking with him in the Garden of Eden?”**

When Adam was in mortality, his Father and God acted in his stead as God. According to Brigham Young, it was the “Grandfather” God that cursed Cain:

“After the deed was done, the Lord inquired for Abel and made Cain own what he had done with him. Now, **says the Grandfather**, I will not destroy the seed of Michael and his wife, and Cain, I will not kill you nor suffer anyone else to kill you, but I will put a mark upon you. What is that mark? You will see it on the countenance of every African you ever did see upon the face of the earth or ever will see.”<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, Brigham Young in a discussion about Adam-God indicated he held this view when he said that the Gods Enoch interacted with were different than our God:

“I will tell you the God which you and I worship, it is a

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<sup>19</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <5 February 1852> page 468, emphasis added.

being that was on an Earth like this. He has been clothed in mortality the same as we have been and he has had devils to fight the same as we have had but I do not expect they were the same devils that we have. That God says I am your God and there is none else. Let us worship him and none Else. He is the God that we have. **No matter what Gods Enoch saw when the heavens were opened unto him if the God he saw had been exalted millions of years before our God was.** He also had to occupy an Earth like ourselves and we shall find it out at some period and this is all the mystery there is about it and if we are faithful we in our turn shall be exalted and become Gods and there will be no mystery about it when we understand it.”<sup>20</sup>

In this statement Brigham clearly indicated that when Enoch first had the heavens opened to him (while Adam was still alive), Enoch communed with and became familiar with the Gods above Adam. Yet it is interesting to note that later, *after* Adam’s death, Enoch lamented God no longer being on Earth and longed for the time he would return to Earth:

“And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? Forasmuch as thou art God, and I know thee, and thou hast sworn unto me, and commanded me that I should ask in the name of thine Only Begotten; thou hast made me, and given unto me a right to thy throne, and not of myself, but through thine own grace; wherefore, I ask thee if thou wilt not come again on the earth.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Minutes of Meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve, 1835–1893* <27 January 1860> page 242.

<sup>21</sup> Moses 7:59.

John Taylor also understood that Adam’s God acted as God when Adam was in the Garden, commenting: “Adam heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden [so] Adam had a God then [i.e. above him].”<sup>22</sup>

## THE FALL OF ADAM

### “Did God sin in partaking of the fruit?”

For some, Adam being identified as God is viewed as ridiculous because it means that God committed sin and was less than perfect, which does not match the scriptural Deity described as sinless and perfect. To answer this objection: the fall of Adam is viewed by believers in the Adam-God Doctrine not as a sin against God’s *moral law* but a transgression against a *law of nature* — falling from Immortality to Mortality. Edward Tullidge in *The Women of Mormondom* wrote:

“The fall is simple. Our immortal parents came down to fall; came down to transgress the laws of immortality; came down to give birth to mortal tabernacles for a world of spirits. The ‘forbidden tree,’ says Brigham, contained in its fruit the elements of death, or the elements of mortality. By eating of it, blood was again infused into the tabernacles of beings who had become immortal. The basis of mortal generation is blood, without blood no mortal can be born.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *In the President’s Office: The Diaries of L. John Nuttall, 1879–1892* <13 January 1880> pages 53–54.

<sup>23</sup> Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* page 198.

Similarly, Ogden Kraut in his book *Michael-Adam* explained:

“The fall of Adam was the transgression of a physical law of nature. His fall was from immortality to mortality – fro the celestial to the earthly. With a celestial resurrected body, he had engendered spirit children – now he had incorporated blood into his body so that he could beget physical, mortal bodies for those spirits to possess. He descended to mortality so that his children would have the opportunity of ascending to immortality.”<sup>24</sup>

Alma 11:45 states that “I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption.” *So for God to fall from an incorruptible Celestial body to a corruptible Telestial body required violating the blessings of the Resurrection.*

Joseph Smith remarked on Genesis 2:17 “Adam did not commit sin in eating the fruits for God had decreed that he should eat and fall. But in compliance with the decree he should die — only ‘he should die’ was the saying of the Lord.”<sup>25</sup> It should be noted that Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible adds a statement where Adam’s Father acknowledged Adam’s choice to partake of the fruit: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and

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<sup>24</sup> Ogden Kraut, *Michael-Adam* page 52.

<sup>25</sup> *Words of Joseph Smith* <9 February 1841> page 63.



evil, thou shalt not eat of it, nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”<sup>26</sup>

The reason God had to forbid Adam from partaking of the fruit to fall is simple: God’s creations are perfect and He cannot be the author of corruption and the physical weaknesses and evils we experience in our bodies in our probationary state. Nevertheless, we need to experience them in order to experience opposition in all things to learn and grow, to learn from hardship and suffering:

“22 And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. 23 And they would have had no children;<sup>27</sup> wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin.

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<sup>26</sup> Moses 3:17.

<sup>27</sup> It is interesting to note that the in the Ugarit Myth of Adam, Adam loses his immortality by being bitten and poisoned by the Serpent, yet receives the ability of *procreation* as a result of his Fall. As one article summarized: “Adam fails miserably, the snake buries his fangs in his flesh and Adam becomes a mortal being. The sun goddess offers humanity a consolation prize, though: via reproduction will man as a species yet remain eternal.” (Article “Dutch Discover oldest Adam and Eve Story” by Jan Kas, 15 May 2014) This oldest story of Adam and the Serpent is published and explored in the book *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning* <2015> by Marjo Korpel and Johannes Morr.

24 But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. 25 Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.”<sup>28</sup>

Brigham Young taught that the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was metaphorical, and that it was just partaking of the fruits of this Earth over a period of time that gradually caused Adam and Eve to lose their immortality:

“After men have got their exaltations and their crowns — have become Gods, even the sons of God — are made Kings of kings and Lords of lords, they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit; and that is the first of their operations with regard to organizing a world. Power is then given to them to organize the elements, and then commence the organization of tabernacles. How can they do it? Have they to go to that earth? Yes, an Adam will have to go there, and he cannot do without Eve; he must have Eve to commence the work of generation, and they will go into the garden, and continue to eat and drink of the fruits of the corporeal world, until this greater matter is diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them, according to the established laws, to produce mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> 2 Nephi 2:22–25. The Book of Moses reiterates this while reminding us that the inverse is also true: “And he said unto them: Because that Adam fell, we are; and by his fall came death; and we are made partakers of misery and woe. . . . And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying: Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.” (Moses 6:48, 55)

<sup>29</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 6 <28 August 1852> page 275.

## KEYS TO GENESIS

President Brigham Young gave us many other keys throughout his sermons on other aspects of Genesis that should be taken figuratively. Brigham preached on many occasions that Adam being made out of the dust of the Earth was not conveying the whole truth of Adam's creation, and that Eve being created from Adam's rib was not literal either:

“Some think he [Adam] was made like an adobe and the Lord breathed into him the breath of life. For we read, ‘From dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.’ Well, he was made of the dust of the earth, but not of this earth. He was made just the same way you and I are made but on another earth.”<sup>30</sup>

“The first people of the earth were no more made of the dust than we are. I would not make out that Moses lied, by no means, but we are made of dust as much as Adam was; so are our cattle. They are formed or created from the elements, all of which are necessary to produce animal or vegetable life; as the dust of the earth will produce grass, and cattle will eat grass and increase. Every person must have a father and a mother or they could not be.”<sup>31</sup>

“Listen, ye Latter-day Saints! Supposing that Adam was formed actually out of clay, out of the same kind of material from which bricks are formed; that with this

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<sup>30</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <1 February 1877> page 3104.

<sup>31</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 October 1854> page 855.

matter God made the pattern of a man, and breathed into it the breath of life, and left it there, in that state of supposed perfection, he would have been an adobie to this day. He would not have known anything. Some of you may doubt the truth of what I now say, and argue that the Lord could teach him. This is a mistake. The Lord could not have taught him in any other way than in the way in which He did teach him. You believe Adam was made of the dust of this earth. This I do not believe, though it is supposed that it is so written in the Bible; but it is not, to my understanding. You can write that information to the States, if you please — that I have publicly declared that I do not believe that portion of the Bible as the Christian world do. I never did, and I never want to. What is the reason I do not? Because I have come to understanding, and banished from my mind all the baby stories my mother taught me when I was a child.”<sup>32</sup>

“Now about the rib. As for the Lord taking a rib out of Adams side to make a woman of, He took one out of my side just as much. ‘But, Brother Brigham, would you make it appear that Moses did not tell the truth?’ No, not a particle more than I would that your mother did not tell the truth, when she told you that little Billy came from a hollow toad stool. I would not accuse your mother of lying, any more than I would Moses; the people in the days of Moses wanted to know things that was not for them, the same as your children do, when they want to know where their little brother came from, and he answered them according to their folly, the same as you did your children.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 2 <23 October 1853> page 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 October 1854> page 850.

“It is said by Moses, the historian, that the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and took from his side a rib and formed the woman that Adam called Eve. This should be interpreted that the man Adam, like all other men, had the seed within him to propagate his species, but not the woman. She conceives the seed but she does not produce it, consequently she was taken from the side or bowels of her father. This explains the mystery of Moses’ dark sayings in regard to Adam and Eve.”<sup>34</sup>

## MOSES AND ADAM-GOD

**“Why do Genesis and the Book of Moses appear to contradict the Adam-God doctrine instead of plainly teach it?”**

While there are some verses in the Book of Moses and Genesis that support the Adam-God Doctrine, the doctrine is not clearly taught in story of Adam and Eve in Genesis — otherwise it wouldn’t have required new revelation to restore that knowledge.

Yet even some verses in the Book of Moses may appear even more challenging to the Adam-God Doctrine. For example, Moses 6:50–52 says:

“50 But God hath made known unto our fathers that all men must repent.

51 And he called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh.

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<sup>34</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <1 February 1877> page 3104.

52 And he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you.”<sup>35</sup>

To some these verses may seem as insurmountable evidence against the Adam-God Doctrine being true — Orson Pratt used these exact verses to argue as much.<sup>36</sup> But it is easily reconciled when you understand that Adam’s Father not only acted in his place, but because they were so perfectly united in all things that he had just as much a right to speak as though he is God the Father. This doctrine eventually became known as “Divine Investiture.”

## DIVINE INVESTITURE

George Q. Cannon appears to be the one of the earliest church leaders to explain that the Gods could act and speak on behalf of each other, in explaining the Book of Mormon’s apparent “Godhead confusion” where Jesus Christ speaks as though he is both the Father and the Son:

“I then referred to a number of passages to explain how difficult it is, unless we have the light of the Spirit, to

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<sup>35</sup> Moses 6:50–52.

<sup>36</sup> *Minutes of Meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve, 1835–1893* <5 April 1860> page 256.

understand the Godhead. I said the Savior — and I quoted revelations to illustrate the point — spoke to His servants as though He were the Father himself and spoke of himself as the Only Begotten Son. I said the reason for this is that Jesus represented the Godhead and spoke for the Godhead. Viewed in this light, many passages that would be puzzling might be clearly understood.”<sup>37</sup>

This concept eventually became called “Divine Investiture” — the understanding that the Gods are so perfectly united they can speak and act for each other. And not only Gods, but angels can speak and act on behalf of God as they are so directed. Divine Investiture was first strongly articulated as a doctrine in the 1916 First Presidency statement “The Father and the Son”:

**“4. Jesus Christ the “Father” by Divine Investiture of Authority**

A fourth reason for applying the title “Father” to Jesus Christ is found in the fact that in all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority. This is true of Christ in His preexistent, antemortal, or unembodied state, in the which He was known as Jehovah; also during His embodiment in the flesh; and during His labors as a disembodied spirit in the realm of the dead; and since that period in His resurrected state.

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<sup>37</sup> George Q. Cannon Journal, 11 June 1892. George Q. Cannon shared this concept 3 years earlier in a discussion with his son Abraham Cannon: “Jesus, in speaking of Himself as the very eternal Father [in the Book of Mormon] speaks as one of the Godhead...” (Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 23 June 1889)

To the Jews He said, 'I and my Father are one' (John 10:30; see also John 17:11, 22); yet He declared, 'My Father is greater than I' (John 14:28), and further, 'I am come in my Father's name.' (John 5:43; see also John 10:25) The same truth was declared by Christ Himself to the Nephites (see 3 Nephi 20:35; 3 Nephi 28:10), and has been reaffirmed by revelation in the present dispensation (D&C 50:43). Thus the Father placed His name upon the Son; and Jesus Christ spoke and ministered in and through the Father's name; and so far as power, authority, and godship are concerned His words and acts were and are those of the Father. We read, by way of analogy, that God placed His name upon or in the angel who was assigned to special ministry unto the people of Israel during the exodus. Of that angel the Lord said, 'Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.' (Exodus 23:21)

The ancient Apostle John was visited by an angel who ministered and spoke in the name of Jesus Christ. As we read, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.' (Revelation 1:1)

John was about to worship the angelic being who spoke in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but was forbidden:

'And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.' (Revelation 22:8-9)



And then the angel continued to speak as though he were the Lord Himself:

‘And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.’ (Revelation 22:12–13)

The resurrected Lord, Jesus Christ, who had been exalted to the right hand of God His Father, had placed His name upon the angel sent to John, and the angel spoke in the first person, saying, ‘I come quickly,’ ‘I am Alpha and Omega,’ though he meant that Jesus Christ would come and that Jesus Christ was Alpha and Omega.”<sup>38</sup>

## ADAM IN MORTALITY

An additional perspective on why the Adam-God Doctrine is not clearly stated in the Book of Moses is because Adam was not acting as God when he was in mortality. Similarly, Jesus Christ was the special God to Israel under God the Father in the Old Testament as the Son Jehovah, yet throughout his mortal ministry only on very rare occasions was that recognized, and more often than not, he was emphatic that he was not God. Christ in mortality would generally not speak or act in his role as the Son Jehovah, but this does not diminish that the scriptures affirm that he was indeed the God of Israel, the Son Jehovah.

Similarly, some Latter-day Saints believe that Joseph Smith hinted at his own personal pre-

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<sup>38</sup> *Improvement Era* vol. 19 <August 1916> pages 934–942.

mortal and post-mortal role of the Holy Ghost as the “Witness and Testator” to the last Dispensation.<sup>39</sup>

Yet Joseph Smith did not consider himself as fully acting in the capacity of the Holy Ghost in his mortality, speaking of himself and the Holy

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<sup>39</sup> Joseph Smith taught “[An] Everlasting Covenant was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and relates to their dispensation of things to men on the earth; these personages, according to Abraham’s record, are called God the first, the Creator; God the second, the Redeemer; and God the third, the Witness or Testator.” (*Words of Joseph Smith* <16 May 1841> page 65) On May 12, 1844 Joseph Smith preached a sermon identifying himself as God’s “Witness” and some accounts recall that when he knew he would be martyred he said that would fulfill his role as the “Testator”. Heber C. Kimball on one occasion indicated his private belief that Joseph Smith was the Holy Ghost: “Heber C. Kimball called in and in course of conversation made some remarks upon previous existence, and told a conversation that Joseph Smith the Prophet had with a brother who had newly joined the Church as follows. Joseph asked the brother if he knew that once there had been a war in heaven and Satan had been cast out. The brother replied he did not; Joseph said ‘once you knew it, but you have forgot it’; Heber C. Kimball remarked, ‘it is the office of the Holy Ghost to bring things to our remembrance which we were once acquainted with.’” (*The Office Journal of President Brigham Young, 1858–1863, Book D* <13 August 1860> page 132) On August 27, 1843 Joseph Smith spoke of “angels” in their probationary state rejecting the truth because of the traditions of their fathers, then also mentioned that the Holy Ghost was in a probationary state, implying both the Holy Ghost and certain “angels” were both experiencing mortal probations: “The Holy Ghost is now in a state of Probation which if he should perform in righteousness he may pass through the same or a similar course of things that the Son has.” (*Words of Joseph Smith* <27 August 1843> page 245)

Ghost as separate beings<sup>40</sup> — since to fully act in that role a person has to be a disembodied spirit. In a comparable way, neither Adam nor Christ were acting fully in their capacity as members of the Godhead while they each were respectively in mortality.

## ISRAEL SINNED AND LOST THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Another important perspective is that in reading Genesis and the Book of Moses, one needs to recognize that all revelation is given according to the capacity of the people, and we need to understand the context it was given in. Moses was giving the Genesis story of Adam and Eve to a fallen, wicked people who had sinned to the point they had the Melchizedek Priesthood taken away from them. According to D&C 84:

“And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.”<sup>41</sup>

This should be viewed as significant: The degree of priesthood a people hold and receive the blessings of equates to the degree of the knowledge

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<sup>40</sup> “He said was the province of the Father to preside as the Chief or President — Jesus as the Mediator and Holy Ghost as the testator or witness — the Son had a Tabernacle and so had the Father. But the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit without tabernacle.” (*Words of Joseph Smith* <9 March 1841> page 64)

<sup>41</sup> D&C 84:19.

of God they will have. So it should be assumed that to a great degree the knowledge of God was restored with the Melchizedek Priesthood being restored to the Earth through Peter, James, and John to Joseph Smith, yet the full knowledge of God would not be committed until *after* April 3, 1836 when Moses, Elias, and Elijah restored the keys to the Fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood.<sup>42</sup>

D&C 84 then explains that the Lord removed this priesthood from the Children of Israel:

19 And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God 20 Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. 21 And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; 22 For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

23 Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; 24 But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is

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<sup>42</sup> Joseph Smith taught on October 5, 1840 that Elijah was the one to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood authority to perform all the ordinances, and on March 10, 1844 he reiterated that Elijah held the keys to perform all the ordinances including to bestow “endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood.” (See *History of the Church* vol. 4 <5 October 1840> pages 211–212; *History of the Church* vol. 6 <10 March 1844> page 251.

the fulness of his glory. 25 Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also; 26 And the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel.”<sup>43</sup>

We learn from the Joseph Smith Translation of Deuteronomy and Exodus that the Lord removed the Everlasting Covenant of the Holy Priesthood, the Holy Order, and the “ordinances thereof” from the Children of Israel after the Golden Calf incident in Exodus 32, which led to Moses breaking the tablets and God having to write the law again on new ones:

“1 At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two other tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me upon the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. 2 And I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables, which thou breakest, save the words of the Everlasting Covenant of the Holy Priesthood, and thou shalt put them in the ark.”<sup>44</sup>

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two other tables of stone, like unto the first, and I will write upon them also, the words of the law, according as they were written at the first on the tables which thou brakest, but it shall not be according to the first, for I will take away the priesthood out of their midst; therefore my holy order, and the ordinances thereof, shall not go before them; for my presence shall not go up in their midst, lest I destroy them.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> D&C 84:19–26.

<sup>44</sup> JST Deuteronomy 10:1–2.

<sup>45</sup> JST Exodus 34:1.

The Sin of Israel is often identified with the Golden Calf, but in reality the sin of Israel wasn't actually the Golden Calf, but something much more serious that occurred at that festival. The symbol of the bull instead of representing a different god, was originally a symbol for El.<sup>46</sup> Jewish scholars admit that Hebrew tradition preserved this understanding, and that the "golden calf" merely was a physical representation of one of the divine symbols:

"The rabbis report that the golden calf was made as a replica of the bull in the divine throne. ...In Israelite tradition the bull formed part of the divine throne. In order that God should make His glory dwell among them, they manufactured a bull, a replica of the divine throne or "heavenly bull," so that God would make His spirit dwell in the calf, His earthly throne, and thereby fully identify with it. They in turn, by having possession of the idol, would in fact have a God in their midst."<sup>47</sup>

Even the text of Exodus 32 preserves the understanding that the festival of the golden calf was a feast unto Jehovah. Aaron stated:

"4 And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 5 And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* vol. 1 page 245.

<sup>47</sup> *Encyclopedia Judaica* vol. 8 page 1229.

<sup>48</sup> Exodus 32:4-5.

The grievous sin the Israelites committed is actually obscured by the biblical text. The next verse reads:

“And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and *rose up to play*.”<sup>49</sup>

“Rose up to play” is the key phrase that appears to be obscured. Essentially they engaged in whoredoms in the name of God during these feast. These whoredoms were after the manner of the pagan cultures around them, as many other ancient religions engaged in religious or ritual prostitution. *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* noted:

“And it appears they went much farther, for it is said they rose up to play, לצחק letsachek, a word of ominous import, which seems to imply here fornicating and adulterous intercourse and in some countries the verb to play is still used precisely in this sense. In this sense the original is evidently used, Genesis 39:14.”<sup>50</sup>

The apostle Paul appeared to understand that this was the sin of Israel as well, as he commented in 1 Corinthians 10:

“7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty

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<sup>49</sup> Exodus 32:6, italics added.

<sup>50</sup> *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* vol. 1 page 464.

thousand.”<sup>51</sup>

When Moses returned from the mount, Aaron explained what had happened to Moses. Aaron said “thou knowest the people... they are set on mischief” and Moses had to execute judgment.<sup>52</sup> Exodus 32 records:

“25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies): 26 Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

27 And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.

28 And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.”<sup>53</sup>

Essentially, the Israelites disgraced both the Divine Father and Mother in the whoredoms they committed as a people at a Feast of Jehovah, and so

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<sup>51</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:7-8. Paul here appears to be referencing the story from memory, and incorrectly cites the number killed as 23,000 instead of 3,000. Some scholars see this as potentially referencing the Baal-peor incident in Numbers 25:6-8 wherein 24,000 were killed by a plague, but the language “fell in one day” more closely parallels the language of Exodus 32:28.

<sup>52</sup> Exodus 32:22.

<sup>53</sup> Exodus 32:25–28.



God cursed them and took away the Melchizedek Priesthood and the higher knowledge of God from them. No longer were the people to depict God in any images in their ritual worship, nor were they even to make stone pillar (Massebahs) or plant sacred trees (Asherahs) to symbolize the Divine Father and Mother anymore.<sup>54</sup>

Like many other ancient religions, their ideas about God had become so human that they had become corrupt and degenerate, and so the Israelites needed significant distance from their God in their carnal, sinful state, as well as geographic separation from the morally corrupt cultures and religions around them.<sup>55</sup>

It is for this reason I believe that Moses purposefully took the knowledge of Adam-God out

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<sup>54</sup> Exodus 20:4, Deuteronomy 16:21–22. While these practices were forbidden by Moses, they clearly were part of the religion of the biblical patriarchs before them: “While Genesis is remarkably silent on the subject of goddess worship, we are told that Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba and called there on the name of the Lord, El Olam (Gen. 21:33). The tree beside a place of worship of El can reasonably be construed as an asherah, and the stone that Jacob erects in Bethel is explicitly called a maṣṣēbâ (Gen. 28:18).” (John J. Collins, *The Bible after Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age* page 124) While the Law given by Moses forbid Massebahs or Asherahs being constructed, it is interesting to note that when Joshua offered the people a covenant with God, he did so by placing a large stone by a tree near the sanctuary of the Lord (Joshua 24:26), a last remnant of this aspect of the patriarchal religion of Genesis.

<sup>55</sup> For more on the subject of the ancient Patriarchal Religion, Massebahs and Asherahs, and the Sin of Israel, see Fred C. Collier, “The Common Origin of Ancient Hebrew / Pagan Religion and the Demise of the Hebrew Goddess,” *Doctrine of the Priesthood* vol. 8 no. 2 <February 1991> pages 34–39.

of Genesis and instead included a statement that Adam was created from dust:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”<sup>56</sup>

This verse does not need to be viewed as Moses lying — this verse can still be understood as something that literally occurred, referencing Adam receiving a resurrection from the dust. Adam *was* resurrected from the dust, just on a different Earth where he had previously dwelt.

## ADAM-GOD IN GENESIS

Yet in spite of Adam-God not being plainly stated in Genesis, Moses in a few places leaves clues regarding the real story of Adam and Eve. Adam not being a relative baby or new-born creation but a man endowed with wisdom and authority was demonstrated when Adam was given the responsibility to name every creature placed upon this Earth:

“And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Genesis 2:7.

<sup>57</sup> Genesis 2:19.

Additionally, Adam indicated that he had both a Father and a Mother — literal parents before him, when he spoke after the creation of Eve:

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”<sup>58</sup>

One final powerful witness in Genesis to Eve’s status as our Mother in Heaven comes from the title that Adam bestowed upon her:

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”<sup>59</sup>

It is significant that Eve is called the “Mother of All Living” before she even had a child — clearly indicating her role as the mother of the spirits of the human family. Some scholars recognize how the title “Mother of All Living” has Mother Goddess connotations.<sup>60</sup> The Term “Eve”

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<sup>58</sup> Genesis 2:24.

<sup>59</sup> Genesis 3:20.

<sup>60</sup> “However, In Genesis 3:20 Adam again named his wife, now with the name Eve, a name which is presupposed in Gen. 4:1, and seems to have ancient roots. This name is a noun of quattal-class designating a profession or function, meaning ‘she-who-gives-life’. This is confirmed by the explanation that Adam called her this because she is the Mother of All the Living. Several scholars have seen in this title a reminiscence of either the concept of Mother Earth, or the primeval mother-goddess. The latter possibility becomes more likely now that in Ugarit and elsewhere Adammu appears to be paired with Kubaba, the primordial mother goddess. Although it was obviously not the intent of the final redactor to introduce Eve as a mother goddess he may certainly have wanted to redress

itself in Hebrew means “She who gives life” indicating she had Creative Power. The Joseph Smith Translation adds an interesting addition to Genesis 3:20, paralleling Adam naming Eve and arguably is a tautology:

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; **for thus have I, the Lord God, called the first of all women, which are many.**”<sup>61</sup>

This verse can either be Adam’s Father speaking on behalf of Adam naming Eve (and indicating that Adam had named other women on previous worlds “Eve” as well). Or at the very least Adam’s Father here indicates that he also had been an Adam on a prior world, and named his wife Eve on that previous Earth.

Another subtle Adam-God allusion hidden in parallelism can be found in Genesis 5:1: “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him,” — equating the “generations of Adam” to “God created man.” The Book of Moses makes this parallel statement even more direct in the way it modifies the verse:

“...and a genealogy was kept of the children of God. And this was the book of the generations of Adam, saying: In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.”<sup>62</sup>

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these traditions by a deliberate hint in Gen. 3:20.” (Marjo Korpel and Johannes Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil, A New Beginning* pages 140–141)

<sup>61</sup> Moses 4:26, emphasis added.

<sup>62</sup> Moses 56:8.

In this verse the “book of the generations of Adam” was clearly equated as being “a genealogy of the children of God.”

## ADAM-GOD AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Book of Mormon provides an important foundation for the Adam-God Doctrine in teaching that instead of Adam’s fall being a terrible event for humanity (as most Christians believe), it was actually a positive and necessary step: “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.” (2 Nephi 2:25) This *felix culpa* “Fortune Fall” doctrine was a vital first step in rehabilitating our First Parents Adam and Eve.

Yet the Book of Mormon in many places references the “creation of Adam” by God and our “first parents” as distinct from God, clearly showing the Adam-God Doctrine is not to be found in the text. But the lack of the Adam-God Doctrine in the Book of Mormon very likely was on purpose, for two reasons: The first reason being because of the historical context that the Israelites lost the higher priesthood and the knowledge of God, and Moses not clearly stating the Adam-God Doctrine in Genesis. The second is that Adam-God is a higher principle of the Gospel, and because it was a higher doctrine instead of a first principle of the Gospel of Christ, it appears to have been explicitly not included in the Book of Mormon.

Every historical text needs to be considered for the context it is given in. The Book of Mormon appears to conflate Jesus Christ as being God the Father in many places, going so far as to call Christ “the Eternal Father” on multiple occasions. Four of these verses were changed in the 1837 edition of the Book of Mormon, yet others that were so intertwined with the verses around them and could not be easily changed remain in the text to the present time.<sup>63</sup>

The reason for this is the historical context. Because the Israelites lost the Melchizedek Priesthood and with it the knowledge of God, the nature and relationship of the Godhead was not clearly presented or preserved in the Old Testament. Indeed, even Isaiah appears to call Christ the “everlasting Father” as well:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”<sup>64</sup>

Part of the reason for this lack of clarity in the Godhead is that God the Father stopped personally dealing with the children of Israel and instead had his Son, upon whom he “placed his

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<sup>63</sup> The four verses that were changed by adding “the son of” to the text are 1 Nephi 11 verses 18, 21, 32, and 1 Nephi 13:40. Yet other verses remain that call Christ the Eternal Father, see for instance Alma 11:26–40. This subject will be addressed further in a future issue of *One Eternal Round* on “Christ as the Father and the Son.”

<sup>64</sup> Isaiah 9:6.

name in Him,” be the one to interact with them after the sin of Israel:

“Behold, **I send an Angel** before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; *for My name is in Him.*”<sup>65</sup>

“And I will send **an angel** before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for **I will not go up in the midst of thee**; for thou art a stiffnecked people: **lest I consume thee in the way.**”<sup>66</sup>

According to the Book of Mormon, this angel was Jesus Christ himself:

“And notwithstanding they being led, the Lord their God, their Redeemer, going before them, leading them by day and giving light unto them by night, and doing all things for them which were expedient for man to receive, they hardened their hearts and blinded their minds, and reviled against Moses and against the true and living God.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Exodus 23:20-21, emphasis and italics added. Other places reference this angel as the “Angel Jehovah”. The reference by God to “My name is in Him” can be seen alluded to in the numerous places in the New Testament where Jesus said he came in the name of his Father, as well as Hebrew 1:4 “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”

<sup>66</sup> Exodus 33:2-3, emphasis added.

<sup>67</sup> 1 Nephi 17:30.

So it was in the context of God the Father no longer interacting with Israel, and the Son of God being the God to the Israelites, that Christ spoke as though he were the Father and the one God to them during the Old Testament period. Adam-God not being included in the Book of Mormon should be viewed in that same context.

It is interesting to observe however that after Christ came to the Nephites in 3<sup>rd</sup> Nephi, and bestowed upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood and established his Church that connotations between him and God the Father essentially disappear after that, with Christ very explicitly distinguished himself from God the Father.<sup>68</sup>

Yet the Book of Mormon interestingly does not include the Adam-God Doctrine in the text, even after Christ came after his Resurrection. This appears to be purposeful, and a strong clue that this was a deliberate omission comes from the fact that Jesus's most common title for himself in the New Testament is completely absent from the Book of Mormon text.

In the Four Gospels the most common title for Jesus Christ is "Son of Man" which appears 75 times in the text of the Gospels, followed by "Christ" which appears 62 times, "Son of God" which appears 25 times, and "son of David" which occurs 15 times. Yet the term "Son of Man" is never used to refer to Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon at all — not even once! Joseph Smith's other early revelations had no problem using the

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<sup>68</sup> The only clear exception to this would be in Ether 3, which had gone through the hands of the early Nephites who had translated the Jaredite plates.



term Son of Man,<sup>69</sup> yet the title “Son of Man” in reference to Jesus Christ is completely absent from the Book of Mormon text.<sup>70</sup>

The reason the title “Son of Man” is absent from the Book of Mormon is that the word for “man” and “Adam” are identical in Hebrew, and the title “Son of Man” as used by Jesus Christ was a clear Adam-God statement. In Mark 2:27–28 it states:

“27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Moses 6:57 received in December 1830 states “Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.” Additionally D&C 45 received in March 1831 says “And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man.” (D&C 45:39) Also D&C 49 received in May 1831 says “And they have done unto the Son of Man even as they listed; and he has taken his power on the right hand of his glory, and now reigneth in the heavens, and will reign till he descends on the earth to put all enemies under his feet, which time is nigh at hand.” All these verses are clear evidence Joseph Smith did not have any problem with using “Son of Man” as a title for Christ in his revelations.

<sup>70</sup> The only time “son of man” appears in the Book of Mormon text is 2 Nephi 8:12 which is quoting Isaiah and did not have reference to Jesus Christ

<sup>71</sup> Mark 2:27-28.

This verse is viewed by some scholars as referencing a ‘ben Adam’ tradition, of Christ referring to himself as the Son of Adam:

“We find ourselves on an unusual path if we trace Mark 2:27 back to a Hebrew ben Adam tradition. For then this text is understood as a reference to the creation story, ‘The Sabbath was made for Adam and not Adam for the Sabbath, hence the Son of Adam is Lord even over the Sabbath’.”<sup>72</sup>

“The Sabbath was made for Man (Adam) and not Man (Adam) for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of the Man (Adam) is lord also of the Sabbath. (He is his legitimate heir.)”<sup>73</sup>

But Genesis 2:2–3 says the Sabbath was made for God: “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his works which he God created and Made.” So either Jesus had a different understanding of the origins of the Sabbath, or maybe Jesus understood that Adam was the God who rested on the Sabbath day of Creation.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* vol. 3 page 623.

<sup>73</sup> Fredrick Houk Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History* page 323.

<sup>74</sup> Mark 2:27–28 isn’t the only place Jesus Christ alluded to the Adam-God Doctrine. As another example, in Matthew 19:4–6 Jesus quoted Adam’s declaration in Genesis 2:24 but indicated they were actually God’s words.

But why would this title indicating that Adam was the Father of Jesus not be included in the Book of Mormon? At least part of the reason is because the Book of Mormon directly states that only the first principles of the Gospel of Christ are to be contained in the book:

“6 And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people; 7 But behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people. 8 And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

9 And when they shall receive these, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them. 10 And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.

11 Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people. 12 Therefore, I Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord.”<sup>75</sup>

So Mormon explicitly says that the Lord directed him to only include the “lesser things” of the Gospel of Christ in the Book of Mormon, which explains why the Adam-God Doctrine and other

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<sup>75</sup> 3 Nephi 26:6–12; see also Alma 12:9–11.

higher principles are not contained in the record. Yet Mormon also included a promise from God that if “they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.”

## ADAM-GOD AND JOSEPH SMITH'S REVEALED TEACHINGS

Yet other objections to the Adam-God Doctrine come up, such as the fact that Adam-God is not clearly contained in the Doctrine and Covenants either, but rather many revelations in it speak of Adam and God as two separate beings, and even speak of Adam being created by the Lord just as the Book of Mormon teaches.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, Joseph Smith on October 5, 1840 spoke of Adam as presiding over the human family but still acting below Christ in the priesthood.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> See for example, D&C 29:34–43.

<sup>77</sup> “These angels are under the direction of Michael or Adam who acts under the direction of Christ. ...This then is the nature of the priesthood, every man holding the presidency of his dispensation and one man holding the presidency of them all even Adam. And Adam receiving his Presidency and Authority from Christ, but cannot receive a fullness, until Christ shall present the Kingdom to the Father which shall be at the end of the last dispensation.” (*Joseph Smith Papers: Documents Volume 7* <5 October 1840> pages 436–437) Brigham Young was apparently aware of Joseph Smith’s October 1840 sermon and made a comment in an Adam-God sermon replying to the idea of Adam “not receiving a fullness” until Christ presents the Kingdom to the Father:

“Now, many inquiries will be made about the Savior, such as, “Who is he? Is he the Father of Adam? Is he the God of

These objections should be understood in the light of the fact that all revelation is given according to the understanding of the people, and that the restoration of the knowledge of God would not be completely revealed until the doctrines pertaining Fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored to the Saints.<sup>78</sup> And while Joseph Smith received the keys to do that work from Elijah in 1836, he did not begin to bestow the ordinances, authority, knowledge, and blessings pertaining to the “highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood” on others until the last two years of his life.<sup>79</sup>

Most revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants come from the early 1830s, and were given to the Saints even before Elijah restored the *keys* to the fullness of the priesthood to Joseph Smith. Yet they still provide clues about Adam’s exalted status, and the revelation identifying Adam as the Ancient of Days in Daniel chapter 7 should

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Adam? ‘When Christ has finished his labor and presented it to his father, then he, Adam will receive a fullness.’” That is all easily understood by me. He cannot receive a fullness of the kingdoms He has organized until they are completed. If He sends His servants off to the right and to the left to perform a certain labor, His kingdom is not complete, until His ministers have accomplished everything to make His kingdom complete and returned home again.” (*Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <5 October 1854> page 851)

<sup>78</sup> As D&C 84:19 states “And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God” it is thus logical that a higher order of the Melchizedek Priesthood would hold the keys to a greater understanding of the knowledge of God.

<sup>79</sup> For more on this priesthood, see *One Eternal Round* issue #1 “The Nauvoo Priesthood Developments.”

be viewed as a revelation identifying Adam as God the Father (even if the Saints did not understand the revelation fully at the time):

“54 And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel. 55 And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: 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.”<sup>80</sup>

“15 That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman; 16 Who hath appointed Michael your prince, and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life.”<sup>81</sup>

“And also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days;”<sup>82</sup>

All revelation is given according to the understanding and capacity of the people, based on what they are able to receive. In that light, Adam-God simply could not be revealed to the Saints until they had the foundational Nauvoo doctrines pertaining to Exaltation and the Plurality of Gods given to them.

Joseph Smith began to teach the doctrine of Exaltation to the Saints in 1843, yet did not begin to

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<sup>80</sup> D&C 107:54–55.

<sup>81</sup> D&C 78:15–16.

<sup>82</sup> D&C 27:11.

teach that God had once lived in mortality until he delivered the King Follett discourse on April 7, 1844. And even that sermon did not fully teach the plurality of Gods, only began to introduce the concept! It wasn't until June 16, 1844 that Joseph Smith fully taught the doctrine of a plurality of Gods above God the Father, and unfortunately he was killed only 11 days later, not having a chance to introduce the Adam-God Doctrine to the Saints.

Brigham Young on many occasions taught the principle that all revelation is given according to the capacity of the people. He said that even the Book of Mormon, if it were to be re-translated by the Lord, would likely materially differ in some places according to the capacity of the Saints:

“When God speaks to the people, he does it in a manner to suit their circumstances and capacities. He spoke to the children of Jacob through Moses, as a blind, stiff-necked people, and when Jesus and his Apostles came they talked with the Jews as a benighted, wicked, selfish people. They would not receive the Gospel, though presented to them by the Son of God in all its righteousness, beauty and glory. Should the Lord Almighty send an angel to re-write the Bible, it would in many places be very different from what it now is. And I will even venture to say that if the Book of Mormon were now to be re-written, in many instances it would materially differ from the present translation. According as people are willing to receive the things of God, so the heavens send forth their blessings. If the people are stiff-necked, the Lord can tell them but little.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 9 <13 July 1862> page 311.

“I suppose there has not yet been a perfect revelation given, because we cannot understand it, yet we receive a little here and a little there. I would not stumble if the Prophet should translate the bible forty thousand times over and yet it should be different in some places every time, because when God speaks, he always speaks according to the capacity of the people.”<sup>84</sup>

“I am so far from believing that any government upon this earth has constitutions and laws that are perfect, that I do not even believe that there is a single revelation, among the many God has given to the Church, that is perfect in its fulness. The revelations of God contain correct doctrine and principle, so far as they go; but it is impossible for the poor, weak, low, grovelling, sinful inhabitants of the earth to receive a revelation from the Almighty in all its perfections. He has to speak to us in a manner to meet the extent of our capacities, as we have to do with these benighted Lamanites; it would be of no benefit to talk to them as I am now speaking to you. Before you can enter into conversation with them and give them your ideas, you are under the necessity of condescending to their low estate, so far as communication is concerned, in order to exalt them.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Brigham Young, *Joseph Smith Papers: Council of Fifty Minutes* <18 April 1844> page 119.

<sup>85</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 2 <8 July 1855> page 314.



## ADAM AS THE SON OF GOD

### “Why do the scriptures call Adam the Son of God if Adam is God?”

One other question about the Adam-God Doctrine that comes up relates to those verses that identify Adam as the Son of God:

“Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”<sup>86</sup>

“And this is the genealogy of the sons of Adam, who was the son of God, with whom God, himself, conversed.”<sup>87</sup>

“Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen.”<sup>88</sup>

There are two different issues to understand with the term “son of God”— the first being that it denotes being the literal offspring of Deity, the second being that “son of God” in a different context means being made full heirs to Exaltation.

Luke 3:38 and Moses 6:22 are just teaching the aspect of the Adam-God Doctrine that Adam is the literal, physical offspring of his God, as Acts 17 (written by the same author as Luke) states:

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<sup>86</sup> Luke 3:38.

<sup>87</sup> Moses 6:22.

<sup>88</sup> Moses 6:68.

“28 For in him we alive, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”<sup>89</sup>

Referencing these ideas, Brigham explained:

“The faithful will become Gods, even the sons of God; but this does not over-throw the idea that we have a Father. Adam is my Father (this I will explain to you at some future time) but [if He has a Father and God] it does not prove that he is not my Father. If I become a God it does not prove that I have not a Father.”<sup>90</sup>

Brigham Young often in sermons would emphasize that Adam and his children were familiar with Adam’s Father, thus the first of the human family were the offspring of Gods:

“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 their Grandfather, and their children were more or less acquainted with their Great-Grandfather.**”<sup>91</sup>

“How many nations were there in the days of Enoch? The very men who were associated with him had been with Adam; they knew him and his children, and had the privilege of talking with God. Just think of it.

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<sup>89</sup> Acts 17:28–29.

<sup>90</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <28 August 1852> page 578.

<sup>91</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 9 <12 January 1862> page 148, emphasis added.

Though we have it in history that our father Adam was made of the dust of this earth, and that he knew nothing about his God previous to being made here, yet it is not so; and when we learn the truth we shall see and understand that he helped to make this world, and was the chief manager in that operation.

He was the person who brought the animals and the seeds from other planets to this world, and brought a wife with him and stayed here. You may read and believe what you please as to what is found written in the Bible. Adam was made from the dust of an earth, but not from the dust of this earth. He was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made upon any other principle.

Do you not suppose that he [Father Adam] was acquainted with his associates, who came and helped to make this earth? Yes, **they were just as familiar with each other as we are with our children and parents.**

Suppose a number of our sons were going to Carson Valley to build houses, open farms, and erect mills and workshops, and that we should say to them that we wish them to stay there five years, and that then we will come and visit them, when I go there will they be afraid of me? No, they would receive me as their father, just as Adam received his Father."<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 3 <20 April 1856> page 319, emphasis added.

**“But then why is Adam declared a Son of God in Moses 6:68 if he was already the literal offspring of God?”**

This question brings to mind the similar controversy of “Why does the New Testament epistles speak of “receiving the adoption” as sons of God, if we are already the children of God?”<sup>93</sup>

The other aspect of the term “Son of God” refers to receiving a full inheritance of Exaltation, from the Gods. When Moses 6:68 declares Adam is a Son of God, it was declaring that he was a full heir of Exaltation.

Just as the Book of Mormon teaches that we become adopted sons of Christ through faithfulness to his commandments and spiritual union with Him,<sup>94</sup> we are also to seek joint-heirship with Christ to inherit all that the Father has. It is in this way that we are “adopted” sons of God in spite of already being the literal offspring of God. As the commentary *Systematic Theology* explains:

“Today, when one speaks of adoption, he refers to the legal process whereby a stranger becomes a member of the family. In Paul’s time, however, adoptions referred to that legal process whereby a parent placed his own child in the legal position of an adult son, with all the privileges of inheritance. Someone may question why adoption was required when the child was already a son by birth. It must be remembered that in pagan Rome, a citizen often had many wives and many children. Some of the wives may have been concubines and slaves. The

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<sup>93</sup> See for examples Galatians 4:5, Romans 8:23, and Ephesians 1:5.

<sup>94</sup> Mosiah 5:7.

citizen may not have wanted the offspring of his slave wives to receive his titles, position in society, and inheritance. The legal procedure of adoption, therefore, provided a means whereby the citizen could designate those children which he wished to be considered his legal sons and heirs. Through receiving newness of life, believers become children of God. Through adoption, the children of God are declared to be His sons, who have all the privileges and inheritance of sonship.”<sup>95</sup>

The *NKJV Greek English Interlinear New Testament* similarly notes:

“Adoption: Greek: huiiothesia. Noun, a compound noun from ‘huio’, a son and ‘thesia’ a placing, thus meaning adoption. The word was a legal technical term for a father's declaration that his natural born child was officially a son or daughter, with all the rights and privileges that this included.”<sup>96</sup>

D&C 76 uses the term “sons of God” in this same context, to describe receiving a full inheritance from God the Father:

“56 They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; 57 And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son.

58 Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God— 59 Wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to

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<sup>95</sup> Alva G. Huffer, *Systematic Theology* page 390.

<sup>96</sup> *NKJV Greek English Interlinear New Testament* page 663.

come, all are theirs and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's."<sup>97</sup>

George A. Smith also commented on this concept in the New Testament:

“Says John, when speaking of our Savior, ‘He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.’ [John 1:11–12] Power was given them to become the sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ; hence the principles of exaltation were clearly illustrated by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, yet the people would not receive them.”<sup>98</sup>

## DID BRIGHAM YOUNG CONTRADICT HIMSELF?

**“Why did Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and other believers in Adam-God on occasions speak as though Adam isn’t God?”**

The reality is that when the Endowment ceremony was first administered with Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael, until Michael was identified as God the Father by Brigham Young in 1852, they viewed Adam’s Father Jehovah in the Endowment as God, and Michael as a Joint-heir of Exaltation.

This original understanding of the Endowment, and the fact that Creation Jehovah acted in the place of God while God the Father was

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<sup>97</sup> D&C 76:56–59.

<sup>98</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 2 <18 March 1855> page 213.

in mortality as Adam, are decent reasons why at times Brigham Young and others spoke of Adam's Father Jehovah as God. Heber C. Kimball on one occasion preached:

“Do you suppose you are going to the earth that Adam came from? That Eloheim came from? Where **Jehovah the Lord** came from? No. When you have learned to become obedient to the Father that dwells upon this earth, to the Father and God of this earth, and obedient to the messengers He sends — when you have done all that, remember you are not going to leave this earth. You will never leave it until you become qualified, and capable, and capacitated to become a father of an earth yourselves.”<sup>99</sup>

Another factor to consider in reading sermons by Brigham Young and his worthy contemporaries who believed in Adam-God is they didn't always feel it was necessary to explicitly lay out Adam-God, even though they believed in it. On one occasion Brigham preached:

“**Adam had been with the Lord** and had lived with him upon an earth like this and had been faithful and overcome, and had received his body and was resurrected. He was well acquainted with the Lord and was one of his mess mates. He had eaten and drunk with him and had lived with him from generation to generation and in many worlds, probably while many had come into and gone out of existence.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <14 November 1852> page 356.

<sup>100</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 April 1855> page 936.

Even though in the above quotation Brigham identified Adam and “The Lord” as separate individuals, like Heber C. Kimball he also recognized Adam was a resurrected being from a previous world. If you read the previous page of the discourse, Brigham makes it plain that he was not explicitly laying out his views about the identity of God to the audience of his discourse, but just was “hint[ing] at a few leading ideas so that we may learn how to learn and know God”:

“As for my explaining and setting the subject [of knowing God] before the people in its fullness, I do not undertake the task this evening, but I wish to hint at a few leading ideas so that we may learn how to learn and know God, and what we shall know if we do know him. Still further, I wish to hint at a few of the leading principles pertaining to the knowledge of God and the influence of his spirit upon the people and they not understand it. ...we can learn who he is from the prophets and what character he was at the time of his incarnation and when he went to his father. But this is for you to believe or disbelieve as you please, for if I were to say who he was I have no doubt but there would be many that would say perhaps it is so and perhaps it is not.”<sup>101</sup>

Still, if a person continues reading in the sermon, Brigham explains his views further:

**“Well now who is the father of our spirits?** I do not design to go into any mysteries or to take up worldly sciences to any great extent, but suppose I were to take

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<sup>101</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 April 1855> page 935.



up a few of them, I should be like the rest of you: tell what I know according to what I understand and believe. And then if I am wrong I should be glad if God or some man upon the earth would correct me and set me right and tell me what it is and how it is.

*I did take the liberty to tell this once and I told it in a way that I did not get to their understandings and I suppose I take the same course this evening and you do not understand. But you have the spirit of the Almighty with you to enable you to appreciate. Or shall I talk it right out as one man talketh and reasoneth with another and in this manner communicate to you my ideas upon the subject?*

For instance: we begin with the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our spirits. Who is he? *...If I were to set before you the principle directly to the truth and yet precisely as I understand pertaining to him with whom we have to do, I have no question or doubt but what it would be opposed to your traditions and the feelings of many of you.*

I will tell you what I think about some who will have something to do with us by and by, **when Michael blows his trumpet and calls the world together we shall then be before him and we shall be perfectly satisfied that he can pass all the judgment that we shall want**, and that the dominions of the wicked will want. And I have no doubt but the Saints that live and have lived from the days of Adam will be satisfied that he can give them kingdoms and power, thrones and dominions and influence in eternity. And when they get all that he can give they will be satisfied and say, 'it's enough.'

If we can get to him, the ancient of days, whose hair is like wool, a man of age, a man of experience, and can

learn of him to understand “I am that I am” we shall then hear him say, ‘I am your father and your leader. I will be your front and your rearward. I understand what this world is. I understand all about it. I have the government of the world in my hands although to a certain extent my opposer, my enemy, has gained a certain influence in the world.’ You will hear him say, ‘I am in the whirlwind at my pleasure. I ride upon the storms and I govern worlds. I set up one king and put another down and organize empires and overthrow them at my pleasure. I the Lord do all these things.’

...I tell you this as my belief about that personage who is called the ancient of days, the prince and so on. But I do not tell it because that I wish it to be established in the minds of others, though to me it is as clear as the sun. It is as plain as my alphabet. I understand it as I do the path to go home. I did not understand so until my mind became enlightened with the spirit and by the revelation of God, neither will you understand until our father in heaven reveals all these things unto you. To my mind and to my feelings those matters are all plain and easy to understand.”<sup>102</sup>

To Brigham there was no doubt in his mind as to the truthfulness of the Adam-God Doctrine, though he wondered if he was too open about it. And in the context of Divine Investiture, both Brigham Young and his associates were willing at times to speak of Adam’s Father (Jehovah), or even his Grandfather (Elohim), as our God. On one occasion Brigham said it wasn’t really a material issue, as we were all of one species and family:

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<sup>102</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 April 1855> pages 936–937, emphasis and italics added.

“Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species — of one family — and Jesus Christ is also of our species.”<sup>103</sup>

On one occasion Heber C. Kimball also spoke of the Grandfather Elohim as God the Father:

“We have been taught that our Father and God, from whom we sprang, called and appointed his servants to go and organize an earth, and, among the rest, he said to Adam, ‘You go along also and help all you can; you are going to inhabit it when it is organized, therefore go and assist in the good work.’ It reads in the Scriptures that the Lord did it, but the true rendering is, that the Almighty sent Jehovah and Michael to do the work. They were also instructed to plant every kind of vegetable, likewise the forest and the fruit trees, and they actually brought from heaven every variety of fruit, of the seeds of vegetables, the seeds of flowers, and planted them in this earth on which we dwell. And I will say more, the spot chosen for the garden of Eden was Jackson County, in the State of Missouri, where Independence now stands; it was occupied in the morn of creation by Adam and his associates who came with him for the express purpose of peopling this earth.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 4 <8 February 1857> page 217.

<sup>104</sup> Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 10 <27 June 1863> page 235.

This should not be seen as Heber C. Kimball not believing in the Adam-God Doctrine, as only one year earlier he wrote in his journal:

“The Lord told me that Adam was my father and that he was the God and father of all the inhabitants of this earth.”<sup>105</sup>

Heber C. Kimball also wasn’t shy of preaching Adam-God in his public sermons. In 1856 he preached:

“I have learned by experience that there is but one God that pertains to this people, and He is the God that pertains to this earth — the first man. That first man sent his own Son to redeem the world, to redeem his brethren; his life was taken, his blood shed, that our sins might be remitted.”<sup>106</sup>

Another individual who believed in and defended the Adam-God Doctrine, yet appeared to recognize not only Adam, but also Elohim and Jehovah as Gods to us is Samuel W. Richards. In an article published in December 1853 defending the Adam-God Doctrine he wrote:

“By the first man, Adam, came death, the triumph of evil; and by the second [man], came life everlasting, the triumph of good. Each was necessary in the order he appeared; if the first Adam had not performed his part, the second [Jesus] could not have had his work to do. Both acted the part assigned to them, in a most God-like

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<sup>105</sup> *On the Potter’s Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball* <30 April 1862> page 176.

<sup>106</sup> Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 4 <29 June 1856> page 1.

manner, and the Great Eloheim accepted the work at their hands as his own, 'for by the power of my Spirit created I them; yea, all things, both spiritual and temporal: firstly, spiritual — secondly, temporal, which is the beginning of my work; and again, firstly temporal — and secondly spiritual, which is the last of my work.' [D&C 29:31–32] Thus the great I AM owns all things — the temporal and the spiritual, the justice and the mercy, to be His own work. Then may not Adam be a God, as well as any of his sons, inasmuch as he has performed the work to which the Great Eloheim appointed him?

...Michael, having accomplished the work committed to him, pertaining to this world, delivers up an account of his stewardship over the same, to that character represented as Yahovah in the creation of the world, who reigns in unison with those upon the earth, until his work is fully accomplished — till the last great contest with the enemy, who has been released for a little season, is won; then he in turn delivers up the kingdom to the great Eloheim, that in the language of the Apostle, 'God may be all in all'.

The final surrender, we are to bear in mind, does not detract from the God-like power and dominion of our first Parent, nor of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Patriarchial order of government, each and every ruler is independent in his sphere, his rule extending to those below, and not to those above him, in the same order. While the God of unnumbered worlds is acknowledged to be his God and Father, Adam still maintains his exalted position at the head of all those who are saved from among the whole family of man; and he will be God over all those who are made Gods from among men. Each and every God will be honoured and adored by those over whom he reigns as a God, without any violation of the laws of heaven — without any encroachment upon that command which saith, 'thou

shalt have no other Gods before me,' [Exodus 20:3] for the glory and honour of all true Gods constitutes the glory, honour, power, and dominion of the great Eloheim, according to His own order of government."<sup>107</sup>

In the above editorial Samuel W. Richards attempted to defend Adam being our God while affirming that Elohim and Jehovah also are Gods above us, and that because "all true Gods" are united in "glory and honour" the recognition of multiple Gods did not violate the commandment "thou shalt have no other Gods before me." This appears to be a proto understanding of Divine Investiture, recognizing the union of the Gods in sharing their glory and honor.

Brigham Young similarly had these ideas in remarking that all "our Fathers" before us have all had to be tried and tested to refuse evil, choose good, hate iniquity, and love truth:

"The Lord knows all things; man should know all things pertaining to this life, and to obtain this knowledge it is right that he should use every feasible means; and I do not hesitate to say that the stage can, in a great degree, be made to subserve this end. It is written, 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' Refuse evil, choose good, hate iniquity, love truth. **All this our Fathers have done before us; I do not particularly mean father Adam, or his Father;** I do not particularly mean Abraham, or Moses, the Prophets, or Apostles, **but I mean our Fathers who have been exalted for millions of years previous to Adam's time.** They have all passed through the same ordeals we are now passing

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<sup>107</sup> Samuel W. Richards, *Millennial Star* vol. 15 <10 December 1853> pages 802–803.

through, and have searched all things, even to the depths of hell.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* vol. 9 <6 March 1862> page 243, emphasis added.

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