

ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

Brigham Young:

“I have had many revelations: I have seen and heard for myself, and know that these things are true, and nobody on earth can disprove them.... What I know concerning God... I have received from the heavens.” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 433)

“Some have grumbled because I believe our God to be so near to us as Father Adam. There are many who know that doctrine to be true.” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, p. 331)

Brigham Young:

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to *one particular doctrine* which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely that *Adam is our Father and God... He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He, with the help of his brethren, brought it into existence. Then he said, ‘I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh....’* (See Fig. #16)

Joseph Fielding Smith:

We hear a lot of people talk about Adam passing through mortality and the resurrection on another earth and then coming here to live and die again. Well, that is a contradiction of the word of the Lord for a resurrected being does not die*... because the spirit and the body become inseparably connected in the resurrection. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 91)

* Brigham Young taught that Adam and Eve did not die. (See John Nuttall Journal, p. 97; also October 8, 1854, sermon, p. 87.)

especially upon theologians, because of the little knowledge they possess about man being on the earth, about the earth itself, about our Father in heaven, his Son Jesus Christ, the order of heavenly things, the laws by which angels exist, by which the worlds were created and are held in existence, &c. How pleased we would be to place these things before the people if they would receive them! How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely that Adam is our father and God—I do not know, I do not know, I care nothing about it. Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him, and after it was made he and his companions came here. He brought one of his wives with him, and she was called Eve, because she was the first woman upon the earth. Our Father Adam is the man who stands at the gate and holds the keys of everlasting life and salvation to all his children who have or who ever will come upon the earth. I have been found fault with by the ministers of religion because I have said that they were ignorant. But I could not find any man on the earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith. Is it a great mystery that the earth exists? Is it a great mystery, that the world can not solve, that man is on the earth? Yes, it is; but to whom? To the ignorant—those who know nothing about it. It is no mystery to those who understand. Is it a mystery to the Christian world that Jesus is the Son of God, and still the son of man? Yes it is, it is hidden from them, and this fulfils the Scripture—"If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," who have no faith, and who pay no attention to the Spirit of God. These things are called mysteries by the people because they know nothing about them, just like laying hands on the sick. Is it a mystery that fever should be rebuked and the sick healed by the laying on of the hands of a man who is endowed with authority from God and has

My brother said that God is as we are. He did not mean those words to be literally understood. He meant simply, that in our organization we have all the properties in embryo in our bodies that our Father has in his, and that literally, morally, socially, by the spirit and by the flesh we are his children. Do you think that God, who holds the eternities in his hands and can do all things at his pleasure, is not capable of sending forth his own children, and forming this flesh for his own offspring? Where is the mystery in this? We say that Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. Who is he? He is Michael, a great prince, and it was said to him by Eloheim, "Go ye and make an earth." What is the great mystery about it? He came and formed the earth. Geologists tell us that it was here millions of years ago. How do they know? They know nothing about it. But suppose it was here, what of it? Adam found it in a state of chaos, unorganized and incomplete. Philosophers, again, in talking of the development of the products of the earth, for instance, in the vegetable kingdom, say the little fibres grew first, then the larger vegetation. When this preparatory stage was completed then came the various orders of the animal creation; and finally man appeared. No matter whether these notions are true or not, they are more or less speculative. Adam came here and got it up in a shape that would suit him to commence business. What is the great mystery about it? None, that I have seen. The mystery in this, as with miracles, or anything else, is only to those who are ignorant. Father Adam came here, and then they brought his wife. "Well," says one, "Why was Adam called Adam?" He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He, with the help of his brethren, brought it into existence. Then he said, "I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this in a mortal state. I was faithful. I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh, that their spirits may have a house, a tabernacle or a dwelling place as mine has, and where is the mystery?" Now for mother Eve. The evil principle always has and always will exist. Well, a certain character came along, and said to Mother Eve, "The Lord has told you that you must not do so and so, for if you do you shall surely die. But I tell you that if you do not do this you will never know good from evil, your eyes will never be opened, and you may live on the earth forever and ever, and you will never know what the Gods know." The devil told the truth, what is the mystery about it? He is doing it to-day. He is telling one or two truths and mixing them with a thous-

Figure 16 — Deseret News, June 18, 1873

Question #175: Which of the two Church Presidents is teaching truth about Adam?

Brigham Young

Joseph Fielding Smith

Joseph Fielding Smith:

“President Young is quoted — *in all probability* the sermon was erroneously transcribed—as having said: ‘Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth....’ Another ambiguous statement from President Young — also, *quite likely*, not recorded exactly as he said it — is torn from its context and used by enemies of the truth to make it appear that he believed something entirely different from the whole burden of all his other teachings. It is ‘When the virgin Mary conceived....’ ” [Fig. #17].

Question #176: Are the statements in Fig. #17 “torn from [their] context to make it appear that Brigham Young believed something different from all his other teachings?” (Answer this after reading the next three sermons.)

Yes

No

Brigham Young:

February 19, 1854:

Who did beget [Jesus Christ]? 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 that the Holy Ghost is God the father, which is inconsistent, and contrary to all 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 Elohim. (See Fig. #18)

October 8, 1854 (See Fig. #19)

But let us turn our attention to the God with which we have to do. I tell you simply, he is our father; the God and the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the father of our spirits.... I tell you more, *Adam is the father of our spirits*. He had lived upon an earth; he did abide his creation, and did honor to his calling and priesthood, and obeyed his master or Lord, and probably many of his wives did the same and they lived, and died upon an earth and then were resurrected again to immortality and eternal life.... Father Adam was a resurrected being, with his wives and posterity, and in the Celestial kingdom they were crowned with glory, immortality, and

read me." I was trying to think of the place where God is not, but it is impossible, unless you can find empty space; and there I believe He is not. If you can find such a place, it will become useful for a hiding place to those who wish to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, in the great day of accounts. I will close this sermon, as I intend to preach another before I present the subject more particularly wish to speak upon. My next sermon will be to both Saint and sinner. One thing has remained a mystery in this kingdom up to this day. It is in regard to the character of the well-beloved Son of God, upon which subject the Elders of Israel have conflicting views. Our God and Father in Heaven, is a being of tabernacle, or, in other words, He has a body, with parts the same as you and I have; and is capable of showing forth His works to organized beings, as, for instance, in the world in which we live, it is the result of the knowledge and infinite wisdom that dwell in His organized body. His son Jesus Christ has become a personage of tabernacle, and has a body like his father. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Lord, and issues forth from Himself, and may properly be called God's minister to execute His will in immensity; being called to govern by His influence and power; but He is not a person of tabernacle as we are, and us our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ are. The question has been, and is often, asked, who it was that bore the Son of the Virgin Mary. The infidel world have concluded that it was the Apostles wrote about his father and mother be true, and the present marriage disclaiming acknowledged by Christendom be correct, then Christians must believe that God is the father of our incarnation, in the person of Jesus Christ! The infidel fraternity teach that to their disciples. I will tell you how it is. Our

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earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came in with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is MICHAEL, the first-born, the ANGEL OF DAYS, about whom holy men have written and spoken—He is our Father and God, and the only God with whom we have to do. Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or non-professing, must hear it, and will know it sooner or later. They came arranged in their order the herbs of the field, the trees, the apple, the peach, the plum, the pear, and every other fruit that is desirable and good for man; the seed was brought from another sphere, and planted in this world. The thistle, the thorn, the briar, and the obnoxious weed did not appear until after the earth was cursed. When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their bodies became mortal from its effects, and therefore their offspring were mortal. When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his Father in Heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over-riches of mankind. However, I have told you the truth as far as I have gone. I have heard men preach upon the divinity of Christ, and ex-All Scripturalists, and approved theologians who were considered exemplary for piety and education, have undertaken to expound on this subject, in every age of the Christian era; and after they have done all, they are obliged to conclude by exclaiming "great is the mystery of godliness, and tell nothing."

It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahorah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organized element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Again, they will try to tell how the divinity of Jesus is joined to his humanity, and exhaust all their mental faculties, and wind up with this profound language, as describing the soul of man, "it is an immaterial substance!" What a learned idea! Let us, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and this is our Father in Heaven. Now let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will bore their salvation or damnation.

I have given you a few leading items upon this subject, but a great deal more remains to be told. Now, remember from this time forth, and for ever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon this subject, when I replied, to this effect—"if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be very dangerous to baptize and convert them, lest he should beget children, people, bringing the Elders into great difficulties."

Treasure up these things in your hearts. In the Bible, you have read the things I have told you to-night; but you have not known that you did read. I have told you no more than you are conversant with; but what do the people in Christendom, with the Bible in their hands, know about this subject? Comparatively nothing.

I will now again take up the subject of tithing. The brethren have done well. They have been willing and obedient, no people could have been more so; for this I thank my Father in Heaven. I could not wish a people to work more kindly in the role of Jesus than this people do; the ye grows more and more cast to them. It seems that every man will not only pay his tithing, but give all he has, if the Lord requires it; still I see where in they may do better. I asked the people to day to assist to pay our Church liabilities. The offer of three or four toke of oxen only, we do not want; but I will lay before you what we wish you to do. By the manifesto which has been read, you have learned the precise situation of the property of the Church. What has incurred this debt? Why does it exist in the shape in which it now appears? And wherein could we have obtained the difficulty, and done better? A fourth part of the money already paid out, did not come in upon tithing. This money we have had to borrow in order to keep the public works in progress. You may say, wherein could we have done better, for we have paid our tithing punctually? But has that brother, who sent \$1000 back to the

Figure 17

Brigham Young, April 9, 1852, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1

eternal lives, with thrones, principalities and powers; and it was said to him it is your right to organize the elements; and to your creations and posterity there shall be no end.... Our spirits and the spirits of all the human family were begotten by Adam and born of Eve. (Brigham Young Papers, Ms d 1234, Church Historian's Office, as published in Adam Is God?, p. 12)

October 8, 1861:

Some years ago I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our father and God, that will be a cause to many of the Elders of Israel because of their folly. With regard to it they yet grovel in darkness and will. It is one of the most glorious revelations of the economy of heaven, yet the world holds it [in] derision. Had I revealed the doctrine of baptism for the dead instead [of]

Joseph Smith there are men around me who would have ridiculed the idea until dooms day. But they are ignorant and stupid like the dumb ass. ("A Few Words of Doctrine," Brigham Young Collection, Church Historian's Office, as published in *Adam Is God?*, p. 22)

Question #177: Is there any question about Brigham Young's meaning in these discourses?

Yes

No

Answer Question #176 now.

Preface, *Discourses of Brigham Young*:

"In this book Brigham Young is allowed to speak for himself.... This book was made possible because Brigham Young secured stenographic reports of his addresses. As he traveled among the people, reporters accompanied him. All that he said was recorded. Practically all of these discourses... were published in the *Journal of Discourses*.... The public utterances of few great historical figures have been so faithfully and fully preserved." (p. vi)

Apostle Mark E. Petersen, 1976:

"Elder Charles C. Rich... was present on a day [April 9, 1852] when President Young gave an address that was wrongly reported as saying Adam was Deity.... Elder Rich referred to the misquotation as it appears in the *Journal of Discourses*, and in his own hand he wrote the... correct statement.... (This signed statement is in the hands of the Church Historian).... the mistake is obvious and was quickly noted by Elder Rich who was present and heard the sermon. Hence the correction that was made." (*Adam: Who Is He?*, pp. 16-17)

Question #178: What is Mr. Petersen's evidence that the *Journal of Discourses* "wrongly reported" Brigham Young?

"The mistake was quickly noted by Elder Rich who was _____ and _____ the sermon."

Deseret Weekly, May, 1852:

"Elder C.C. Rich arrived on Wednesday, the 21st of April, in company with 13 others... direct from San Bernardino...."

Apostle Mark Petersen, 1979:

"Elder Charles C. Rich was *not* present on.... April 9, 1852... Elder Rich returned [from California] April 21.... [the] son of Elder Charles C. Rich [corrected the statement] in his own hand.... In this same statement Ben E. Rich wrote 'As corrected above is what

in a fellow laborer of the same, forget him, as to say the Father
forget him. Who must forget him? His Father, and his Father is in
God, and the Father of our spirits; and he is the Father of the dead,
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is
Father Adam; Michael, the Contender of days. Was he a Father?
He was! Was he a Mother? He had. How to say that the
Lion of God was forgotten 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 Ancient, and Contender.

I discerned this erroneous doctrine a year ago in a
fall conference. I was struck when a point was made
some of our best Elders, as to who was the Father of the Son of Man,
pertaining to the flesh. Some considered it was the Holy Ghost,

Figure 18 Brigham Young Papers — Msf, 219, #81, p. 7, Church Archives — Courtesy of Sandra Tanner

Prest. Young said, as testified to me by my father, C.C. Rich.' ”
(Adam: Who Is He?, pp. 16-17)

Question #179: Is Ben Rich's "correction" concerning the sermon valid as evidence? Note: (1) He quoted his father who didn't hear the sermon (2) He himself was not even born until five years after Brigham Young preached it.

Yes No

Rodney Turner, Professor of Ancient Scripture, BYU:

Was Brigham Young misquoted?... There is not the slightest evidence from Brigham Young, or any other source, that either his original remarks on April 9, 1852, or any of his subsequent statements were ever misquoted in the official publications of the Church.... In light of Brigham Young's attitude toward the errors of others, and in view of the division created by his remarks concerning Adam, it would be stretching one's credulity to the breaking point to believe that he would have remained silent had he been misquoted.... The complete absence of any real evidence to the contrary obliges the writer to conclude that Brigham Young has not been misquoted in the official publications of the Church. ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," M.A. thesis, BYU, August 1953, pp. 45-47)

Question #180: (Refer to Fig. #16). Which best describes Brigham Young's discourse of June 18, 1873?

- Brigham Young was concerned that people misunderstood statements about Adam.
- Brigham Young lamented over the disbelief which existed among the Latter-day Saints concerning his teachings.

Question #181: Does it appear that Joseph Fielding Smith wanted to discredit Brigham Young's teachings by saying that his sermons were "in all probability erroneously transcribed?"

Yes No

Question #182: Is it "probable" that Brigham Young's April 9, 1852 sermon (Fig. #17) was misquoted when, twenty-one years later (Fig. #16), he was still declaring that Adam was God our Father?

Yes No

Millennial Star, December 10, 1853:

"Adam, the Father and God of the Human Family"

"The above sentiment appeared in Star No. 48, a little to the sur-

be no end, but you shall add Kingdom to Kingdom
and ~~thousands to thousands~~; and still behold the most blessed
of unorganized matter. Adam there was a resurrection
being; and I re-asked;

Our spirits and the spirits of all the human
family were begotten by Adam, and born of him.
~~How are we going to know this?~~
I re-asked it.

And I re-asked that Adam came into the garden
of Eden, and did actually eat of the fruit that he himself
planted; and I re-asked there was a previous understand-
ing. And the whole plan was previously calculated, by
the garden of Eden was made, that he would indeed be

prise of some of its readers: and while the sentiment may have appeared blasphemous to the ignorant; it has no doubt given rise to some serious reflection with the more candid and comprehensive mind... *Adam is really God! And why not?*" (Vol. 15, p. 801)

"...every Knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is the God of the whole earth. Then will the words of the Prophet Brigham, when speaking of Adam, be fully realized — 'He is our Father and our God, and the *only* God with whom we have to do.' " (*Ibid.*, Vol. 17, p. 195)

"Father Adam, our God, let all Israel extol, and Jesus our Brother, who died for us all...." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 17, p. 320)

See Figures #20-22.

In an 1870 meeting, 'Elder Geo. Q. Cannon fully endorsed the doctrine that father Adam was our God and Father....' Indeed, 'the above doctrine had been *revealed* to him, so that he *knew* it was true....' In another meeting of the School three years later, Daniel Wells of the First Presidency asked his colleagues whether they endorsed the 'doctrine pertaining to Adam being our Father and our God.' He personally 'bore a *powerful testimony* to the *truth* of the doctrine, remarking that if ever he had received a testimony of any doctrine in this church he had of the truth of this. The Endowments plainly teach it and the Bible and other revelations are full of it.' Others who 'approved or endorsed' the doctrine at the meeting were Henry Grow, O.B. Huntington, John Lyon, George B. Wallace, and Joseph F. Smith, the latter stating that the 'enunciation of that doctrine gave him great joy.' (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, p. 31)

President Heber C. Kimball:

"The Lord told me that Adam was my father and that he was the God and father of all the inhabitants of this earth." (*Ibid*, Spring 1982, p. 27)

Journal of Samuel Rogers:

"April 16, 1852, Conference commenced on the 6 and continued until the 11.... during the time of the Conference President Brigham Young said that our spirits ware [sic] begotten before that Adam came to the Earth.... he said that *Adam was the only God that we would have*, and that Christ was not begotten of the Holy Ghost, but of the Father Adam." (Vol. 1, p. 179 original, BYU Library, Special Collections.)

Wilford Woodruff Journal, February 19, 1854:

"[Brigham Young] said that our GOD was Father Adam. He was the Father of the Savior Jesus Christ — our God was no more or less than ADAM." (See Fig. #23)

Among all the evils which are entailed upon the human family there is one which has so deeply pervaded the human mind, that it is difficult for the Saints and Elders always to avoid its evil effects—that is, national distinction. Everything of this kind should be done away from among the Saints; and only those who are the most diligent to keep the commandments of God, and teach others to do so, should have our preference.

He who has made of one blood all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth, has undertaken an effectual cure of this evil by gathering the honest in heart from all nations to Zion. There they become one people, the people of God, uniting their efforts to build up His kingdom, throwing off their national distinctions, and imbibing from each other whatever is excellent and praiseworthy, no matter whatever nation he, she, or they may be from who possess it, while that which tends to division, discord, or death is studiously put away. Thus union and confidence are restored, and the Saints progress in solving the great heavenly problem of becoming *one*—a people unto God.

When an Elder is appointed to preside or labour in any Mission or Conference, it matters not which of the United Kingdoms he may be of, let the Saints receive him affectionately as the minister of God, and he shall be made a messenger of life unto them; and thus let us teach the Saints here in their own native land; to be diligent in overcoming and breaking down all these middle walls of partition which now tend to divide and distract, that the Saints may manifest when they get to Zion that they have been taught of God, and are worthy to be numbered with His people. It is necessary that the Saints be instructed in all their duties, that they may be faithful when they have not the Elders and Teachers constantly with them, that they may know how to lean upon the Lord in a dark and cloudy day. I feel that if I could, I would gladly carry them from here to the Valley, so that they might escape all the trials of the journey. But this is not the will of the Lord. They must have experience, they must be tried, they must learn for themselves whether they have got faith to stand and not be shaken from their foundation. It is because that many have not been sufficiently

tried, that they are so easily persuaded to leave the Valleys, after being gathered from Babylon, to go in pursuit of gold or other favourite objects. If they had passed through what those have who founded and established the gathering places in the mountains, they would be so thankful for such a place of rest from the persecution of their enemies, that nothing but a high sense of duty to their fellow men could induce them to leave their peaceful, blessed homes which God had there given them.

Concerning the item of doctrine alluded to by Elder Caffall and others, viz., that Adam is our Father and God, I have to say do not trouble yourselves, neither let the Saints be troubled about that matter.

The Lord has told us in a revelation which he gave through the Prophet Joseph, January 19, 1841—"I deign to reveal unto my Church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times." (Doc. and Cov. sec. ciii. 13.) I would like to know where you will find Scripture to prove those things by, which have never before been revealed. Some seem to feel it their bounden duty to prove everything which belongs to our faith from the Bible, but I do not, and I will excuse you from all obligation to prove this from the old Scriptures, for you cannot, if you try. You may bring much collateral evidence from the Bible and other revelations that will dissipate objections, and serve to strengthen the position, but to directly and substantially prove it, as the world require, and as we can do the first principles, it will puzzle you to do it, and from henceforth we may expect more and more of the word of the Lord giving us instructions which are nowhere written in the old Scriptures. If we feel ourselves, or teach the Saints or the people generally, that we are only to believe that which can be proved from the Scripture, we shall never know much of the Lord ourselves, nor be able to teach the children of men to any very considerable extent. If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for this objection to be removed, tell such, the Prophet and Apostle Brigham has declared it, and that it is the word of the Lord. That is vastly stronger proof than Christendom can give for much that they profess to believe! Tell the Saints that if this stone does not

JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES.

THE SAINTS SHOULD PREPARE FOR FUTURE EMERGENCIES—EVIL SPIRITS—THEIR POWER AND ORGANIZATION—THE CHAIN OF THE PRIESTHOOD—ANGELS ARE MINISTERING SPIRITS.

A Discourse by President Heber C. Kimball, in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, June 29, 1856.

On account of the breeze that is playing beneath this shade, brother Brigham thought I had better put on my hat, but I never feel as though I wanted to wear my hat when he is present. I consider that the master should wear his hat, or hang it on the peg that God made for it, which is his head, of course.

I feel tolerably well as to health today, but I suffer much from bad colds, and have to be very careful, for I am often confined in my house with colds. I took a very violent cold here last Sabbath, by sitting in the draft, and I have not felt very well since, still I feel ambitious in the cause that I have espoused. The things concerning which brother Grant has this day been speaking are good, and I believe in his doctrines because they are true, especially in regard to our being one. I do know most definitively that unless we are one we are not Christ's; and I also know that if we are not one
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with brother Brigham, our leader, we are not one with Christ. Yes, I know this, and my feelings are and have been with brother Brigham all the time.

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. That Son called twelve men and ordained them to be Apostles, and when he departed the keys of the kingdom were deposited with three of those twelve, viz.: Peter, James, and John. Peter held the keys pertaining to that Presidency, and he was the head.

How did these keys come to us? Did not Peter, James, and John, ordain Joseph Smith our Prophet? They did. And Joseph Smith called and ordained brother Brigham, brother
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Figure 21
Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, Heber C. Kimball, June 29, 1856

birth of that man. He was fore-ordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation, as much so as Pharaoh was fore-ordained to be a wicked man, or as was Jesus to be the Saviour of the world because he was the oldest son in the family.

Abraham was ordained to be the father of the faithful,—that is, he was ordained to come forth at a certain period; and when he had proved himself faithful to his God, and would resist the worship of idols, and trample them under his feet in the presence of their king, and set up the worship of the true God, he obtained the appellation of “father of the faithful.” “For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.” He knew, millions of years before this world was framed, that Pharaoh would be a wicked man. He saw—he understood; his work was before him, and he could see it from the beginning to the end. And so scrutinizing, penetrating, and expanded are his visions and knowledge, that not even a hair of our head can fall to the ground unnoticed by him. He foreknew what Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, would do. Joseph was foreordained to be the temporal saviour of his father's house, and the seed of Joseph are ordained to be the spiritual and temporal saviours of all the house of Israel in the latter days. Joseph's seed has mixed itself with all the seed of man upon the face of the whole earth. The great majority of those who are now before me are the descendants of that Joseph who was sold. Joseph Smith, junior, was foreordained to come through the loins of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and so on down through the Prophets and Apostles; and thus he came forth in the last days to be a minister of salvation, and to hold the keys of the last dispensation of the fulness of times.

The whole object of the creation of

this world is to exalt the intelligencies that are placed upon it, that they may live, endure, and increase for ever and ever. We are not here to quarrel and contend about the things of this world, but we are here to subdue and beautify it. Let every man and woman worship their God with all their heart. Let them pay their devotions and sacrifices to him, the Supreme, and the Author of their existence. Do all the good you can to your fellow-creatures. You are flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone. God has created of one blood all the nations and kingdoms of men that dwell upon all the face of the earth: black, white, copper-coloured, or whatever their colour, customs, or religion, they have all sprung from the same origin; the blood of all is from the same element. Adam and Eve are the parents of all pertaining to the flesh, and I would not say that they are not also the parents of our spirits.

You see some classes of the human family that are black, uncouth, uncomely, disagreeable and low in their habits, wild, and seemingly deprived of nearly all the blessings of the intelligence that is generally bestowed upon mankind. The first man that committed the odious crime of killing one of his brethren will be cursed the longest of any one of the children of Adam. Cain slew his brother. Cain might have been killed, and that would have put a termination to that line of human beings. This was not to be, and the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the flat nose and black skin. Trace mankind down to after the flood, and then another curse is pronounced upon the same race—that they should be the “servant of servants;” and they will be, until that curse is removed; and the Abolitionists cannot help it, nor in the least alter that decree. How long is that race to endure the dreadful curse that is upon them? That curse will remain upon them,

Figure 22

Journal of Discourses, Vol. 7, Brigham Young, October 9, 1859

On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout:

“Another meeting this evening. President B. Young taught that Adam was the father of Jesus and the only God to us. That he came to this world in a resurrected [sic] body &c more hereafter.” (Vol. 2, p. 435)

Women of Mormondom, 1877:

“Adam is our Father and God. He is the God of the earth. So says Brigham Young.... He is the father of our elder brother, Jesus Christ—the father of him who shall also come as Messiah to reign. He is the father of the spirits as well as the tabernacles of the sons and daughters of man. Adam!... When Brigham Young proclaimed to the nations that Adam was our Father and God, and Eve, the mother of a world — both in a mortal and celestial sense — he made the most important revelation ever oracled to the race since the days of Adam himself. (pp. 179 & 196)

See Fig. #24

Abraham H. Cannon (son of President George Cannon):

... Father... asked me what I understood concerning Mary conceiving the Savior; and as I found no answer, he asked what was to prevent *Father Adam* from *visiting* and *overshadowing* the mother of Jesus. ‘Then,’ said I, ‘He must have been a resurrected Being.’ ‘Yes,’ said he ‘and through Christ is said to have been the first fruits of them that slept, yet the Savior said he did nothing but what he had seen His Father do, for He had the power to lay down His life and take it up again. Adam, though made of dust, was made, as Pres. Young said, of the dust of another planet than this.’ I was very much instructed by the conversation and this day’s services. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” March 10, 1888, Vol. 10, pp. 178-179; BYU)

John Nuttall, special secretary to President Young:

Prest Young was filled with the spirit of God and revelation and said....

‘Adam was an *immortal* being when he came on this earth, he had lived on an earth similar to ours, he had received the Priesthood and the keys thereof and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection... and was numbered with the Gods for such he became through his faithfulness, and had begotten all the spirits that was to come to this earth.... when this earth was organized by Eloheim, Jehovah and Michael who is Adam our common Father, Adam and Eve had the privilege to continue the work of progression, consequently came to this earth and commenced the great work of forming tabernacles for those spirits [which Eve bore] to dwell in.... *Father Adam’s oldest son (Jesus the Savior)* who is the heir of the family is *Father Adam’s first begotten in the spirit world*, who according to the flesh is the only begotten


Feb 15th I spent the time in school at-attended the children
 meeting in the evening near end brought were present &
 prayer & spoke & sang
 16th I spent the time at home during the day in school &
 The evening with the children of the 17th ward
 17th & 18th I spent the time trying to settle accounts
 19th  Sunday E. D. Woolley was called upon to
 preach a funeral sermon or rather upon the
 resurrection of the dead in some of the sermons had
 advanced some erroneous ideas concerning the resurrex
 Dr. H. Woolley had some incorrect ideas when he in
 closed President Young followed & made many good
 remarks he said that who should have the same benefit
 identical body that our spirits occupied while in this life
 our graves would literally be opened and our bodies come
 forth. The question was asked if children that died in
 infancy lost any thing He said No a person would not
 lose any thing they had not got. Children that died in
 infancy would be provided for in some way
 He said that our God was British Adam He
 was the Father of the Savior Jesus Christ. Our God was
 no more or less than ADAM. Michael the Archangel
 I attended meeting in the prayer circle in the evening & then
 went & preached to the 18th ward.
 20th I spent the day at home in school with my children
 21st I spent the day in the Council House Eldon ^{Payton} ~~Strombatt~~
 delivered a long and interesting address in the evening among
 his remarks he said when strong drink or any evil things
 bring a man down from his dignity to a brute it has no power
 to exalt him I spent the evening with the 12th ward. ^{Feb 21st}
 22nd I spent the day at home & attended meeting in the
 evening at the 17th ward with the children & had a good time
 23rd I spent the day at home with my children
 24th I spent the day at home in the Council House and had
 an interesting discourse from Eldon ~~Strombatt~~
 25th I spent the day at home with my children in school
 26th Sunday we have a severe snow storm through this day
 & spent the day at home
 27th The extra mail came into day brought states
 up to Dec 22nd containing the following news of the day
 Europe is in war. China in revolution Harpary took
 establishment burnd up at New York with many other
 things out of move

Figure 23

Wilford Woodruff's Journal, Feb. 19, 1854 — Courtesy of Sandra Tanner

as it is written. (In his divinity he having gone back into the spirit world and come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived for when Adam and Eve got through their work on this earth they did not lay their bodies down in the dust but returned to the spirit world from whence they came)' (Vol. 1, pp 21-24, BYU, see Fig. #25.)

Apostle Orson Pratt:

"Brigham Young says that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ, both of his Spirit and Body...." (See Fig. #26)

Jospeh Fielding Smith:

But the expression that [our Father] was the same character that was in the Garden of Eden [Fig. #17] has led to misunderstanding because of the implication which our enemies place upon it that it had reference to Adam. Unfortunately President Brigham Young is not here to make his meaning in this regard perfectly clear." (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 102)

Rodney Turner:

It is true that the original discourse of April 9, 1852, could be taken in more than one way; and if he had never mentioned the subject again his actual meaning would be a moot point. However, he did mention the subject again, many times. Therefore the liklihood of misunderstanding him, in view of his subsequent statements through the years, becomes more remote. ("The Position of Adam in LDS Scripture and Theology," p. 36)

Question #183: After reviewing all quotes thus far, list at least six references that state Brigham Young taught that Adam was our God, the Father of Jesus.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (1) _____ | (4) _____ |
| (2) _____ | (5) _____ |
| (3) _____ | (6) _____ |

Question #184: The references you listed are

- "Implications of enemies" Statements of faithful Mormons

Wilford Woodruff Journal:

December 29, 1856:

"President Young made some remarks about [Apostle] Orson Pratt and said if he did not take a different course in his philosophy... he would not stay long in this Church."

January 27, 1860

(Meeting of the General Authorities in Brigham Young's Office):

... it has ever been a key with me that when the Prophet who leads presents a doctrine or principle or says thus saith the Lord I make

it a point to receive it even if it comes in contact with my tradition or views being well satisfied that the Lord would reveal the truth unto his prophet whom he has called to lead the Church before he would unto me, and the word of the Lord through the prophet is the End of the Law unto me....

Brother Orson Pratt, I wish to ask you one or two questions. You see that the spirit and doctrine which you possess is *entirely in opposition to the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and all who are present this evening*, and it chills the blood in our veins to hear your words and feel your spirit. Should *this* not be a guidance to you that you are *wrong*... Every man in this room who has a particle of the Spirit of God *knows* that President Young is a Prophet of God and that God sustains him and He has the Holy Spirit and *his doctrines are true*.... (As published in *Adam Is God?*, pp. 16-17)

Question #185: According to Wilford Woodruff, what was one “guide” to prove Orson Pratt “wrong”? (Fill in the blanks)

The doctrine which he possessed was “entirely in _____ to the _____ and the _____ of the _____.”

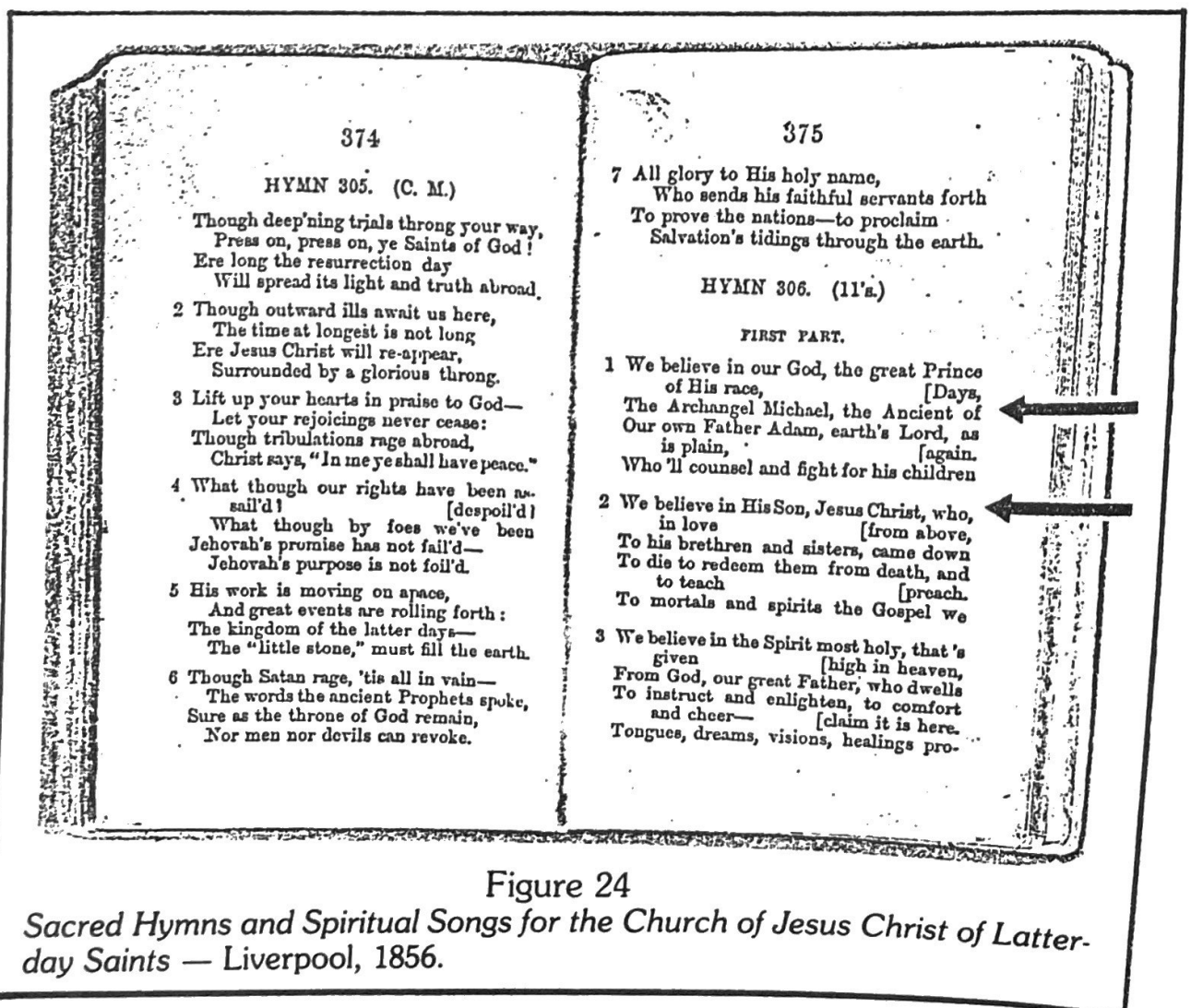


Figure 24

Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — Liverpool, 1856.

He had to surrender the Pleistocene and still
 keep things and had been faithful in all
 things and gained his reward in the
 excitement and as a crown with glory
 immortality and eternal love and more
 abundant with the gods for such he became
 through his faithfulness and had begotten all
 the spirits that was to be in the earth, and
 our common Mother who is the mother
 of all living creatures spirits in the celestial
 world, and when this world was organized by
 Elohim: Phad & Michael who is drawn our
 common Father, Adam & Eve had the privilege
 to continue the work of Progression, every man
 came to the earth and commenced the great
 work of forming terrestrial planets & spirits &
 dwellers, and when Adam and then, that
 scientific him had completed the Kingdom
 on earth he came to the earth and slept with
 all and became wife and spirit-child as
 is said by Moses the historian that the Lord
 caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and took
 from his ribs a rib and formed the woman
 that Adam called Eve - this should be inter-
 preted that the man Adam like all other men
 had the seed within him to propagate his
 species, but not the woman, she carried
 the seed but she does not produce it, every-
 thing else was taken from the side of branch
 of her father, then explains the mystery of Moses
 that says in regard to Adam and Eve,
 Adam & Eve when they were placed within
 earth were immortal being with flesh, bones
 and sinews, but upon partaking of the fruit of

the earth while in the garden and still
 the fruit of the tree became changed from
 immortal to mortal being with flesh & sinews
 though their minds as the rest of life
 Adam was not under temptation
 with the serpent of the forbidden fruit
 the man's mission was to be to gather
 the human race, the human race
 in Progression, not the man
 the Law of Sacrifice we have seen in
 of a spirit and man had the privilege and
 the first part of his work and the history of
 the people, this is a showing that Jesus
 came and died to bleed

Father Adam's oldest son Jesus the son
 who is the heir of the family in Father Adam
 first begotten in the spirit world, who was
 dying to the flesh is the only begotten as it
 is written (see his divinity in having
 gone back into the spirit world, and
 come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived
 for when Adam and Eve had their job
 with their work in the earth they did not

Figure 25

— John Nuttall Journal,
 February 7, 1877

Antagonistic. I see no necessity of rejecting Joseph's revelations, or going to war with the living ones, that is the nearest to us, but Pratt is like the Jew, who gambled the souls of the dead, but reject those that were the nearest to them. I do not see any contradiction or opposition between B. Young & J. Smith.

O. Pratt B. Young must have feelings towards me, I wish the brethren would point out to me where my pamphlet on "the Holy Spirit" is wrong.

J. Taylor when Bro. Brigham tells me a thing, I receive it as revelation, some things may be apparently contradictory, but are not really contradictory.

O. Pratt it was the Father of Jesus Christ that was talking to Adam in the garden. B. Young says that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ, both of his Spirit and Body in his teachings from the stand, Bro. Richards published in the Star of Great Salt Lake, that another person would come in the meridian of time, which was Jesus Christ.

A. Hyde David in spirit called Jesus Christ, Lord, how thou art his son! it would seem a contradiction, I went to Joseph and told him my ideas of the Omnipresence of the Spirit, he said it was very pretty, and it was got up very nice, and is a beautiful doctrine, but it only teaches one thing, I inquired what is it Bro. Joseph, he replied it is nothing.

J. Taylor spoke again of Christ is the first fruits of them that slept. There must be some discrepancy, he must have resigned his position, having a legitimate claim to a possession some where else, he ought not to be debarred from his rights, The power of God was sufficient to resuscitate Jesus immediately, and also the body of Adam.

A. Hyde We have come here to arrange that discourse, to the sanction of Bro. Young, that it may go forth under the sanction of Bro. Pratt. I am willing to put that discourse in a shape to recall or quote certain points of doctrine, not extended, but in an easy way to show reflection, and that truth has led him to make this confession, and to leave Bro. Young out as a dictator, and what would be satisfactory to Bro. Young. I am pleased with the courtesy extended by Bro. Young to Bro. Pratt, it is more than has been extended to me or others.

O. Pratt I have heard Brother Brigham say that Adam is the Father of our Spirits, and he came here with his redemptive body to pay for his own redemption, and I said to him, it leads to an endless number of spirits, which leads to sorrow and death, that is repelling to my feelings, even if it were not sustained by revelation, and I said to Bro. Pratt, so here my revelation saying that the body of Adam should remain to the end of this earth.

Figure 26

A photograph of the original manuscript of the meeting of the Council of the Twelve, April 5, 1860 — Courtesy of Sandra Tanner.

"Minutes of Council of the Twelve in Upper Room of Historian's Office," by Thomas Bullock (clerk), April 5, 1860, 10 AM (See Fig. #26):

Orson Hyde:

To acknowledge that this is the Kingdom of God, and that there is a presiding power, and to admit that he can advance incorrect doctrine, is to lay the ax at the root of the tree. Will he suffer His mouthpiece to go into error? No. He would remove him and place another there. Bro. Brigham may err in the price of a horse, or a House and lot, but in the revelations from God, where is the man that has given thus saith the Lord when it was not so? I cannot find one instance. David was led by his own lust, but the Lord will *not* suffer Brigham to introduce *incorrect* doctrine... he is the presiding authority of God on earth, then he is legitimate and everything opposed to him is not legitimate.

Erastis Snow:

It is given to the presiding officer to discern all things, and tell a man whether he is on the tract or not. When bro. Pratt feels a reluctance to credit bro. Brigham, he takes a course *opposite* the truth.

Orson Pratt:

In regard to Adam being our Father and God... I frankly say I have no confidence in it, although advanced by Brother Kimball in the stand.... One [revelation] says that Adam was formed out of the Earth, and the Lord put in his spirit, and another that he came with his body, flesh, and bones, there are *two contradictory revelations*... how do we know that in sixteen years time, all these revelations will be overturned, as *Joseph's now are*.... I have heard Brigham say that Adam is the Father of our spirits, and he came here with a resurrected body, to fall for his own children, and I said to him it leads to an endless number of falls which leads to sorrow and death; that is revolting to my feelings, even if it were sustained by revelation.

George Smith:

[What will be satisfactory to the Church will be for Orson Pratt] to acknowledge Brigham Young as President of the Church in the exercise of his calling. But he only acknowledges him as a poor drivelling fool, he preaches a doctrine opposed to Joseph, and all other revelations. *If Brigham Young is the President of the Church, he is an inspired man. If we have not an inspired man, then Orson Pratt is right*.....

John Taylor:

If that mouthpiece [Brigham Young] has not power to dictate, I would throw all Mormonism away. All that can be asked is to carry out the doctrine in his sermon. (Brigham Young Collection, Miscellaneous Papers, Church Historian's Office, transcript pub-

lished in *LDS Apostle Confesses Brigham Young Taught Adam-God Doctrine*)

Question #186: According to Orson Hyde, would Brigham Young be divinely led if he “advanced incorrect doctrine”?
 Yes No

Question #187: What was Orson Pratt’s central argument against President Young’s doctrine? (Fill in the blanks)

“There are two _____.”

Question #188: According to George Smith, what was the main issue at stake in the disagreement between Young and Pratt?

“If Brigham Young is the President of the Church he is an _____ . If he is not an _____ , then Orson Pratt is _____ .”

It is apparent that a substantial — and ultimately a dominant — number of Mormons rejected what Brigham Young held to be one of the ‘precious things of the kingdom.’ For Young *clearly* believed that Adam was the father of the spirits of mankind in addition to being the first procreator of mankind’s physical bodies; that Adam came to this earth as a resurrected and exalted being; that he ‘fell’ to a mortal state of existence in order to procreate mortal bodies, and that *Adam was the spiritual and physical father of Jesus Christ....* If one accepts at face value the sermons of President Young and his colleagues, and their successors, on Adam-God, it is apparent that official (or even quasi-official) teachings on the subject have undergone considerable change. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1982, p. 45)

President Joseph Fielding Smith:
...President Brigham Young did not believe and did not teach that Jesus Christ was begotten by Adam. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 105)

Apostle Bruce McConkie:
Yes, President Young *did* teach that Adam was the father of our spirits, and all the related things that the cultists ascribe to him. (See p. 6 of Fig. #28)

Question #189: In light of the available evidence, who is right?

President Smith

Apostle McConkie

See Figure #27

Question #190: (Refer to Fig. #27.) Did President Spencer Kimball use the same reasoning that Orson Pratt employed against Brigham Young a hundred years before, i.e. that the teaching was "not according to the scriptures"?

Yes

No

Adam-God Theory Denounced

The importance of teaching the "orthodox truth" of the gospel throughout the Church was emphasized by President Spencer W. Kimball during the priesthood session of conference Oct. 2.

He said, "We hope that you who teach in the various organizations, whether on the campuses or in our chapels, will always teach the orthodox truth.

"We warn you against the dissemination of doctrines which are not according to the scriptures and which are alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations. Such, for instance is the Adam-God theory.

"We denounce that theory and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this and other kinds of false doctrine."

Figure 27
Deseret News,
October 9, 1976
Church News Section, p. 11

President Heber C. Kimball:

"Just think of your position; you have heard the teachings and instructions of President Young, and his instructions are the word of God to us, and I know that every man and woman in this Church who rejects his testimony and the testimony of those he sends, rejects the testimony of God the Father." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 2)

Question #191: According to Heber Kimball, was rejecting Brigham Young's testimony rejecting God?

Yes

No

Question #192: (Refer to Figure #27.) When President Spencer Kimball said Brigham Young's teaching regarding Adam was "false doctrine," did he reject the "word of God"?

Yes

No

Question #193: Should you believe in a man as a true prophet once you have rejected his "testimony"?

Yes

No

Brigham Young:

Brother Orson Hyde referred to a few who complained about not getting revelations. I will make a statement here that has been brought against me.... that Brigham Young has said 'when he sends forth his *discourses* to the world they may call them Scripture.' I say now when they are copied and approved by me they are *as good scripture as is couched in this Bible*, and if you want to read revelation read the sayings of *him who knows the mind of God*.... (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, p. 264)

If I do not speak here by the power of God, if it is not revelation to you every time I speak to you here, I do not magnify my calling. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 141)

Question #194: According to Brigham Young, which is true?

- He expressed merely his own opinions in his discourses.
- His discourses could be called "Scripture" and were as authoritative as scripture in the Bible.

Question #195: From evidence presented thus far, which is accurate concerning Brigham Young's teaching on Adam?

- It was only a "theory" (Fig. #27)
- It was a doctrine which he claimed "God revealed" to him (Fig. #16)

Brigham Young:

"Some years ago, I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our father and God.... It is one of the most glorious revelations of the economy of heaven...." ("A Few Words of Doctrine," unpublished manuscript in the Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives, as cited in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1982, p. 29)

Question #196: If Brigham Young was a true prophet, why does the church today not accept his "glorious revelation" regarding Adam?

See Figure #28

Note: The next six questions refer to Figure #28 — a letter from Apostle Bruce McConkie to Eugene England, Associate Professor of English, BYU. (Pages 2-3 were omitted as they did not significantly deal with the subject at hand.)

Figure 28 — Page 1

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Council of the Twelve
47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

February 19, 1981

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Mr. Eugene England
C/O Honors Program
4012 Harold B. Lee Library
Provo, Utah 84602

B.P.M.

Dear Brother England:

This may well be the most important letter you have or will receive. It is written in reply to an undated letter from you which came in an envelope postmarked, September 4, 1980. Your letter enclosed a 19-page document which you had prepared under the title, "The Perfection and Progression of God: Two Spheres of Existence and Two Modes of Discourse."

In your letter and the article enclosed with it, you set forth the thesis that although God knows all things as pertaining to our sphere of existence, there are nonetheless other spheres beyond ours in which Deity continues to advance and progress in knowledge and truth. In espousing and explaining this philosophy you suppose you are harmonizing quotations from various of the early Brethren. Some of these statements emphatically say that God knows all things and has all power and others of them say that he is advancing in knowledge and understanding and is gaining new truths.

When your letter arrived I was aware of the subject material contained in it and in the enclosed article. Because I do not engage in controversy or discussion of divergent views, either orally or in writing, I simply dropped your letter in a drawer and did not bother to read it. Some four and a half months later, in January of this year, I did read your presentation for the first time. I was not at all pleased, but still thought I would have nothing to say to you on the subject.

Over the months various hearsay reports have come to me indicating that you are presenting and championing the views you sent to me. I have now reached the conclusion that it would be wise for me to depart from my usual custom and send you an answer to your letter. I do so out of respect for your parents, G. Eugene and Dora, and for your own personal well-being and for your guidance where your teachings and discussions with others are concerned.

Figure 28 — Page 4

Mr. Eugene England
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paragraph: "Will he one day learn something that will destroy the plan of salvation and turn man and the universe into an uncreated nothingness? Will he discover a better plan of salvation than the one he has already given to men in worlds without number?"

— Continued

I have been sorely tempted to say at this point that any who so suppose have the intellect of an ant and the understanding of a clod of miry clay in a primordial swamp--but of course I would never say a thing like that." I deliberately deleted the quoted sentence because it does not come out in print the way it was expressed by voice. It was said in such a tone as to draw laughter from the congregation and is of course, a normal use of hyperbole.

In that same devotional speech I said: "There are those who believe or say they believe that Adam is our father and our God, that he is the father of our spirits and our bodies, and that he is the one we worship." I, of course, indicated the utter absurdity of this doctrine and said it was totally false.

Since then I have received violent reactions from Ogden Kraut and other cultists in which they have expounded upon the views of Brigham Young and others of the early Brethren relative to Adam. They have plain and clear quotations saying all of the things about Adam which I say are false. The quotations are in our literature and form the basis of a worship system followed by many of the cultists who have been excommunicated from the Church. I also received, of course, your material in which you quote from Brigham Young and others of the early Brethren saying that God is progressing in knowledge.

I assume that you were aware of the foregoing quotations when you wrote me in September of 1980. In the October 1980 General Conference, without as yet having read your material, I said the following:

"True religion is found only where men worship the true and living God. False religion always results from the worship of false gods. Eternal life itself, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God, is available to those and those only who know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

"It is all the rage in this modern world to worship false gods of every sort and kind. There are those who bow before idols of wood and stone, and others who lisp their petitions to icons and images. There are those who worship cows and crocodiles, and others who acclaim Adam or Allah or Buddha as their Supreme Being.

"There are those who apply the names of Deity to some spirit essence that is immaterial, uncreated and unknowable and

Figure 28 — Page 5

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that fills the immensity of space and is everywhere and nowhere in particular present.

"And there are even those who champion the almost unbelievable theory that God is an Eternal Student enrolled in the University of the Universe where he is busily engaged in learning new truths and amassing new and strange knowledge that he never knew before.

"How belittling it is--it borders on blasphemy--to demean the Lord God Omnipotent by saying he is an idol, or an image, or an animal, or a spirit essence, or that he is ever learning but never able to come to a knowledge of all truth.

"It is the first principle of revealed religion to know the nature and kind of being that God is. As for us: 'We know [and testify] that there is a God in heaven, who is infinite

—Continued

and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them." (D&C 20:17.)

"This great God, the Lord Almighty, is a personage of tabernacle. He has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's." (D&C 130:22.) He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He has all power, knows all things, and, by the power of his Spirit, is in and through all things."

On Tuesday, February 17, 1981, I was the speaker at the BYU Devotional. My subject was "The Three Pillars of Eternity," under which heading I spoke of the creation, the fall and the atonement. With reference to the omnipotence and omniscience of God I said in that talk:

"Who is Elohim? He is God the Eternal Father. He is a glorified and exalted personage. He has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's. In the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He knows all things and has all power--not simply as pertaining to us or in some prescribed sphere or realm--but in the absolute, eternal, and unlimited sense. In the ultimate sense, he is the Creator. And anything you may have heard to the contrary, whether in the creeds of Christendom or the mouthings of intellectuals, who, in their own eyes, know more than the Lord, is false."

Now may I say something for your guidance and enlightenment. If what I am about to say should be taken out of context and published in Dialogue or elsewhere, it would give an entirely erroneous impression and would not properly present the facts. As it happens, I am a great admirer of Brigham Young and a great believer in his doctrinal presentations. He was called of God.

Figure 28 — Page 6

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He was guided by the Holy Spirit in his teachings in general. He was a mighty prophet. He led Israel the way the Lord wanted his people led. He built on the foundation laid by the Prophet Joseph. He completed his work and has gone on to eternal exaltation.

Nonetheless, as Joseph Smith so pointedly taught, a prophet is not always a prophet, only when he is acting as such. Prophets are men and they make mistakes. Sometimes they err in doctrine. This is one of the reasons the Lord has given us the Standard Works. They become the standards and rules that govern where doctrine and philosophy are concerned. If this were not so, we would believe one thing when one man was president of the Church and another thing in the days of his successors. Truth is eternal and does not vary. Sometimes even wise and good men fall short in the accurate presentation of what is truth. Sometimes a prophet gives personal views which are not endorsed and approved by the Lord.

Yes, President Young did teach that Adam was the father of our spirits, and all the related things that the cultists ascribe to him. This, however, is not true. He expressed views that are out of harmony with the gospel. But, be it known, Brigham Young also taught accurately and correctly, the status and position of Adam in the eternal scheme of things. What I am saying is, that Brigham Young contradicted Brigham Young, and the issue becomes one of which Brigham Young we will believe. The answer is we will believe the expressions that accord with the teachings in the Standard Works.

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Yes, Brigham Young did say some things about God progressing in knowledge and understanding, but again, be it known, that Brigham Young taught, emphatically and plainly, that God knows all things and has all power meaning in the infinite, eternal and ultimate and absolute sense of the word. Again, the issue is, which Brigham Young shall we believe and the answer is: We will take the one whose statements accord with what God has revealed, in the Standard Works.

I think you can give me credit for having a knowledge of the quotations from Brigham Young relative to Adam, and of knowing what he taught under the subject that has become known as the Adam God Theory. President Joseph Fielding Smith said that Brigham Young will have to make his own explanations on the points there involved. I think you can also give me credit for knowing what Brigham Young said about God progressing. And again, that is something he will have to account for. As for me and my house, we will have the good sense to choose between the divergent teachings of the same man and come up with those that accord with

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what God has set forth in his eternal plan of salvation.

This puts me in mind of Paul's statement: "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Cor. 11:19.) I do not know all of the providences of the Lord, but I do know that he permits false doctrine to be taught in and out of the Church and that such teaching is part of the sifting process of mortality. We will be judged by what we believe among other things. If we believe false doctrine, we will be condemned. If that belief is on basic and fundamental things, it will lead us astray and we will lose our souls. This is why Nephi said: "And all those who preach false doctrines. . . . wo, wo, wo be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, for they shall be thrust down to hell!" (2 Ne. 28:15.) This clearly means that people who teach false doctrine in the fundamental and basic things will lose their souls. The nature and kind of being that God is, is one of these fundamentals. I repeat: Brigham Young erred in some of his statements on the nature and kind of being that God is, and as to the position of Adam in the plan of salvation, but Brigham Young also taught the truth in these fields on other occasions. And I repeat, that in his instance, he was a great prophet and has gone on to eternal reward. What he did is not a pattern for any of us. If we choose to believe and teach the false portions of his doctrines, we are making an election that will damn us.

It should be perfectly evident that under our system of church discipline, it would be anticipated that some others besides Brigham Young would pick up some of his statements and echo them. Those who did this, also on other occasions, taught accurately and properly what the true doctrines of the gospel are. I do not get concerned when a good and sound person who, on the over-all, is teaching the truth happens to err on a particular point and say something in conflict with what he has said himself on a previous occasion. We are all mortal. We are all fallible. We all make mistakes. No single individual all the time is in tune with the Holy Spirit, but I do get concerned when some person or group picks out false statements and makes them the basis of their presentation and theology and thus ends up having a false concept of the doctrine, which in reality, was not in the mind of the person whose quotations they are using.

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Wise gospel students do not build their philosophies of life on quotations of individuals, even though those quotations come from presidents of the Church. Wise people anchor their doctrine on the Standard Works. When Section 20 says that God is infinite and eternal, it means just that and so on through all

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of the revelations. There is no need to attempt to harmonize conflicting views when some of the views are out of harmony with the Standard Works. This is what life is all about. The Lord is finding out what we will believe in spite of the allurements of the world or the philosophies of men or the seemingly rational and logical explanations that astute people make.

We do not solve our problems by getting a statement from the president of the Church or from someone else on a subject. We have been introduced to the gospel; we have the gift of the Holy Ghost; we have the Standard Works, and it is our responsibility to get in tune and understand properly what the Lord has revealed and has had us canonize. The end result of this course of personally and individually pursuing light and truth is to reach that millennial state of which the scriptures say it will no longer be necessary for every man to say to his neighbor "know the Lord," for all shall know him from the greatest to the least. Joseph Smith says this will be by the spirit of revelation.

If it is true, as I am advised, that you speak on this subject of the progression of God at firesides and elsewhere, you should cease to do so. If you give other people copies of the material you sent me, with the quotations it contains, you should cease to do so. It is not in your province to set in order the Church or to determine what its doctrines shall be. It is axiomatic among us to know that God has given apostles and prophets "for the edifying of the body of Christ," and that their ministry is to see that "we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:11-16.) This means, among other things, that it is my province to teach to the Church what the doctrine is. It is your province to echo what I say or to remain silent. You do not have a divine commission to correct me or any of the Brethren. The Lord does not operate that way. If I lead the Church astray, that is my responsibility, but the fact still remains that I am the one appointed with all the rest involved so to do. The appointment is not given to the faculty at Brigham Young University or to any of the members of the Church. The Lord's house is a house of order and those who hold the keys are appointed to proclaim the doctrines.

Now you know that this does not mean that individuals should not do research and make discoveries and write articles. What it does mean is that what they write should be faith promoting and where doctrines are concerned, should be in harmony with that which comes from the head of the Church. And those at,

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the head of the Church have the obligation to teach that which is in harmony with the Standard Works. If they err then be silent, on the point and leave the event in the hands of the Lord. Some day all of us will stand before the judgment bar and be accountable for our teachings. And where there have been disagreements, the Lord will judge between us. In the meantime if we want to save our own souls we need to strive with all the power we have to be in harmony with the revelations and not to be teaching or promulgating doctrines that suit our fancy.

I advise you to take my counsel on the matters here involved. If I err, that is my problem; but in your case if you single out some of these things and make them the center of your philosophy, and end up being wrong, you will lose your soul. One of the side effects of preaching contrary to what the Brethren preach is to get a spirit of rebellion growing up in your heart. This sort of thing cankers the soul spiritually. It drives people out of the Church. It weakens their faith. All of us need all of the faith and strength and spiritual stability we can get to maintain our positions in the Church and to work out our salvation.

Now, I think I have said enough in this letter so that if you are receptive and pliable, you will get the message. If you are not, rebellion will well up in your heart. I pray for your well-being. I repeat: the door to my office is open. Perhaps I should tell you what one of the very astute and alert General Authorities said to me when I chanced to mention to him the subject of your letter to me. He said: "Oh dear, haven't we rescued him enough times already."

Now I hope you will ponder and pray and come to a basic understanding of fundamental things and that unless and until you can on all points, you will remain silent on those where differences exist between you and the Brethren. This is the course of safety. I advise you to pursue it. If you do not, perils lie ahead. It is not too often in this day that any of us are told plainly and bluntly what ought to be. I am taking the liberty of so speaking to you at this time, and become thus a witness against you if you do not take the counsel.

I repeat: I have every good wish for you, pray that the Lord will bless you and hope that things will work out properly and well in your life.

Sincerely,

Bruce R. McConkie

Bruce R. McConkie

BPM:vh

Bruce McConkie (p. 7 of Fig. #28):

“...Nephi said: ‘...all those who preach false doctrine... shall be thrust down to hell!’ This clearly means that people who teach *false doctrine* in the *fundamental* and *basic* things will lose their souls. The nature and kind of being that God is, is one of these fundamentals. I repeat: *Brigham Young erred* in some of his statements on the nature and kind of being that God is and as to the position of Adam in the plan of salvation....”

Question #197: Did Brigham Young err on a “fundamental and basic doctrine” according to Mr. McConkie?

Yes

No

Question #198: (Refer to p. 4 of Fig. #28.) How can “utterly absurd” and “totally false” doctrine be in the Church’s literature?

Brigham Young:

“How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me — namely that Adam is our father and God....” (Fig. #16)

Bruce McConkie (p. 6 of Fig. #28):

“Prophets... sometimes err in doctrine [and] give *personal views* which are not endorsed and approved by the Lord.”

Question #199: According to Brigham Young, was his “doctrine which God revealed” a “personal view not endorsed and approved by the Lord”?

Yes

No

Bruce McConkie (pp. 4 & 6 of Fig. #28):

“False religion always results from the worship of false gods.... There are those who... *acclaim Adam...* as their *Supreme Being* Yes, President Young *did* teach that Adam was the father of our spirits.... This, however, is not true.”

Question #200: According to the above logic, did Brigham Young worship a false god?

Yes

No

Bruce McConkie (pp. 6-7 of Fig. #28):

I think you can give me credit for having a knowledge of the quotations from Brigham Young relative to Adam, and of knowing

what he taught under the subject that has become known as the Adam God Theory.... that is something he will have to account for.... If that belief [in false doctrine] is on basic and fundamental things, it will lead us astray and we will lose our souls.... The nature and kind of being that God is, is one of these fundamentals. I repeat: Brigham Young erred... on the nature and kind of being that God is....

Question #201: Could Brigham Young be a true prophet since he "erred on a fundamental" that would cost his followers their souls if they believed it?

- Yes: Explain _____
 No

President Wilford Woodruff:

"I say to Israel, the Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of the Church to lead you astray. It is not in the program... It is not in the mind of God." (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 212-213 as quoted by Ezra Taft Benson in "Following the Brethren," speech, February 26, 1980, p. 5 of typed copy)

Brigham Young:

"Do you think the Lord will allow you to be fooled and led astray? No." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, p. 141)

Question #202: Can you explain how Brigham Young taught "totally false" doctrine on a "basic and fundamental thing" which would "lead astray" if a Church President cannot "lead astray"?

- Yes: _____
 No

Brigham Young:

Now, let all who hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, p. 51)

Bruce McConkie

There are those who believe, or say they believe, that Adam is our father and our God, that he is the father of our spirits and our bodies.... The devil keeps this heresy alive... anyone who has received the temple endowment and who yet believes the Adam-God theory does not deserve to be saved. (Speech at Marriott Center, 14-Stake Fireside, June 1, 1980, p. 5 of copy from BYU Press, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah)

Question #203: Both Brigham Young and Bruce McConkie taught Church doctrine, yet Heber Kimball said those who reject Young's teachings "reject God" and Bruce McConkie said Young's teachings were of "the devil." Who is right?

- Bruce McConkie Brigham Young Neither

Question #204: Since the Church admits that Brigham Young taught this "totally false" doctrine for over 25 years, has it, in effect, adopted Orson Pratt's views (p. 103) as being "right"?

- Yes No

Question #205: If Orson Pratt was "right," what did Apostle George Smith conclude (p. 103)? Fill in the blank.

That Brigham Young was _____ an inspired man.

Rodney Turner, Professor of Ancient Scripture, BYU:

"A careful, detached study of [Brigham Young's] available statements, as found in the official publications of the Church, will admit of no other conclusion than that the identification of Adam with God the Father by president Brigham Young is an *irrefutable fact*." ("The Position of Adam in LDS Scripture and Theology," p. 58)

Question #206: From evidence presented in this chapter, which is true?

- The Adam-God doctrine was only "alleged" to have been taught (Fig. #27).
 The Adam-God doctrine was actually taught and believed by many in the Church.

Question #207: Can you be certain that the present prophet advances correct doctrine?

- No
 Yes. Why does your testimony of the truthfulness of his teachings carry more weight than the "powerful" testimonies which past members bore to the truthfulness of Brigham Young's teachings about Adam?
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