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SCIENCE & MORMONISM SERIES 1

# COSMOS, EARTH, AND MAN

DAVID H. BAILEY, JEFFREY M. BRADSHAW, JOHN S. LEWIS,  
GREGORY L. SMITH, AND MICHAEL R. STARK



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David H. Bailey, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, John S. Lewis,  
Gregory L. Smith, and Michael R. Stark

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# SCIENCE AND GENESIS: A PERSONAL VIEW

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

**T**he book of Genesis has always been a favorite of mine. Since I was a small child, I have read it repeatedly, relishing its spiritual truths, its literary beauty, and its frank and vivid descriptions of the lives of the patriarchs — intimately entwined as in no other book of scripture with the lives of their immediate and extended families.

While fellow Latter-day Saints will have little problem comprehending my still-growing attachment to the early narratives of Genesis, some of my non-LDS scientific colleagues might understandably find it mystifying that I have devoted so much time and attention to a study of what may seem to be no more than a fanciful collection of worn-out fables — one more shard among the dusty discards of the almost bygone religious passage of Western culture. In that regard, it must also be admitted that the central historical claims of Mormonism — and Christianity<sup>1</sup> itself, for that matter — hardly appear any less fantastic to the modern mind than the stories of Adam and Eve.<sup>2</sup> Even in the nineteenth century, Charles Dickens<sup>3</sup> approved as Hannay charged the Mormons with “the absurdity of seeing visions in the age of railways” — simultaneously commending our “immense practical industry” while decrying our “pitiable superstitious delusion.”<sup>4</sup> His conclusion at that time is one that would be met with understanding nods by many perplexed observers of Mormonism in our day: “What the Mormons do, seems to be excellent; what they say is mostly nonsense.”<sup>5</sup>

## **Taking the Stories of Primeval History Seriously**

Given their status as targets of humor and caricature, the well-worn stories of Adam, Eve, and Noah are sometimes difficult to take seriously, even for some Latter-day Saints. However, a thoughtful examination of the scriptural record of these characters will reveal not simply tales of “piety or ... inspiring adventures”<sup>6</sup> but rather carefully crafted narratives from a highly sophisticated culture that



*Donald Duck Gathers the Animals to the Ark, from Walt Disney's Fantasia 2000, 1999*

preserve “deep memories”<sup>7</sup> of revealed understanding. We do an injustice both to these marvelous records and to ourselves when we fail to pursue an appreciation of scripture beyond the initial level of cartoon cut-outs inculcated upon the minds of young children.<sup>8</sup> Hugh Nibley characterized the problem this way:<sup>9</sup>

The stories of the Garden of Eden and the Flood have always furnished unbelievers with their best ammunition against believers, because they are the easiest to visualize, popularize, and satirize of any Bible accounts. Everyone has seen a garden and been caught in a pouring rain. It requires no effort of imagination for a six-year-old to convert concise and straightforward Sunday-school recitals into the vivid images that will stay with him for the rest of his life. These stories retain the form of the nursery tales they assume in the imaginations of small children, to be defended by grown-ups who refuse to distinguish between childlike faith and thinking as a child when it is time to “put away childish things.”<sup>10</sup> It is equally easy and deceptive to fall into adolescent disillusionment and with one’s emancipated teachers to smile tolerantly at the simple gullibility of bygone days, while passing stern moral judgment on the savage old God who damns Adam for eating the fruit He put in his way and, overreacting with impetuous violence, wipes out Noah’s neighbors simply for making fun of his boat-building on a fine summer’s day.<sup>11</sup>

Adding to the circus-like atmosphere surrounding modern discussions of Noah’s flood are the sometimes acrimonious contentions among fundamentalist proponents concerning the different theories about where the Ark came to rest.<sup>12</sup> Nicolas Wyatt reports:<sup>13</sup>

I once watched a television programme of excruciating banality, in which a camera team accompanied an American “archaeologist” (for so he called himself) on his quest for the remains of Noah’s Ark on Mount Ararat. The highlight for me occurred when a rival crew was encountered at several thousand feet ... above sea level heading in the opposite direction, on the same quest!



*In Search of Noah's Ark, 1976*



*Enki Inserts a Computer Disk*

Unfortunately, Mesopotamian studies are no more exempt from such quackery than is Old Testament scholarship. The following description by Sasha Lessin, PhD, for the figure above recounts:<sup>14</sup>

Galzu tells Enki (depicted with his snake icon) to warn Ziasudra [*sic*] (touching the “wall” — probably a computer bank, depicted with Xs across the screens and slots for programs) of the Flood. Galzu guides Enki’s arm to convey tablet (possibly a computer or holo disk. The disk leaves Enki’s hand en route to Ziasudra’s computer).

Below is a photograph of Russell Crowe as Noah in a film that Paramount officially called a “close adaptation of the biblical story.”<sup>15</sup> Bible readers will, of course, agree with director Darren Aronofsky’s description of Noah as “a dark,



*Russell Crowe as Noah*



*A "Watcher" on the Attack*

complicated character' who experiences 'real survivor's guilt' after surviving the Flood."<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, he portrays the prophet with perfect scriptural fidelity as a "Mad Max-style warrior surviving in a pseudo post-apocalyptic world."<sup>17</sup> Students of the Bible will also surely recognize the portrait at left as one of the "Watchers," depicted in exact correspondence to the graphic novel that inspired the movie as "eleven-foot-tall fallen angels with six arms and no wings."<sup>18</sup>

The profound accounts of primeval history deserve better treatment. To understand them for what they are, we need to bring our best to the task: the powerful tools of modern science and scholarship, the additional light shed by modern revelation, and, of no less importance, the consecrated dedication of inquiring minds and honest hearts diligently seeking divine inspiration. The simple fantasies of a "fanciful and flowery and heated imagination"<sup>19</sup> will not suffice.



Adapted from Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1824-1904, *Dante and Virgil [Nibley] in Hell*, 1850

I would like to share some personal lessons learned in my study of the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis and in the LDS book of Moses. I will summarize these perspectives under five headings, illustrated by examples from scripture.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout this chapter I will draw heavily on the writings of that insightful pioneer, Hugh Nibley, who has served as a baptized Virgil for me in my journeys "into the blind world"<sup>21</sup> of mortality described in the primeval history of the Bible.<sup>22</sup>



**Lesson 1: *God's plan is more vast, comprehensive, and wonderful than we might imagine.***



*Carl Sagan,  
1934-1996*

Even some of the most doubting of scientists have stated their willingness to keep their mind open to the possibility of a God — so long as it is a God “worthy of [the] grandeur”<sup>23</sup> of the Universe. For example, the well-known skeptic Richard Dawkins stated: “If there is a God, it’s going to be a whole lot bigger and a whole lot more incomprehensible than anything that any theologian of any religion has ever proposed.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Elder Neal A. Maxwell approvingly quoted the unbelieving scientist Carl Sagan, noting that he:<sup>25</sup>



*Neal A. Maxwell,  
1926-2004*

perceptively observed that “in some respects, science has far surpassed religion in delivering awe. How is it that hardly any major religion has looked at science and concluded, ‘This is better than we thought! The Universe is much bigger than our prophets said — grander, more subtle, more elegant. God must be even greater than we dreamed’? Instead, they say, ‘No, no, no! My god is a little god, and I want him to stay that way.’”



*Joseph Smith, Jr.  
1805-1844*

Joseph Smith’s God was not a little god. His God was a God who required our minds to “stretch as high as the utmost heavens, and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss, and the broad expanse of eternity”<sup>26</sup> — that is more of a stretch than the best of us now can tolerate. Although the Ninth Article of Faith says explicitly that God “will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God,”<sup>27</sup> the general rule is that such revelation will come only “when we’re able to understand it.”<sup>28</sup> The Prophet mourned that “things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by the weak-minded men without even a thought” — a phenomenon that made him want to “hug [truth] to [his] bosom” all the more.<sup>29</sup> “I believe all that God ever revealed,” said the Prophet, “and I never hear of a man being damned for believing too much; but they are damned for unbelief.”<sup>30</sup> He complained that he had tried “for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God” but that they would frequently “fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions.”<sup>31</sup> He compared the “difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation” to splitting the hardest of logs with the flimsiest of tools.<sup>32</sup>

The Prophet ran into that kind of trouble when he received section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Many were shaken and some apostatized because they could not broaden their narrow sectarian notions of heaven and hell to encompass the glorious doctrine of the multiple gradations of glory.<sup>33</sup> More recently we have seen this same phenomenon at work in the unwillingness of some Saints to give



Noël Pisano, *Negative of Hand and Red Dots*,  
Cavern of Pech-Merle, Cabarets, France, ca. 2004



*Seven Hands*, Cavern of Pech-Merle,  
Cabarets, France.

up the outmoded idea that the Book of Mormon peoples were confined to the boundaries of North America.<sup>34</sup>

With these precedents in mind, we come to the topic of this chapter. Genesis and the book of Moses invite us not only to stretch our minds to consider how God's work extends *beyond* our own earth to include the salvation of "worlds without number"<sup>35</sup> but also stretch our minds to consider the vastness, comprehensiveness, and wonder of God's plan for all creatures who have lived and will live on *this* earth.

The beautiful copper engraving<sup>36</sup> above by Noël Pisano was made from meticulous observation of one of the many prehistoric paintings in the caves of Pech-Merle, in the heart of the *massif central* of southern France.<sup>37</sup> Although the cave walls and ceilings contain many images of greater sophistication, this simple tracing of a single hand appeals to me. Its original is solidly dated to 25,000 years ago, yet in standing to examine it in close quarters, the gap of time between oneself and the skilled artist is suddenly erased, and we are brought to admire the beauty and subtlety of his technique. To create this work, the artist had to crawl into the cavern by candlelight. After contemplating his design and choosing the ideal place for its execution, he placed his hand on the wall to serve as a stencil. To create the colored outline, he projected pigment onto the rock by blowing, perhaps with the help of a sprayer held tight in his lips.<sup>38</sup> This well-honed technique allowed a negative of the hand, surrounded by symbols whose meaning is now lost to us, to be preserved tens of thousands of years later as an ancient snapshot, the sole remaining memory of the life of this individual.

In another chamber, we find what is undoubtedly a family portrait. Fourteen hands of adults and children are found together here, in a deep, submerged section of the cavern now accessible only during periods of drought. The creators of such relics “almost certainly intended them to last for generations.”<sup>39</sup> Elsewhere in the cave, visitors are moved to discover a dozen footprints of an adolescent boy drawn into this place by unknown rites, hostile forces of nature, or the mere boldness of curiosity — and preserved intact for twelve thousand years in the clay of the cavern floor.<sup>40</sup>

Hugh Nibley, with his great love of God’s creation,<sup>41</sup> had great sympathy for these ancient individuals and pondered long and hard about how their stories fit in with those of Adam and Eve. For a thoughtful perspective on this issue, we can do no better than to cite him directly:<sup>42</sup>

The philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, in his *Essay on the Christian System*, said that the two fatal flaws of Christianity were (1) denying spirit and mind to any other creatures but ourselves and (2) allowing life on no other world but our own. ...

This ... should be no concern [for us]. ...

Do not begrudge existence to creatures that looked like men long, long ago, nor deny them a place in God’s affection or even a right to exaltation — for our scriptures allow them such. Nor am I overly concerned as to just when they might have lived, for their world is not our world. They have all gone away long before our people ever appeared. God assigned them their proper times and functions, as He has given me mine — a full-time job that admonishes me to remember His words to the overly eager Moses: “For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.”<sup>43</sup>

It is Adam as my own parent who concerns me. When he walks onto the stage, then and only then the play begins. He opens a book and starts calling out names. They are the sons of Adam, who also qualify as the sons of God, Adam himself being a son of God. This is the book of remembrance from which many have been blotted out.

From this same perspective, it is significant that the Book of Mormon, as a history of those who were Nephites by lineage or “adoption,” records only incidentally the story of the Lamanites and their associates.<sup>44</sup> So also the book of Moses tells us very little about the history of the Cainites or of the children of Adam that were born before Cain and Abel<sup>45</sup> who “followed Satan by choice and were disqualified as sons of God.”<sup>46</sup> The account instead focuses on the inauguration of temple ordinances among the righteous, which began, as Nibley indicates, “when God set them apart, gave them a blessing, gave them a new name, [and] registered them in the new Book of the Generations of Adam.”<sup>47</sup>

In light of what scripture tells us, how do we account for the results of genetic studies indicating that every person who has ever lived on earth is descended from a common population of, perhaps, 10,000 founders who lived 100,000 to 150,000 years ago — long before Adam and Eve entered mortality?<sup>48</sup> Drawing on the richer



Fernand-Anne Piestre (Cormon), 1845-1924, *Cain*, Based on Victor Hugo's Poem, 1880

sources of scripture produced through modern revelation, Nibley raises a series of questions with an eye to finding scriptural support for surviving non-Adamic and non-Noachian lineages that might help explain such findings:

What about those people who lived before Cain and Abel?<sup>49</sup> What about those who disappeared from sight?<sup>50</sup> What about those who were not even warned of the Flood?<sup>51</sup> ... What about the comings and goings of Enoch's day between the worlds?<sup>52</sup> Who were his people ... ?<sup>53</sup> ... What about the creatures we do not see around us?<sup>54</sup>

Speaking of Noah, ... "the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come."<sup>55</sup> Methuselah boasted about his line as something special.<sup>56</sup> Why special if it included the whole human race? These blessings have no meaning if all the people of the earth and all the nations are the seed of Noah and Enoch. What other line could the Messiah come through? Well, there were humans who were not invited by Enoch's preaching.<sup>57</sup>

Nibley no doubt was wondering whether some of these shadowy peoples described in scripture might be neither descendants of Noah nor of Adam but rather distantly related contemporaries whose descendants may have mixed at various times with the Adamic lineage.<sup>58</sup> Of relevance is the reminder by Ryan Parr that promised blessings from patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are of necessity driven by covenant and lineal descent, not by genetics, since specific "nuclear DNA finding its way from any one of these progenitors to any descendant of today is extremely unlikely from a biological perspective."<sup>59</sup> Happily, the promises made to the faithful covenant posterity are not about inheriting fragments of Abrahamic DNA but rather about receiving a fulness of Abrahamic blessings, assured through faithfulness. Otherwise, the doctrines that describe the possibility of adoption into the Abrahamic lineage would be meaningless.<sup>60</sup>

I am humbled as I read the first chapters of Genesis and the book of Moses and contemplate the vastness, comprehensiveness, and wonder of God's plan for all His

creatures. It is too grand for the human mind to grasp, but not too great for God. Elder Neal A. Maxwell frequently referred to what we might call “God’s greatest understatement.” He spoke of the fact that “in two adjoining verses, the Lord said tersely, ‘I am able to do mine own work.’”<sup>61</sup> Then he commented: “Brothers and sisters, that is about as nice a way as God could say to us that He can handle it!”<sup>62</sup>



Thomas Cole, 1801-1848, *The Subsiding Waters of the Deluge*, 1829

## **Lesson 2: Scripture is a product of a particular point of view.**

Nibley illustrates this idea:<sup>63</sup>

The Latter-day Saints, [like other Bible readers,] are constantly converting statements of limited application to universal or at least sweeping generalities. To illustrate, I was told as a child that the Rocky Mountains, the Appalachians, and the Andes all came into existence overnight during the great upheavals of nature that took place at the time of the Crucifixion — an absurdity that plays into the hands of critics of the Book of Mormon. But what we find in the [Third] Nephi account when we read it carefully is a few sober, factual, eyewitness reports describing an earthquake of 8-plus on the Richter scale in a very limited area. Things that appear unlikely, impossible, or paradoxical from one point of view often make perfectly good sense from another.

The *Nautical Almanac* gives the exact time of sunrise and sunset for every time of the year, yet astronauts know that the sun neither rises nor sets except from a particular point of view, the time of the event being strictly dependent on the exact location. From that point of view and that only, it is strictly correct and scientific to say that the sun does rise and set. Just so, the apparently strange and extravagant phenomena described in the scriptures are often correct descriptions of what would have appeared to a person in a particular situation. ...

So with Noah in the Ark. From where he was, “the whole earth”<sup>64</sup> was covered with water as far as he could see. ... But what were conditions in other parts of the world? If Noah knew that, he would not have sent forth messenger birds to explore.

But doesn't Genesis 7:19 say that “the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered”? Explaining his understanding of this verse, Walter Bradley observes:<sup>65</sup>

The Hebrew word *eretz* used in Genesis 7:19 is usually translated “earth” or “world” but does not generally refer to the entire planet. Depending on the context, it is often translated “country” or “land” to make this clear. ... [For example, i]n Genesis 12:1, Abram was told to leave his *eretz*. He was obviously not told to leave the planet but rather to leave his country. ... [Another] comparison to obtain a proper interpretation of Genesis 7:19 involves Deuteronomy 2:25, which talks about all the nations “under the heavens” being fearful of the Israelites. Obviously, all nations “under the heavens” was not intended to mean all on planet Earth.

Elder John A. Widtsoe, writing in 1943, summed up the important idea of taking point of view into account when interpreting scripture:<sup>66</sup>

We should remember that when inspired writers deal with historical incidents they relate that which they have seen or that which may have been told them, unless indeed the past is opened to them by revelation.

[For example, t]he details in the story of the Flood are undoubtedly drawn from the experiences of the writer. ... The writer of Genesis made a faithful report of the facts known to him concerning the Flood. In other localities the depth of the water might have been more or less.

An additional area where point-of-view comes into prominent play is in consideration of the authorship of the Old Testament. An impressive array of evidences for the seeming heterogeneity of sources within the first five books of the Bible have converged to form the basis of the Documentary Hypothesis, which tries to sort out different sources of authorship in the Old Testament.<sup>67</sup> However, even those who find the Documentary Hypothesis — or some variant of it<sup>68</sup> — compelling have good reason to admire the resulting literary product on its own terms. For example, in the case of the two Creation chapters, Richard Friedman, perhaps the most well-known popular expositor of the Documentary Hypothesis, concludes admiringly that in the scriptural version of Genesis we have a text “that is greater than the sum of its parts.”<sup>69</sup> Sailhamer aptly summarizes the situation when he writes that “Genesis is characterized by both an easily discernible unity and a noticeable lack of uniformity.”<sup>70</sup>

The idea that a series of individuals may have had a hand in the authorship and redaction of the Old Testament should not be foreign to readers of the Book of Mormon, where inspired editors have explicitly described the process by which they wove separate, overlapping records into the finished scriptural narrative. The authors and editors of the Book of Mormon knew that the account was preserved



Joseph Brickey, 1973-: *Lehi Studying the Brass Plates*, 2005

not only for the people of their own times, but also for future generations,<sup>71</sup> including our own.<sup>72</sup>

With this understanding in mind, it should not be disturbing to Latter-day Saint readers that events such as the story of the Flood, in the form we have it today, might be read not only as an actual occurrence but also “as a kind of parable”<sup>73</sup> — its account of the historical events shaped with specific pedagogical purposes in mind. “If this is so,” writes Blenkinsopp, “it would be only one of several examples in P [one of the presumed sources of the Genesis account] of a paradigmatic interpretation of events recorded in the earlier sources with reference to the contemporary situation.”<sup>74</sup> More simply put, Nephi plainly declared: “I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.”<sup>75</sup> Indeed, Nephi left us with significant examples where he deliberately shaped his explanation of Bible stories and teachings in order to help his hearers understand how they applied to their own situation.<sup>76</sup>

Of course, in contrast to the carefully controlled prophetic redaction of the Book of Mormon, we do not know how much of the editing of the Old Testament may have taken place with less inspiration and authority.<sup>77</sup> Joseph Smith is remembered as saying: “I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors.”<sup>78</sup>



*Joseph Smith, Prophet and Seer, 2011*

**Lesson 3: It is profitable to read these chapters “literally,” though not in the way people usually think about the word.**

The Prophet Joseph Smith held the view that scripture should be “understood precisely as it reads.”<sup>79</sup> It must be realized, however, that what premoderns understood to be “literal” interpretations of scripture are not the same as what most people understand them to be in our day. Whereas modernists<sup>80</sup> typically apply the term “literal” to accounts that provide clinical accuracy in the journalistic dimensions of who, what, when, and where, premoderns were more apt to understand “literal” in the sense of “what the letters, i.e., the words say.” These are two very different modes of interpretation. As James Faulconer observed: “‘What x *says*’ [i.e., the premodern idea of “literal”] and ‘what x *describes accurately*’ [i.e., the modernist idea of “literal”] do not mean the same, even if the first is a description.”<sup>81</sup>

Consider, for example, Joseph Smith’s description of the Book of Mormon translation process. An emphasis consistent with modernist interests appears in the detailed descriptions given by some of the Prophet’s contemporaries of the size and appearance of the instruments used and the procedure by which the words of the ancient text were made known to him. These kinds of accounts appeal to us as modernists — the more physical details the better — because we want to know what “actually happened” as he translated. Note, however, that Joseph Smith declined to relate such specifics himself even in response to direct questioning in private company from believing friends.<sup>82</sup> The only explicit statement he made about the translation process is his testimony that it occurred “by the gift and power of God,”<sup>83</sup> a description that avoids reinforcing the misleading impression that we can come to an understanding of “what really happened” through “objective” accounts of external observers. Of course, there is no reason to throw doubt on the idea



that the translation process relied on instruments and procedures such as those described by Joseph Smith's contemporaries. However, by restricting his description to the statement that the translation occurred "by the gift and power of God," the Prophet disclaimed the futile effort to make these sacred events intelligible to the modernist literalist. Instead he pointed our attention to what mattered most: that the translation was accomplished by divine means.<sup>84</sup>

James E. Faulconer argues that insistence on a "literal" interpretation of such sacred events, in the contemporary clinical sense of the term, may result in "rob[bing that event] of its status as a way of understanding the world."<sup>85</sup> Elaborating more fully on the limitations of modernist descriptions of scriptural events, he observes that the interest of premoderns:<sup>86</sup>

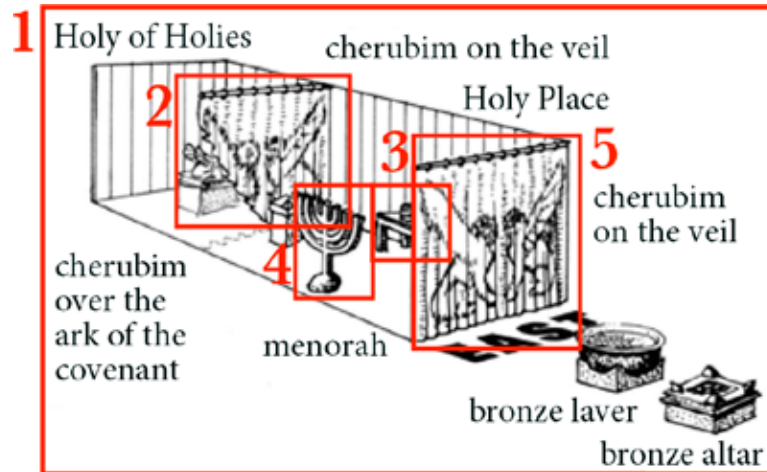
was not in deciding what the scriptures *portray*, but in what they *say*. They do not take the scriptures to be picturing something for us, but to be telling us the truth of the world, of its things, its events, and its people, a truth that cannot be told apart from its situation in a divine, symbolic ordering.<sup>87</sup>

Of course, that is not to deny that the scriptures tell about events that actually happened. ... However, premodern interpreters do not think it sufficient (or possible) to portray the real events of real history without letting us see them in the light of that which gives them their significance — their reality, the enactment of which they are a part — as history, namely the symbolic order that they incarnate. Without that light, portrayals cannot be accurate. A bare description of the physical movements of certain persons at a certain time is not history (assuming that such bare descriptions are even possible).

"Person A raised his left hand, turning it clockwise so that .03 milliliters of a liquid poured from a vial in that hand into a receptacle situated midway between A and B" does not mean the same as "Henry poured poison in to Richard's cup." Only the latter could be a historical claim (and even the former is no bare description).

Of course, none of this should be taken as implying that precise times, locations, and dimensions are unimportant to the stories of scripture. Indeed, details given in Genesis about, for example, the size of the Ark, the place where it landed, and the date of its debarkation are crucial to its interpretation. However, when such details are present, we can usually be sure that they are not meant merely to add a touch of realism to the account but rather to help the reader make mental associations with scriptural stories and religious concepts found elsewhere in the Bible.

In the case of Noah, for example, these associations might echo the story of Creation or might anticipate the Tabernacle of Moses. It is precisely such backward and forward reverberations of common themes in disparate passages of scripture, rather than a photorealistic rendering of the Flood, that will provide the understanding of these stories that we seek. Though we can no more reconstruct the story of Noah from the geology of flood remains than we can re-create the discourse of Abinadi from the ruins of Mesoamerican buildings, we are fortunate to have a scriptural record that can be "understood precisely as it reads."<sup>88</sup>



Michael P. Lyon, 1952-: *Sacred Topography of Eden and the Temple*, 1994 (detail)

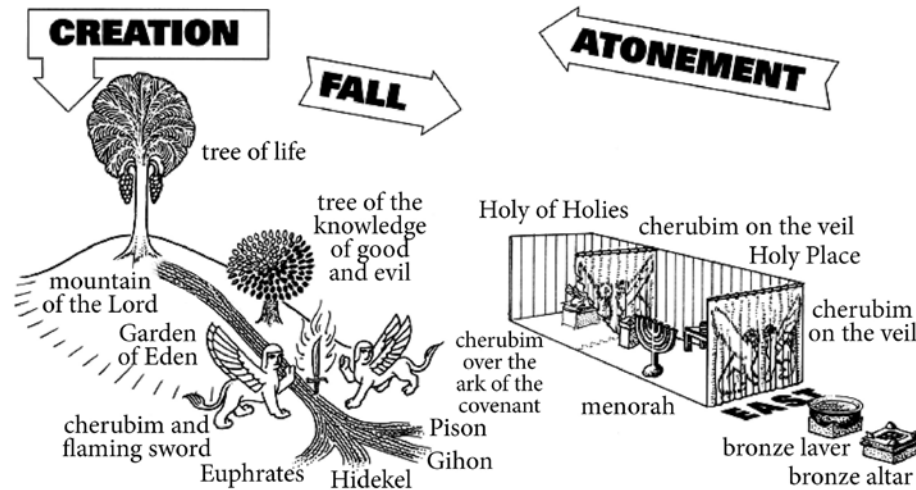
**Lesson 4: *There is a deep relationship between Genesis 1-11 and the liturgy and layout of temples.***

The companion accounts of Creation in Genesis and the book of Moses provide a structure and a vocabulary that seem deliberately designed to highlight temple themes. Louis Ginzberg’s reconstruction of ancient Jewish sources is consistent with this overall idea,<sup>89</sup> as well as with the proposal that Genesis 1 may have been used as part of Israelite temple liturgy:<sup>90</sup>

God told the angels: On the first day of creation, I shall make the heavens and stretch them out; so will Israel raise up the tabernacle as the dwelling place of my Glory.<sup>91</sup> On the second day I shall put a division between the terrestrial waters and the heavenly waters, so will [my servant Moses] hang up a veil in the tabernacle to divide the Holy Place and the Most Holy.<sup>92</sup> On the third day I shall make the earth to put forth grass and herbs; so will he, in obedience to my commands, ... prepare shewbread before me.<sup>93</sup> On the fourth day I shall make the luminaries;<sup>94</sup> so he will stretch out a golden candlestick [menorah] before me.<sup>95</sup> On the fifth day I shall create the birds; so he will fashion the cherubim with outstretched wings.<sup>96</sup> On the sixth day I shall create man; so will Israel set aside a man from the sons of Aaron as high priest for my service.<sup>97</sup>

Carrying this idea forward to a later epoch, Exodus 40:33 describes how Moses completed the Tabernacle. The Hebrew text exactly parallels the account of how God finished Creation.<sup>98</sup> *Genesis Rabbah* comments: “It is as if, on that day [i.e., the day the Tabernacle was raised in the wilderness], I actually created the world.”<sup>99</sup>

A number of scholars have found parallels in the layout of the Garden of Eden and that of Israelite sanctuaries.<sup>100</sup> To appreciate how the stories told in the book of Moses relate to the temple, one must first understand how the layout of the Garden of Eden parallels that of Israelite temples. Each major feature of the Garden (e.g., the river, the cherubim, the Tree of Knowledge, the Tree of Life) corresponds to a similar symbol in the Israelite temple (e.g., the bronze laver, the cherubim, the veil,<sup>101</sup> the menorah<sup>102</sup>).



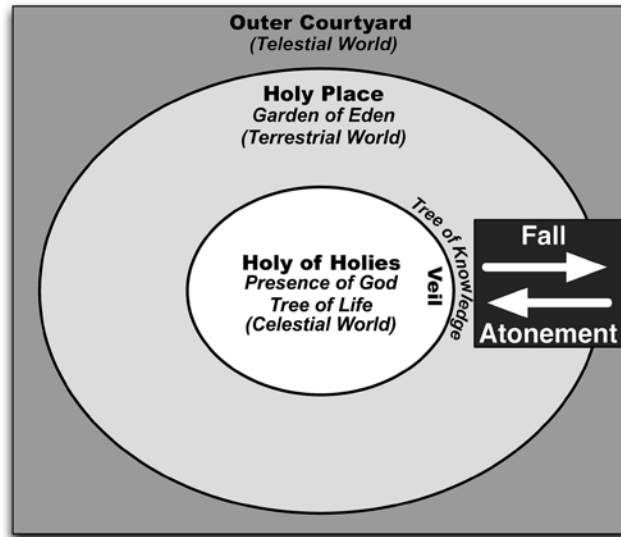
Michael P. Lyon, 1952-: *Sacred Topography of Eden and the Temple*, 1994

Moreover, the course taken by the Israelite high priest through the temple can be seen as symbolizing the journey of the Fall of Adam and Eve in reverse. In other words, just as the route of Adam and Eve's departure from Eden led them *eastward* past the cherubim with the flaming swords and out of the sacred garden into the mortal world, so in ancient times the high priest would return westward *from* the mortal world, past the consuming fire, the cleansing water, and the woven images of cherubim on the temple veils — and, finally, back into the presence of God. Likewise, in both the book of Moses and the modern LDS temple endowment, the posterity of Adam and Eve trace the footsteps of their first parents — first as they are sent away from Eden, and later in their subsequent journey of return and reunion.<sup>103</sup>

Also recalling the parallels between the layout of the Garden of Eden and Israelite Houses of God, Gary Anderson points out that “the vestments of the priest matched exactly those particular areas of the Temple to which he had access. ... Each time the high priest moved from one gradient of holiness to another, he had to remove one set of clothes and put on another to mark the change”.<sup>104</sup>

- (a) Outside the Tabernacle priests wear ordinary clothes. (b) When on duty in the Tabernacle, they wear four pieces of clothing whose material and quality of workmanship match that of the fabrics found on the outer walls of the courtyard.<sup>105</sup>
- (c) The High Priest wears those four pieces plus four additional ones — these added garments match the fabric of the Holy Chamber where he must go daily to tend the incense altar.

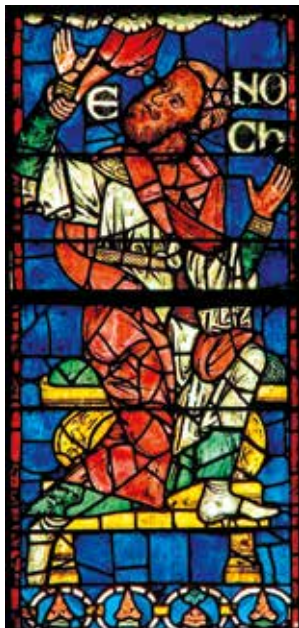
In Eden a similar set of vestments is found, again each set suited to its particular space. (a) Adam and Eve were, at creation, vested like priests and granted access to most of Eden. (b) Had they been found worthy, an even more glorious set of garments would have been theirs (and according to St. Ephrem, they would have entered even holier ground). (c) But having [transgressed], they were stripped of their angelic garments and put on mortal flesh. Thus, when their feet met ordinary earth — the realm of the animals — their constitution had become “fleshly,” or mortal.<sup>106</sup>



*Top-Down View of the Sacred Topography of Eden*

According to Brock, the imagery of clothing in the story of Adam and Eve is “a means of linking together in a dynamic fashion the whole of salvation history; it is a means of indicating the interrelatedness between every stage in this continuing working out of divine Providence,” including “the place of each individual Christian’s [ordinances] within the divine economy as a whole.”<sup>107</sup>

Not only the Garden of Eden, but also Noah’s Ark seems to have been “designed as a temple”<sup>108</sup> — more specifically a prefiguration of the Tabernacle, as argued so well by Michael Morales.<sup>109</sup> In fact, a few ancient accounts go so far in promoting the motif of the temple as to describe the Ark not as a floating watercraft but rather as a stationary, land-based place of protection,<sup>110</sup> where Noah and “many other people” from his generation “hid in a bright cloud” of glory.<sup>111</sup>



*Noah Window, Ancestors of Christ Windows, Canterbury Cathedral, ca 1178-1180*

The Ark’s three decks suggest both the three divisions of the Tabernacle and the threefold layout of the Garden of Eden.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, each of the decks of Noah’s Ark was exactly “the same height as the Tabernacle and three times the area of the Tabernacle court.”<sup>113</sup> Note that Noah’s Ark is shaped, not as a typical boat, but with a flat bottom like a box or coffer. The ratio of the width to the height of both Noah’s Ark and the Ark of the Covenant is 3:5.<sup>114</sup>

The story of Enoch is also fraught with temple themes.<sup>115</sup> Enoch is shown here with upraised hands in the traditional attitude of prayer. The right hand of God emerges from the cloud to grasp the right wrist of Enoch and lift him to heaven. Having mastered the law of consecration, which is “the consummation of the laws of obedience and



Mario Larrinaga, 1895-1972, *The Hanging Gardens of Babylon (Tower of Babel in the Distance)*, 1959-1962

sacrifice, ... the threshold of the celestial kingdom, [and] the last and hardest requirement made of men in this life,”<sup>116</sup> Enoch’s whole city is taken to the bosom of God, the heavenly temple.

A few chapters later we encounter the Tower of Babel, which can be seen as a sort of anti-temple wherein the Babylonians attempt to “make ... a name” for themselves.<sup>117</sup>

What has all this got to do with the topic of this chapter? In short, I would suggest that the kind of knowledge that will help us best understand the first chapters of Genesis and the book of Moses is not scientific or historic knowledge but rather knowledge of ancient and modern temples and temple worship.

Without a firm grasp on the teachings and ordinances of the temple, we will miss the gist of the primeval history. True, we may “race along with the seductively captivating narratives,” feeling that we are “largely grasping what is going on, even if some exotic or minor details are not immediately apparent.”<sup>118</sup> However, this mode of reading scripture — an approach that focuses on an interpretation of the stories only as presentations of historical characters and events — misses the point. Though the authors of scripture “must have actually experienced ... the meaning of ... ‘the sacred world,’” their writings are “not exactly in a manner of a scientific-ethnographic description and report”<sup>119</sup> but rather are composed representationally<sup>120</sup> “as foundations for collective practices and identity.”<sup>121</sup> The characters and events of the stories of Noah, Enoch, and the Tower of Babel, like the story of Adam and Eve, are “incorporated into the sacred world”<sup>122</sup> of rites and ordinances and must be understood accordingly. On the other hand, insight into the meaning of these stories “is obscured by the recontextualization of the tradition in a [merely] ‘historical’ account.”<sup>123</sup>

Does abandoning the primacy of the historical and scientific world in the interpretation of these scriptures mean that we are left with only fantasy in its place? Not according to Elder Douglas L. Callister, who said: “When you enter the temple, you *leave* the world of make-believe.”<sup>124</sup>

**Lesson 5: *There is more in these chapters than meets the eye.***

The more I study the scriptures, the more I have learned to trust them.<sup>125</sup> When I come to a puzzling verse, I do not automatically assume the passage is wrong, because there have been many times that further study has shown me that I was

mistaken in my initial assumptions or conclusions.

I ran into such a problem when David Larsen and I were studying the call of Enoch in the book of Moses,<sup>126</sup> a topic that already had been explored with insight by Stephen Ricks.<sup>127</sup>

Curiously, the closest biblical parallel to the wording of the opening verses of this passage is not to be found in the call of any Old Testament prophet but rather in the New Testament description of events following Jesus' baptism. The detailed resemblances between Moses 6:26-27 and the accounts of the baptism of Jesus seemed an obvious case of borrowing from the Gospels by Joseph Smith. However, as I studied and prayed about the issue, as a result of what I consider to be a process of inspiration, I came across an obscure article by Samuel Zinner.<sup>128</sup>



George Campfield, fl. 1861, *Creation Window*, All Saints Church, Selsley, England, 1861

Zinner compares Hebrews 1:5-6 to passages relating to the Father's declaration of the Lord's Sonship at the baptism of Jesus in the *Gospel of the Ebionites* and the *Gospel of the Hebrews*. He also notes that the motifs of "rest" and "reigning" co-occur in these three texts as well as in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*.<sup>129</sup> Finally, he argues for a "striking isomorphism" shared between *1 Enoch* and the baptismal allusion in the *Gospel of the Ebionites* in a promise made by Enoch to the righteous: "and a bright light will shine upon you, and the voice of rest you will hear from heaven."<sup>130</sup>

In summary, Zinner argues from these traces in extrabiblical writings that the ideas behind the description of Jesus' baptism in the Gospel "arose in an Enochic matrix." In other words, the verses from Joseph Smith's writings on Enoch that I thought had been derived from the New Testament were thought instead by Zinner to have originated in ancient Enoch traditions that eventually made their way into the New Testament. Hence, the unexpected parallel to Jesus' baptism in the book



J. James Tissot, 1836-1902, *Building the Tower of Babel*, 1856-1902

of Moses account of the calling of Enoch — which in a cursory analysis might have been looked upon as an obvious anachronism — is a passage with plausible Enochic affinities and possible Enochic origins.<sup>131</sup>

More of a puzzle from a scientific perspective is the Tower of Babel story. On the one hand, the details of the Babylonian setting and construction techniques check out quite plausibly, even if the time frame for the story is difficult to pin down definitively. On the other hand, in light of what is known about evolutionary linguistics the story of the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel seems patently ridiculous.

Building on the leads of Hugh Nibley, Brant Gardner, and other scholars, a credible alternative can be proposed to the idea that the story explains the origin of multiple languages. Instead, we might imagine that the story describes the dissolution of a lingua franca that had enabled cooperative work among the people who came together from throughout the empire to execute the building project.<sup>132</sup> “From such a mixing of people who were attempting to build a [false] temple to the heavens, Yahweh removed some of His believers [e.g., the Jaredites and, at some point, Abram] for His own purposes.”<sup>133</sup>

If we take the “one language” of Genesis 11:1 as being Sumerian, Akkadian, or even Aramaic<sup>134</sup> rather than a supposed universal proto-language, some of the puzzling aspects of the biblical account become more intelligible. “In addition to the local languages of each nation,<sup>135</sup> there existed ‘one language’<sup>136</sup> which made communication possible throughout the world”<sup>137</sup> — or, perhaps more accurately, throughout the land.<sup>138</sup> “Strictly speaking, the biblical text does not refer to

a plurality of languages but to the ‘destruction of language as an instrument of communication.’”<sup>139</sup>

In my years of acquaintance with the book of Genesis and the book of Moses, I have been astonished with the extent to which their words reverberate with the echoes of antiquity found elsewhere in scripture — and, no less significantly, with the deepest truths of my personal experience. Indeed, I would not merely assert that these books hold up well under close examination but rather that, like a fractal whose self-similar patterns become more wondrous upon ever closer inspection, the brilliance of their inspiration shines most impressively under bright light and high magnification: there is glory in the details.<sup>140</sup>

That said, J. D. Pleins reminds us that:<sup>141</sup>

we should acknowledge that not all questions can be answered definitively. This is the nature of the human quest, whether in the realm of science or religion. The answers we have are merely provisional. The search for any final truths is an all-consuming, lifelong task. Faith should not shun the historian’s discoveries, but neither will faith expect the historian to solve all questions. Faith can certainly benefit from seeing in the archaeologist’s persistent probing a kindred spirit in the search for elusive truths. Historical truth is a moving target, not a rock upon which to build faith. Faith, likewise, has its own work to do and cannot wait for the arrival of the latest issue of *Near Eastern Archaeology* before trying to sort things out.

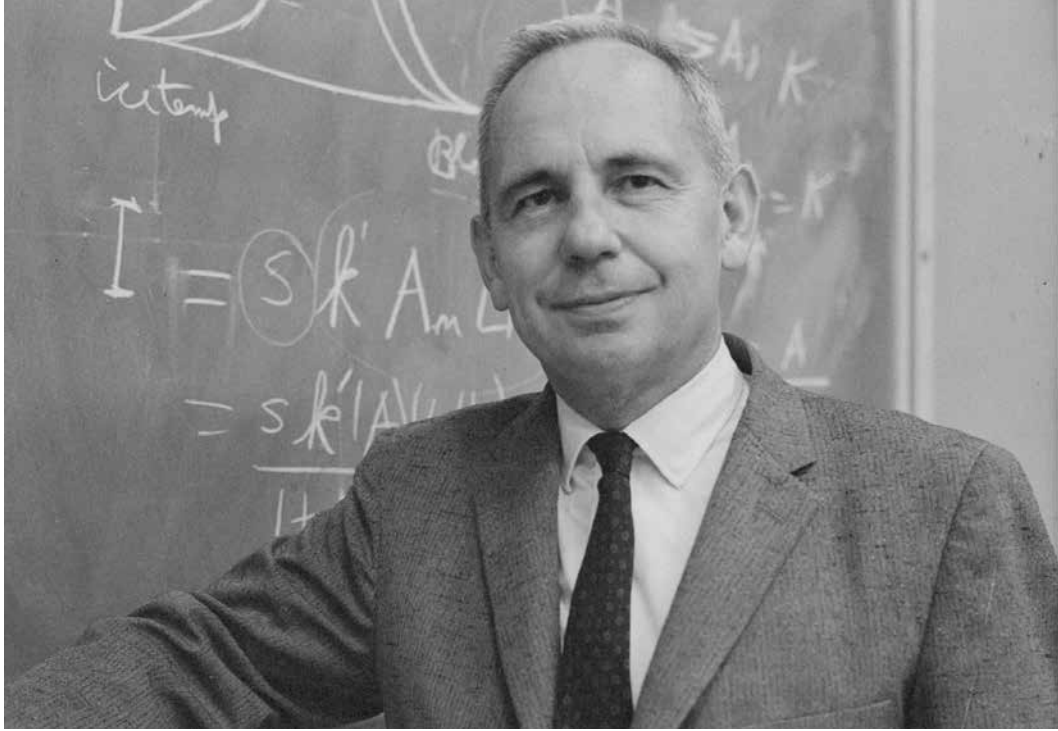
We should avoid the example of the man who found himself in a burning building and said: “I’m not leaving this spot until someone tells me exactly how all this got started.”

### **The Essential Quality of Meekness**

The characteristic of awe mentioned by Carl Sagan — so vital to the pursuit of knowledge in both science and religion — has been equated by Elder Maxwell with the scriptural term “meekness.”<sup>142</sup> Illustrating this attitude of meekness with an anecdote about his scientist father, President Henry B. Eyring wrote.<sup>143</sup>

Some of you have heard me tell of being in a meeting in New York as my father presented a paper at the American Chemical Society. A younger chemist popped up from the audience, interrupted, and said: “Professor Eyring, I’ve heard you on the other side of this question.” Dad laughed and said, “Look, I’ve been on every side of it I can find, and I’ll have to keep trying other sides until I finally get it figured out.” And then he went on with his lecture. So much for looking as though you are always right. He was saying what any good little Mormon boy would say. It was not a personality trait of Henry Eyring. He was a practicing believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that the Savior was the only perfect chemist. That was the way Dad saw the world and his place in it. He saw himself as a child. He worked his heart out, as hard as he could work. He was willing to believe he didn’t know most things. He was willing to change any idea he’s ever had when he found something which seemed closer to the truth. And even when others praised his





*Henry Eyring (1901-1981) at the Blackboard, 1958.*

work, he always knew it was an approximation in the Lord's eyes, and so he might come at the problem again, from another direction.

Some take the fact that science reverses its positions from time to time as a disturbing thing. On the contrary, I feel that we should take such events as encouraging news. In this regard, I side with those who locate the rationality of science not in the assertion that its theories are erected upon a consistent foundation of irrefutable facts but rather in the idea that it is at heart a self-correcting enterprise.<sup>144</sup> The payload of a mission to Mars precisely hits its landing spot not because we can set its initial course with pinpoint accuracy but rather because we can continue to adjust its trajectory as the rocket advances to its target. The same thing is true with religion — as Paul says, now we see only in part, now we know only in part<sup>145</sup> — that is why we have continuing revelation, and that is why we won't understand some things completely until we meet the Lord face-to-face.

Brother Henry Eyring said that it is the people who can tolerate “no contradictions in their minds [that] may have [the most] trouble.” As for himself, he continued: “There are all kinds of contradictions [in religion] I don't understand, but I find the same kinds of contradictions in science, and I haven't decided to apostatize from science. In the long run, the truth is its own most powerful advocate.”<sup>146</sup>

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### Endnotes

1. Thus Malcolm Muggeridge's poignant question, "Would something like the miracle of Bethlehem even be allowed to happen in our day?" (M. Muggeridge, *Jesus*, p. 19):

In humanistic times like ours, a contemporary virgin ... would regard a message from the Angel Gabriel that she might expect to give birth to a son to be called the Son of the Highest as ill-tidings of great sorrow. ... It is, in point of fact, extremely improbable, under existing conditions, that Jesus would have been permitted to be born at all. Mary's pregnancy, in poor circumstances, and with the father unknown, would have been an obvious case for an abortion; and her talk of having conceived as a result of the intervention of the Holy Ghost would have pointed to the need for psychiatric treatment, and made the case for terminating her pregnancy even stronger. Thus our generation, needing a Savior more, perhaps, than any that has ever existed, would be too humane to allow one to be born; too enlightened to permit the Light of the World to shine in a darkness that grows ever more oppressive.

2. Already in 1905, George Chesterton could write: "Atheism itself is too theological for us today" (G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics*, p. 40). Likewise, Charles Taylor provides an eloquent discussion of the process and consequences of the loss of "immediate certainty" of the moral/spiritual in Western culture (C. Taylor, *Secular Age* — see, e.g., pp. 11ff. See also T. Asad, *Construction*, pp. 47-52). This point is illustrated by Dan Peterson in his discussion of an essay by Jacob Weisberg that views (D. C. Peterson, *Reflections*, pp. xxiii-xxiv. See J. Weisberg, *Romney's Religion*):

reliance upon religious faith in general, not merely Mormonism, 'as an alternative to rational understanding of complex issues.' ... Weisberg regards all religious doctrines as 'dogmatic, irrational, and absurd. By holding them, someone indicates a basic failure to think for himself or see the world as it is.' [Cf. Asad for a view that "the reasons for a person's attachment to a given way of life, or conversion to another, cannot be reduced to an idealized model of scientific theory building" (*ibid.*, p. 235).] More commonly held creeds have simply been granted an unmerited patina of respectability by the sheer passage of time. "Perhaps Christianity and Judaism are merely more venerable and poetic versions of the same. But a few eons makes a big difference."

Peterson also cites a critical review of Bushman's biography of Joseph Smith, which implied that Bushman was overreaching himself in crafting a book that tries to make a place for "both inspiration and rational discourse." Peterson notes the "apparent assumption that rational discourse and inspiration are radically incompatible" and cites the reviewer's declaration "that, in order to earn a secular historian's acceptance, 'Smith's revelations would need to be

explained materially as a product of his cultural or physical environment” (D. C. Peterson, *Reflections* p. xxx. See L. F. Maffly-Kipp, *Who’s That*, p. 11).

Nonmember historian Jan Shippo’s experiences in responding to media questions about Mormonism illustrate the kinds of issues that arise for believers of all faiths in our day (J. Shippo, *Sojourner*, pp. 282-283; cf. R. L. Bushman, *Mormonism*, pp. 113-114):

I remember very well how the voice of one reporter coming across the telephone wire expressed both exasperation and astonishment. “How,” he wailed, “can perfectly sane people believe all this crazy stuff?” Because I had spent the first half of the 1980s writing a book designed to answer that very question, I had a ready reply ... It usually began with my pointing out that the idea that Joseph Smith found golden plates and had revelations was not any more absurd than the idea that Moses and the Hebrews walked across the Red Sea without getting wet or that Jesus, who was dead, is now alive.

That debates about the reality of Jesus’ resurrection are not a new phenomenon of the age of science is emphasized by N. T. Wright, who reminds us: “We didn’t need Galileo and Einstein to tell us that dead people don’t come back to life” (N. T. Wright, *Surprised*, p. 294).

Getting to the nub of the problem, Jacob Neusner concludes that “among our colleagues are some who do not really like religion in its living forms, but find terribly interesting religion in its dead ones. That is why an old Christian text, one from the first century for example, is deemed a worthy subject of scholarship. But a fresh Christian expression (I think in this connection of the Book of Mormon) is available principally for ridicule, but never for study. Religious experience in the third century is fascinating. Religious experience in the twentieth century is frightening or absurd” (J. Neusner, *Vocation*, p. 117).

While not accepting the historicity of the Book of Mormon, non-Mormon scholar Thomas O’Dea is one who at least took the book seriously “as a legitimate work of religious literature” and acknowledged that most of the theories of its origin advanced by its critics were unconvincing (A. L. Mauss, *Near-Nation*, p. 307). He observed with irony that “the Book of Mormon has not been universally considered by its critics as one of those books that must be read in order to have an opinion of it” (T. F. O’Dea, *Mormons*, p. 26).

3. Dickens later spoke admiringly of an uneducated but orderly group of Mormon emigrants he observed in Liverpool, concluding to his own surprise that if he hadn’t have known who they were: “I should have said they were in their degree, the pick and flower of England” (C. Dickens, *Traveler*, 22, 4 July 1863, p. 262). “Dickens related his experience to Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, who said that he had himself written on the topic of the Latter-day

Saints in the *Edinburgh Review* in January 1862. In his article Milnes refers to a House of Commons inquiry in 1854 . . . : ‘The Select Committee of the House of Commons on emigrant ships for 1854 summoned the Mormon agent and passenger-broker before it, and came to the conclusion that no ships under the provisions of the ‘Passengers Act’ could be depended upon for comfort and security in the same degree as those under his administration. . . . [T]he Mormon ship is a Family under a strong and accepted discipline, with every provision for comfort, decorum and internal peace’” (P. E. Kerry, *Carlyle*, pp. 266-267).

Dickens’ contemporaries John Stuart Mill and Thomas Carlyle also wrote sympathetically about the Mormons. In his 1859 essay *On Liberty*, Mill decried “the language of downright persecution which breaks out from the press of this country, whenever it feels called on to notice the remarkable phenomenon of Mormonism.” Characterizing the religion as “the product of palpable imposture,” all the more incredible because of its appearance “in the age of newspapers, railways, and the electric telegraph,” Mill was not at all partial to the teachings of the Church. However, it deeply concerned him that “its prophet and founder was, for his teaching, put to death by a mob; that others of its adherents lost their lives by the same lawless violence; that they were forcibly expelled, in a body, from the country in which they first grew up; while, now that they have been chased into a solitary recess in the midst of a desert, many in this country openly declare that it would be right (only that it is not convenient) to send an expedition against them, and compel them by force to conform to the opinions of other people.” That legitimate means of persuasion could be used to counter its teachings seemed acceptable. “But when the dissentients have conceded to the hostile sentiments of others, far more than could justly be demanded; when they have left the countries to which their doctrines were unacceptable, and established themselves in a remote corner of the earth, which they have been the first to render habitable to human beings; it is difficult to see on what principles but those of tyranny they can be prevented from living there under what laws they please, provided they commit no aggression on other nations, and allow perfect freedom of departure to those who are dissatisfied with their ways” (J. S. Mill, *Liberty*, pp. 163-166).

In the 1854 draft of his *Essay on the Mormons*, Carlyle described Mormonism as “a gross physical form of Calvinism, . . . but in this one point incommensurably (transcendently) superior to all other forms of religion now extant. That it is believed, that it is practically acted upon from day to day and from hour to hour; taken as a very fact, the neglect or contradiction of which will vitiate and ruin all other facts of the day and of the hour. That is its immeasurable superiority” (cited in P. E. Kerry, *Carlyle*, pp. 266-267, p. 270).

4. Thomas W. Merrill describes the prevailing attitudes of contentious believers and unbelievers as follows (T. W. Merrill, *Children of Skeptics*, pp. 238-239):



In the absence of a more satisfying refutation on the merits, ... published attacks on orthodoxy [have often taken] the form of mockery. Mockery — still a dominant mode of critique of religion among today's avowed atheists — insinuates that religious belief is mere prejudice, mere unthinking habit that has been shed by all forward thinking persons, who cannot help but have contempt or condescending pity for those stick-in-the-mud believers. In turn, those believers cannot help but resent the evident contempt of the intellectuals. Enlightenment thus understood is necessarily divisive: even to this day in all Western democracies, believers and unbelievers confront each other with the haughtiness of contempt on the one side and an understandable resentment on the other.

5. J. Hannay, Smith, p. 385, cited in R. J. Dunn, Dickens, p. 4. A non-LDS observer similarly wrote of the Mormons in 2009: "What would do you do if you met people you admired greatly, who reminded you of the best examples of your fellow believers, yet whose faith rested on what you saw as patent absurdities" W. Lobdell, *Losing*, pp. 121-122). He goes on to concede, however: "Yet what's so strange about Mormonism compared to traditional Christianity. ... The details of Mormonism are fresher, but not much more strange and mythical" (*ibid.*, pp. 126, 127).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell expressed his "special appreciation for my friends who, though resolutely irreligious themselves, were not scoffers. Instead, though doubtless puzzled by me and their other religious friends, they were nevertheless respectful. I admire the day-to-day decency of such men and women. Though detached from theology, their decency is commendable" (N. A. Maxwell, *Inexhaustible*, p. 216). Among the many religious non-Mormon friends is historian Jan Shipps. She put her finger on part of the problem that people encounter in understanding LDS beliefs when she observed that "Mormonism is a really complex theological system. ... All its parts fit together beautifully. But if you just know a little bit about one of them, or part of them, it seems weird" (M. Luo, Test).

For an insightful essay charting the historical evolution of charges that Mormonism is not Christian, see J. Shipps, *Sojourner*, pp. 335-357. For general overviews of changes in public perceptions of the Mormons in America, see T. L. Givens, *Viper*; J. Shipps, *Sojourner*, pp. 51-123).

The well-known Vatican astronomer, Guy Consolmagno, found that two religions were universally dismissed by the subjectively selected sample of scientists and engineers he interviewed as "obviously wrong": Scientology and Mormonism. However, he also notes a difference between the two: "no scientist of my acquaintance has ever had something good to say about Scientology — rather ironic, given its name. But as it happens, I know a number of techies who are Mormons, including my thesis advisor at MIT" (G. Consolmagno, *God's Mechanics*, p. 98). Consolmagno's masters thesis advisor was John S. Lewis, author of a chapter in the present volume, who joined the Church in

Boston while teaching at MIT and, among many other accomplishments, spent time as an internationally-respected professor of planetary science at the University of Arizona.

As one who has experienced both the perplexity and the generosity of spirit of his non-LDS colleagues, prominent Mormon historian Richard L. Bushman shared the following (R. L. Bushman, R. L. Bushman, pp. 79-80):

I have lived an academic life ever since I graduated from Harvard College in 1955 and then later received a Ph.D. in the history of American civilization from that same institution. Since then I have taught at Brigham Young University, Boston University, and the University of Delaware, been visiting professor at Brown and Harvard universities, and now am Gouverneur Morris Professor of History at Columbia University. In these many years as an academic, I have never been belittled for my religious beliefs or felt excluded. I have published books, contributed to conferences, entered into scholarly controversies, and had my share of honors without once feeling that my well-known faith raised a barrier. Only now and then have I caught a glimpse of the wonder my colleagues must feel that a rational, modern man believes the stories and doctrines of the Latter-day Saints. Soon after I was hired as professor of history and chair of the department at the University of Delaware, a member of the search committee invited me to lunch. While we were driving along, I mentioned my work on a biography of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Latter-day Saint Church. My colleague, doubtless to reassure me, turned quickly and said, "Dick, we took all that into account and decided it didn't matter." Apparently he was thinking of the peculiar tic in my intellectual makeup that allowed me to hold these strange beliefs. A similar reaction greeted me on coming to Columbia in 1989. Introduced to a member of the faculty, he said jovially, "Oh, you're the Mormon," an entirely amiable remark meant to make me feel at home. But one can imagine the repercussions if a new faculty member at Brigham Young University was greeted with "Oh, you're the Jew," or "Oh, you're the Catholic."

The extravagant nature of the Latter-day Saint religion probably accounts for the perplexity of my colleagues. Christian and Jewish doctrines, weathered by time, no longer strike people as bizarre or unusual. One can hold to one of the moderate versions of these ancient religions without startling one's friends. But Joseph Smith saw the angel Moroni less than two hundred years ago and then brought home gold plates and translated the Book of Mormon. These miraculous events, happening so close to home, strain one's credulity. How can anyone in this day of science and skepticism believe that God sends angels to speak to humans and requires such unlikely acts as the translation of an ancient history with the aid of a Urim and Thummim? My sophomore tutor, the distinguished historian of science, I. B. Cohen, once coyly mentioned to me that many people thought LDS beliefs were pure garbage. He doubtless was trying gently to bring me to my senses after my sheltered upbringing as a member of the Church.

While Mormons regard many of the doctrinal elaborations that occurred during the early centuries of Christianity as unwarranted intrusions of Greek philosophy into the straightforward historical truths of the Gospel, some non-Mormons see LDS theology merely as simplistic and naïve. For example Thomas Cahill writes that Mormonism resembles Manichaeism in its philosophical impoverishment, being “full of assertions, but [yielding] no intellectual system to nourish a great intellect” (T. Cahill, *Irish*, p. 49). While a strong rebuttal of Cahill’s claim could be buttressed with arguments from a long line of scholars, both Mormon and non-Mormon, who have recognized the unique riches of the LDS tradition, such an argument would distract attention from a more central point: Like all religious traditions with which I am personally acquainted, the primary interest of Mormonism is in developing a universal community of saints not an elite cadre of scholars (see J. E. Faulconer, Tracy; J. Siebach, Response). In his essay on the *Difference between a Genius and an Apostle*, Søren Kierkegaard eloquently captures this distinction between what he calls a “genius” and an “apostle” (S. Kierkegaard, *Purity*, from Translator’s Introduction, p. 21):

The genius, an aristocrat of the spirit, has had gifts lavished upon him by nature that distinguish him from his fellows. The apostle may be a commoner, a fisherman, a one-talent man by nature, or he may have ten talents—yet all that he has is dedicated to the service of the Eternal and as such is lifted up. The genius speaks with brilliance and charm. The apostle speaks with authority. The way of the genius is a way closed to all but a few. The way of the apostle is a way open to all as individuals — even to the genius himself if he can forsake the absorbing satisfactions of a brilliant self-sufficiency and be ready to will one thing.

For a similar point of view, see H. W. Nibley, *Prophets*. See also J. S. Tanner, *Men and Mantles*, pp. 159-160; J. L. Kugel, *How to Read*, pp. 679-689.

6. J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1995*, p. vii.
7. M. Barker, *Hidden*, p. 34.
8. LaCocque observes: “To consider [such stories as tales] for children is only possible when the story is vaguely known, when it is considered from a distance, and with a preconceived feeling that nothing can be learned from so ‘naïve’ a tale” (A. LaCocque, *Trial*, pp. 10-11).
9. H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, p. 63.
10. 1 Corinthians 13:11.
11. Thomas Paine, in his 1794 treatise *The Age of Reason*, dismissed the Flood story in one line by saying: “The story of Eve and the serpent, and of Noah and his Ark, drops to a level with the *Arabian Nights*, without the merit of being entertaining” (J. D. Pleins, *When*, p. 19). Characterizing the view of

contemporary scholarship, Elizabeth Harper observes: “Noah’s Ark still appeals as a colorful children’s toy, but otherwise it is a story much out of favor. It is, after all, historically ridiculous and even morally reprehensible. While it provides a fine example of source divisions for introductory biblical classes, exciting scholarly work seems to lie elsewhere” (E. A. Harper, *It’s All [2013]*, p. 32). Cf. Richard Dawkins: “the legend of the animals going into the Ark two by two is charming, but the moral of the story of Noah is appalling” (R. Dawkins, *Delusion*, p. 237).

12. J. David Pleins observes: “Creating a science of the Flood has not necessarily helped to shore up biblical belief. In fact, the preposterous character of so many of the proposals made belief in the Bible seem ludicrous” (J. D. Pleins, *When*, p. 11). Continuing, he writes (*ibid.*, pp. 65-66):

Eating from the fruit of the tree of scientific knowledge has led to a loss of innocence for many believers. The sort of literalism demanded by so many fundamentalists today does not ring true to those who take the geological and evolutionary sciences seriously. Yet is there a place for religion at the table of the sciences? The culture war that creationists are waging has pushed many scientifically minded people away from interest in religion. Many secular scientists join the creationists in thinking that religion and science must ever be in conflict with one another. While rightly wishing to keep creation science out of the biology classroom, those who erect a barrier between modern science and religion run the risk of throwing the baby out with the bath water. Believers in the Bible have not always had a siege mentality when it comes to the sciences. In fact, the popularity of flood geology and creation science serves to conceal the many and varied attempts to bring religious realism and a scientific sensibility to the interpretation of scriptures. Since these more creative efforts, rather than fundamentalism, have dominated the Jewish and Christian centuries, the alternative approaches deserve separate treatment.

13. N. Wyatt, *Water*, p. 219. For a survey of equally dubious modern attempts to create replicas of the Ark, see P. B. Thomas, *Go-4-Wood*.
14. S. Lessin, Galzu. Sasha Lessin, who also goes by the name of Alex, claims a PhD in anthropology from UCLA and describes himself as the “Dean of Instruction at Tantra Theosophical and Gaia Worshipping Society of the Divine Human Family.”
15. P. Hall, *Just How Much*. See E. D. Cohen et al., *After Me*, for their analysis of three popular “apocalyptic” films with respect to their embodiment of a “Noahide Apocalyptic Template.” For my views on the film, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Noah Like No Other*.
16. *Noah* (Film).
17. P. Hall, *Just How Much*.

18. Ibid.
19. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 25 March 1839, p. 137.
20. In a separate chapter of this book, I have provided a discussion of specific questions on verses from Genesis 1-11 and the book of Moses in greater detail. For more on these topics, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*; J. M. Bradshaw and D. J. Larsen, *God's Image 2*.
21. D. Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, Inferno: Canto 4:13: *Or discendiam qua giù nel cieco mondo*.
22. The virtuous Roman Virgil, the greatest of poets, served as a guide for Dante in his journeys through the frights of Hell and Purgatory in the *Divine Comedy*. However, because Virgil was unbaptized he could not accompany Dante on his visit to Paradise.
23. R. Dawkins in D. Van Biema, *God vs. Science*, p. 55. As a matter of scientific principle, Dawkins has classed himself as a TAP (Temporary Agnostic in Practice), though he thinks the probability of a God is very small, and certainly in no sense would want to be “misunderstood as endorsing faith” (L. M. Krauss et al., *Science* [online]).
24. L. M. Krauss et al., *Science* (online). Though personally rejecting the notion of a personal God, Albert Einstein is an example of one whose deeply-held “vision of unity and order” (C. H. Townes, *Convergence*, p. 66) — which throughout his life played an important role in shaping his scientific intuitions (see, e.g., W. Isaacson, *Einstein*, p. 335) — was chiefly motivated by his profound sense of awe and humility in the face of the lawful and “marvelously arranged” universe (ibid., p. 388):

Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the Universe—a spirit vastly superior to that of man, and one in the face of which we with our modest powers must feel humble.

Often more critical of the debunkers of religion than of naïve believers in God, he explained: “The fanatical atheists are like slaves who are still feeling the weight of their chains which they have thrown off after hard struggle. They are creatures who—in their grudge against traditional religion as the ‘opium of the masses’ — cannot hear the music of the spheres” (ibid., p. 390).

25. Cited in N. A. Maxwell, *Cosmos*, p. 1.
26. See J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 25 March 1839, p. 137:

Thy mind, O man! If thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation, must stretch as high as the utmost heavens, and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss, and the broad expanse of eternity—thou must commune with God.

How much more dignified and noble are the thoughts of God, than the vain imaginations of the human heart!

For an insightful discussion of this imperative, see J. W. Welch, *Thy Mind*.

27. Articles of Faith 1:9.
28. For example, in the most recent statement by a standing prophet specifically addressing the origin of man to appear in an official Church publication, President Spencer W. Kimball wrote (Church Educational System, Religion 327, p. 9; S. W. Kimball, *Blessings*, emphasis added):

The Creators breathed into their nostrils the breath of life and man and woman became living souls. We don't know exactly how their coming into this world happened, and *when we're able to understand it the Lord will tell us.*"

29. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 16 June 1844, p. 374.
30. *Ibid.*, 16 June 1844, p. 374.
31. *Ibid.*, 20 January 1844, p. 331.
32. *Ibid.*, 20 January 1844, p. 331:

But there has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlock knots with a corn-dodger [= a hard, fried corn-meal cake] for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle [= a heavy hammer, a maul].

33. R. L. Bushman, *Rough Stone*, p. 200 summarized these difficulties:

"The Vision" confused Mormons who saw only its universalist bent. For most Christians, universal salvation exceeded the limits of acceptable orthodoxy. One Mormon [Brigham Young] reflected later that "my traditions were such, that when the Vision came first to me, it was so directly contrary and opposed to my former education, I said, wait a little; I did not reject it, but I could not understand it" (B. Young, 28 August 1852, p. 31, cited in R. J. Woodford, *Historical Development*, 2:929). Others who were "stumbling at it" did object. At a conference in Geneseo, New York, held to deal with the controversy, one brother declared "the vision was of the Devil & he believed it no more than he believed the devil was crucified" (cited in *ibid.*, 2:930). Ezra Landon was cut off from the Church for insisting "the vision was of the Devil came from hel[l]" (cited in *ibid.*, 2:931). Eventually Joseph counseled missionaries against publicizing "The Vision" prematurely. The first missionaries to England were told to stick to the first principles of the Gospel (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 11 June 1837, 2:492). Other members found it thrilling. William Phelps immediately published "The Vision" in the Church newspaper in Missouri (E & MS, vol. 1, no. 2, July 1832, pp. 27-30).

See R. J. Woodford, *Historical Development*, 2:929-933 for a more detailed account of the difficulties of the Saints with this revelation. See also D. Q. Cannon, Section 76, p. 414; B. Young, 18 May 1873, p. 42; M. McBride, *The Vision*. For more on universalism and the revelations of Joseph Smith, see C. P. Griffiths, *Universalism*.

Joseph Smith lamented (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 21 May 1843, p. 305):

I could explain a hundred fold more than I have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested in the vision, were I permitted, and were the people prepared to receive them. The Lord deals with this people as a tender parent with a child, communicating light and intelligence and the knowledge of His ways as they can bear it.

34. See a nuanced discussion of this issue in M. A. Wright, *Heartland*.
35. Moses 1:33. See also Moses 1:35; D&C 76:24; D&C 88:46-61.
36. The technique that Pisano uses for his engravings is called in French *taille-douce*, literally soft-cutting. Writes N. Pisano, *Prehistoric Engravings* (Unpublished broadside):
 

This is an engraving technique which involves hollowing out a metal-plate (zinc, copper, etc.) by the action of acid after making the drawing with an etcher's needles, burin, aquateinte, etc. After inking, the prints are printed one by one with a hand press. The pressure is very high and allows the paper to pick up the ink from the hollows in the metal. The prints ... are made from one, two, or three plates.
37. For a comprehensive and beautifully illustrated survey of European paleolithic art, see J. Clottes, *L'Art*.
38. The description of how the image was created is drawn from I. Cahn et al., *L'Art*, p. 16.
39. Y. N. Hariri, *Sapiens*, p. 100. As a witness of the great effort and care sometimes made to honor the dead in this era, Hariri notes the 1955 discovery in Sungir, Russia of (*ibid.*, pp. 57-58):

a 30,000 year-old burial site belonging to a mammoth-hunting culture ... [Among other things, i]t contained two skeletons, buried head to head. One belonged to a boy aged about twelve or thirreen, and the other to a girl of about nine or ten. The boy was covered with 5,000 ivory beads. He wore a fox-tooth hat and a belt with 250 fox teeth (at least sixty foxes had to have their teeth pulled to get that many). The girl was adorned with 5,250 ivory beads. Both children were surrounded by stauettes and various ivory objects. A skilled craftsman (or craftswoman) probably needed about forty-five minutes to prepare a single ivory bead. In other words, fashioning the 10,000 ivory beads that covered the two children, not to mention the other

objects, required some 7,500 hours of delicate work, well over three years of labor by an experienced artisan!

40. Free translation of T. Félix et al., *Préhistoire*, pp. 106-107, with additional details provided by R. Teyssedou et al., *Guide de Visite*.
41. See, e.g., H. W. Nibley, *Dominion*.
42. H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, pp. 50, 51, 82-83.
43. *Moses* 1:31.
44. J. L. Sorenson, *Ancient*, pp. 50-56.
45. *Moses* 5:12, 16.
46. H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, p. 78 and *Moses* 7:33, 37.
47. H. W. Nibley, *Return*, pp. 62-63 and *Moses* 5:5-9; cf. *Revelation* 20:12.
48. For example, F. S. Collins, *Language*, p. 126 writes:

Population geneticists, whose discipline involves the use of mathematical tools to reconstruct the history of populations for animals, plants, or bacteria, look at ... facts about the human genome and conclude that they point to all members of our species having descended from a common set of founders, approximately 10,000 in number, who lived about 100,000 to 150,000 years ago. This information fits well with the fossil record, which in turn places the location of those founding ancestors most likely in East Africa.

Collins (*ibid.*, pp. 125-126) draws out an implication of this finding:

At the DNA level, we are all 99.9 percent identical. That similarity applies regardless of which two individuals from around the world you choose to compare. Thus, by DNA analysis, we humans are truly part of one family. This remarkably low genetic diversity distinguishes us from most other species on the planet, where the DNA diversity is ten or sometimes even fifty times greater than our own. An alien visitor sent here to examine life forms on earth might have many interesting things to say about humankind, but most certainly he would comment on the suprisingly low level of genetic diversity within our species.

Collins is noted for his leadership of the Human Genome Project. Currently, he is director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A critic of both Young Earth Creationism and Intelligent Design, he is a proponent of theistic evolution or evolutionary creation, and describes himself as a “serious Christian.” The well-known atheist “Christopher Hitchens referred to Francis Collins as a ‘Great American’ and stated that Collins was one of the most devout believers he had ever met ... [Hitchens said] that their friendship despite their differing opinion on religion was an example of the greatest armed truce in modern times” ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_Collins#Christianity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Collins#Christianity) (accessed January 18, 2016))

49. *Moses* 5:12.
50. *Moses* 7:21.
51. *Moses* 7:12, 22.
52. *Moses* 7:27.
53. *Moses* 6:41.



54. It is unclear who Nibley is referring to, unless he is talking about lines of hominids who have become extinct.
55. Moses 7:51-53.
56. Moses 8:2-3.
57. Moses 7:22.
58. J. H. Walton, *Lost World of Adam and Eve*, p. 185 describes such a scenario:

In some models Adam and Eve are thought of as two of the members of a small population of humans and that through the course of time as generation followed generation, their descendants spread through the population and other lines died out such that today everyone has genetic material from these two. This view attempts to place Adam and Eve in Genesis 1 among an *en masse* creation of humans and still retain the idea that Adam and Eve are the parents of us all. It affirms that Adam and Eve were (among) the first humans and that (through a complex process) we are all descended from Adam and Eve. Though it looks nothing like the traditional biblical interpretation, it makes similar affirmations while at the same time accommodating common descent and affirming that the history evident in the genome actually took place.

With reference to a much earlier time than the era of Adam and Eve (no later than approximately 30,000 BCE), there is a growing consensus among researchers that there was a limited amount of interbreeding between the ancestors of today's humans and Neanderthals that led to modern humans carrying 1-4% of Neanderthal genes (Interbreeding?). The authors of one study believe they have "pinpointed the skeletal remains of the first known human-Neanderthal hybrid. ... The finding came from northern Italy, where some 40,000 years ago scientists believe Neanderthals and humans lived near each other, but developed separate and distinctly different cultures" (500,000-Year-Old Neanderthal). Other researchers "suggest that interbreeding went on between the members of several ancient human-like groups living in Europe and Asia more than 30,000 years ago, including an as-yet unknown human ancestor from Asia" (E. Callaway, *Ancient Humans*).

59. R. Parr, *Missing*, pp. 94-97.
60. Of course, the chances that someone on earth today is *not* already a descendant of Abraham are becoming vanishingly slim. See L. Funderburg, *Changing Face* for a vivid photo essay illustrating the rapid growth of multiracial self-identification in America since it was first included in the US Census in 2000.
61. 2 Nephi 27:20, 21.
62. N. A. Maxwell, *Richness*. In another reference to these verses, Elder Maxwell said: "God's capacity is such that two times in two verses in the Book of

Mormon, He reassures us in a very polite but pointed way, ‘I am able to do mine own work’ (2 Nephi 27:20–21). Is He ever!” (N. A. Maxwell, *Wondrous*, p. 33).

63. H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, pp. 64-66.
64. Genesis 8:9. See J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God’s Image 2*, pp. 267-270 for a discussion of evidence pointing to a local (rather than global) Flood.
65. W. Bradley, *Why*, pp. 177-179.
66. J. A. Widtsoe, *Evidences*, p. 127.
67. See, e.g., R. E. Friedman, *Who*; R. E. Friedman, *Hidden*. For a recent LDS perspective on the Documentary Hypothesis and higher criticism in general, see D. E. Bokovoy, *Authoring Genesis-Deuteronomy*. For mixed reviews of the book, see K. L. Barney, *Authoring*; J. M. Bradshaw, *Sorting*.
68. Although broad agreement persists on many issues of longstanding consensus, the state of research on the composition of the Pentateuch continues to evolve in important ways. In 2012, Konrad Schmid gave the following assessment (K. Schmid, *Genesis*, pp. 28-29):

Pentateuchal scholarship has changed dramatically in the last three decades, at least when seen in a global perspective. The confidence of earlier assumptions about the formation of the Pentateuch no longer exists, a situation that might be lamented but that also opens up new and — at least in the view of some scholars — potentially more adequate paths to understand its composition. One of the main results of the new situation is that neither traditional nor newer theories can be taken as the accepted starting point of analysis; rather, they are, at most possible ends.

With respect to Genesis in particular, “it is fairly obvious that the book of Genesis serves as a kind of introduction or prologue to what follows in Exodus through Deuteronomy” (*ibid.*, p. 29). “Nevertheless,” continues Schmid in his highlighting of one prominent theme in the most recent thinking on the topic (*ibid.*, pp. 30, 32, 45), “the function of Genesis to the Pentateuch is apparently not exhausted by describing it as an introduction to the Moses story. ... Genesis ... shows ... clear signs of having existed as a stand-alone literary unit for some portion of its literary growth. Genesis is a special book within the Pentateuch: it is the most self-sufficient one. ... In current scholarship, it is no longer possible to explain the composition of the book of Genesis from the outset within the framework of the Documentary Hypothesis.” For a broader survey of current research, see J. C. Gertz, *Formation*. For details of textual transmission and reception history of Genesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, see C. A. Evans et al., *Book of Genesis*, pp. 303-632.

69. R. E. Friedman, *Commentary*, p. 16.

70. J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 5.
71. E.g., 2 Nephi 25:8, 21-22; Jacob 1:3; Enos 1:15-16; Jarom 1:2; Mormon 7:1, 8:34-35.
72. E.g., E. T. Benson, *Book of Mormon—Keystone*.
73. J. Blenkinsopp, *The structure of P*, p. 284.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 284.
75. 1 Nephi 19:23.
76. E.g., 1 Nephi 4:2, 17:23-44. André LaCocque describes how the Bible “attributes to historical events (like the Exodus, for instance) a paradigmatic quality” (A. LaCocque, *Captivity of Innocence*, p. 71). “[A]ny conceptual framework which merely purports to reconstruct events ‘as they really were’ (Ranke),” writes Michael Fishbane, “is historicistic, and ignores the thrust of [the Bible’s] reality. For the Bible is more than history. It is a religious document which has transformed memories and records in accordance with various theological concerns” (M. A. Fishbane, *Sacred Center*, p. 6).
77. Cf. B. A. Gardner, *Gift and Power*, p. 295.
78. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 15 October 1843, p. 327. Cf. 1 Nephi 13:24-28. Willard Richards’ original notes in Joseph Smith’s Diary for this passage read: “I believe the bible, as it ought to be, as it came from the pen of the original writers” (J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 15 October 1843, p. 256). The notes of Richards, who was present for the original discourse, were later filled out under the direction of Elder George A. Smith who continued the compilation of Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* after the death of Elder Richards (D. C. Jessee, *JS History*, p. 470). Of course, there are similar difficulties that have come into play in the textual, editing, and publishing history of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants (e.g., Section 27), a fact that should help us better understand the idea of a textual history described by source criticism for the Old Testament. As Ben McGuire explains (B. L. McGuire, 17 March 2014):

Within the short history of our scripture we see numerous such changes (even with the existence of printing technology) that help us to understand that these changes occur quite naturally — and are not necessarily the results of translational issues or corrupt priests. We can, of course, completely identify the history of some of these changes, we can detail corruptions in the Book of Mormon that have occurred from the original manuscript. We can speculate about the existence of these errors where the original manuscript does not exist, and so on. And the fact that we can talk about [D&C] 27 as a composite work is itself another symptom of the process by which our texts come into existence in a way that doesn’t reflect a single author with a single pen, providing us with the perfect word of God.

79. J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 29 January 1843, p. 161. By this, I do not think that the Prophet meant that a given passage of scripture can be understood in isolation, apart from the context in which it stands. Rather, for example, when he interpreted a parable, his “key” to “ascertain its meaning” was to “dig up the root,” i.e., to “enquire [as to] the question which drew out the answer” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, January 1843, pp. 276-277). He was democratic in his desire to have the scriptures unfolded to all, decrying those who supposed that their plain truths were “mystery ... and, therefore, are not to be understood.” He declared that all the Saints could come to an understanding of such things “if [they] will but open [their] eyes, and read with candor” (*ibid.*, December 1835, p. 96).
80. We use the term “modernists” rather than “moderns” to describe those who hold this view of interpretation in order to make it clear that this is not the only contemporary point of view possible. For example, many who would describe their perspective as “postmodern” are critical of the modernist view.

A thumbnail characterization of this modernism controversy is given by Faulconer (J. E. Faulconer, *Study*, pp. 131-132):

One writer has described modernism’s assumption this way: “A constellation of positions (e.g., a rational demand for unity, certainty, universality, and ultimacy) and beliefs (e.g., the belief that words, ideas, and things are distinct entities; the belief that the world represents a fixed object of analysis separated from forms of human discourse and cognitive representation; the belief that culture is subsequent to nature and that society is subsequent to the individual)” (S. Daniel, *Paramodern Strategies*, pp. 42-43). There is far too little room here to discuss the point extensively, but suffice it to say that, first, few, if any, of these assumptions have remained standing in the twentieth century, and second, the failure of these assumptions does not necessarily imply the failure of their claims to truth or knowledge, as is often argued, sometimes by adherents to the current attack on modernism and sometimes by critics of that attack. For an excellent discussion of postmodernism and its relation to religion, see J. Caputo, *Good News*.

81. J. E. Faulconer, *Incarnation*, p. 44, emphasis added.
82. In response to a request in 1831 by his brother Hyrum to explain the translation process more fully, Joseph Smith said that “it was not intended to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon; and ... it was not expedient for him to relate these things” (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 25-26 October 1831, 1:220). For more on the Prophet’s reluctance to share details of sacred events, see R. O. Barney, *Joseph Smith’s Visions*; R. Nicholson, *Cowdery Conundrum*.
83. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 4 January 1833, 1:315, in a parallel to the wording found in Omni 1:20 that was later taken up in the account and

testimony of the Three Witnesses (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Histories*, 1832-1844, pp. 318-323). See also D&C 1:29, 20:8.

84. Brant Gardner summarizes (B. A. Gardner, *Gift and Power*, p. 321):

The Book of Mormon was translated by a very human Joseph Smith. Nevertheless, he was a human being inspired to extrahuman ability through divine providence. Joseph declined to say more about the translation of the Book of Mormon than to declare that it was accomplished through “the gift and power of God.” No matter how closely we examine the process, no matter how well we might understand the human aspect, Joseph’s description really remains the best.

85. J. E. Faulconer, *Dorrien*, p. 426.
86. J. E. Faulconer, *Incarnation*, pp. 44-45, emphasis added. Cf. J. E. Faulconer, *Study*, pp. 124-133.
87. Cf. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, pp. 31-32.
88. J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 29 January 1843, p. 161.
89. L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:51. See also W. P. Brown, *Seven Pillars*, pp. 40-41; P. J. Kearney, *Creation*; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Cosmology of P*, pp. 10-11. According to J. H. Walton, *Lost World*, p. 82:

the courtyard represented the cosmic spheres outside of the organized cosmos (sea and pillars). The antechamber held the representations of lights and food. The veil separated the heavens and earth — the place of God’s presence from the place of human habitation.

Note that in this conception of creation the focus is not on the origins of the raw materials used to make the universe but rather on their fashioning into a structure providing a useful purpose. The key insight, according to Walton, is that: “people in the ancient world believed that something existed not by virtue of its material proportion, *but by virtue of its having a function in an ordered system*. ... Consequently, something could be manufactured physically but still not ‘exist’ if it has not become functional. ... The ancient world viewed the cosmos more like a company or kingdom” that comes into existence at the moment it is organized, not when the people who participate it were created materially (*ibid.*, pp. 26, 35; cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 5 January 1841, p. 181, Abraham 4:1).

J. H. Walton, *Lost World*, pp. 43-44, 53 continues:

It has long been observed that in the contexts of *bara'* [the Hebrew term translated “create”] no materials for the creative act are ever mentioned, and an investigation of all the passages mentioned above substantiate that claim. How interesting it is that these scholars then draw the conclusion that *bara'* implies creation out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). One can see with

a moment of thought that such a conclusion assumes that “create” is a material activity. To expand their reasoning for clarity’s sake here: Since “create” is a material activity (assumed on their part), and since the contexts never mention the materials used (as demonstrated by the evidence), then the material object must have been brought into existence without using other materials (i.e., out of nothing). But one can see that the whole line of reasoning only works if one can assume that *bara’* is a material activity. In contrast, if, as the analysis of objects presented above suggests, *bara’* is a functional activity, it would be ludicrous to expect that materials are being used in the activity. In other words, the absence of reference to materials, rather than suggesting material creation out of nothing, is better explained as indication that *bara’* is not a material activity but a functional one. ...

In summary, the evidence ... from the Old Testament as well as from the ancient Near East suggests that both defined the pre-creation state in similar terms and as featuring an absence of functions rather than an absence of material. Such information supports the idea that their concept of existence was linked to functionality and that creation was an activity of bringing functionality to a nonfunctional condition rather than bringing material substance to a situation in which matter was absent. The evidence of matter (the waters of the deep in Genesis 1:2) in the precreation state then supports this view.

90. E.g., M. Weinfeld, *Sabbath*, pp. 508-510; S. D. Ricks, *Liturgy*; P. J. Kearney, *Creation*; J. Morrow, *Creation*.
91. Exodus 40:17-19.
92. Exodus 40:20-21.
93. Exodus 12:8, 25:30.
94. For a discussion how the notion of “priestly time” is reflected in the story of the creation of the luminaries, see M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, pp. 93-94, 97-98. If we take a functional view of Creation, then the luminaries are among the functionaries (J. H. Walton, *Lost World*, pp. 63-66).
95. Exodus 25:31-40, 37:17-24.
96. Exodus 25:18-22, 37:6-9.
97. See Exodus 40:12-15. See also M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, pp. 98-102. J. H. Walton, *Lost World*, p. 149 writes:

Through Genesis 1 we come to understand that God has given us a privileged role in the functioning of His cosmic temple. He has tailored the world to our needs, not to His (for He has no needs). It is His place, but it is designed for us and we are in relationship with Him.

See C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Jewish Roots*, p. 128 for the idea that certain individuals (e.g., the high priest, as possessor of the “glory of Adam”) were

even “deemed worthy of worship because they were God’s Image, his living idols.” Cf. S. Bunta, *Likeness*; John 14:6-13.

98. Moses 3:1. Significantly, the view that relates the symbolism of the Creation to the elevation of the Israelite sanctuary is shared by scholars of very different persuasions as to the process of Bible authorship (see, e.g., J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, p. 287; A. C. Leder, *Coherence*, p. 267; J. Morrow, *Creation*; D. P. Wright, *Inventing*, p. 509 n. 31; M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*; J. H. Walton, *Lost World*; J. H. Walton, *Genesis*, pp. 10-31; W. P. Brown, *Seven Pillars*, pp. 33-77; D. E. Bokovoy, *Authoring Genesis-Deuteronomy*, pp. 147-149). See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 146-149; J. M. Bradshaw, *LDS Book of Enoch*.

Levenson cites Blenkinsopp’s thesis of a triadic structure in the priestly concept of world history that described the “creation of the world,” the “construction of the sanctuary,” and “the establishment of the sanctuary in the land and the distribution of the land among the tribes” in similar, and sometimes identical language. Thus, as N. Polen, *Leviticus*, p. 216 reminds us:

the purpose of the Exodus from Egypt is not so that the Israelites could enter the Promised Land, as many other biblical passages have it. Rather it is theocentric: so that God might abide with Israel. ... This limns a narrative arc whose apogee is reached not in the entry into Canaan at the end of Deuteronomy and the beginning of Joshua, but in the dedication day of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 9-10) when God’s Glory — manifest Presence — makes an eruptive appearance to the people (Leviticus 9:23-24).

In another correspondence, M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 47 notes a variation on the first Hebrew word of Genesis (*bereshit*) and the description used in Ezekiel 45:18 for the first month of a priestly offering (*barishon*):

“Thus said the Lord: ‘In the beginning (month) on the first (day) of the month, you shall take a bull of the herd without blemish, and you shall cleanse the sanctuary.’” What makes this verse particularly relevant for our discussion of *bereshit* is that *ri’shon* occurs in close proximity to *’ehad*, which contextually designates “(day) one” that is “the first day” of the month. This combination of “in the beginning” (*barishon*) with with “(day) one” (*yom ’ehad*) is reminiscent of “in beginning of” (*bereshit*) in Genesis 1:1 and “day one” (*yom ’ehad*) in Genesis 1:5.

Hahn notes the same correspondences to the creation of the cosmos in the building of Solomon’s Temple (S. W. Hahn, *Christ, Kingdom*, pp. 176-177; cf. J. Morrow, *Creation*; J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, pp. 283-284; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*, pp. 62-65; M. Weinfeld, *Sabbath*, pp. 506, 508):

As creation takes seven days, the Temple takes seven years to build (1 Kings 6:38). It is dedicated during the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles (1 Kings 8:2), and Solomon’s solemn dedication speech is built on seven petitions (1 Kings 8:31-53). As God capped creation by “resting” on the seventh day, the Temple is built by a “man of rest” (1 Chronicles 22:9) to be a “house of rest”

for the Ark, the presence of the Lord (1 Chronicles 28:2; 2 Chronicles 6:41; Psalm 132:8, 13-14; Isaiah 66:1).

When the Temple is consecrated, the furnishings of the older Tabernacle are brought inside it. (R. E. Friedman suggests the entire Tabernacle was brought inside). This represents the fact that all the Tabernacle was, the Temple has become. Just as the construction of the Tabernacle of the Sinai covenant had once recapitulated creation, now the Temple of the Davidic covenant recapitulated the same. The Temple is a microcosm of creation, the creation a macro-temple.

99. J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 1*, 3:9, p. 35.
100. E.g., G. K. Beale, *Temple*, pp. 66-80; G. J. Wenham, *Sanctuary Symbolism*; J. M. Lundquist, *Reality*; D. W. Parry, *Garden*; J. A. Parry et al., *Temple in Heaven*; T. Stordalen, *Echoes*, pp. 112-116, 308-309; R. N. Holzapfel et al., *Father's House*, pp. 17-19; J. Morrow, *Creation*. The imagery of the Garden of Eden as a prototype sanctuary is not incompatible with views that relate the symbolism of the Creation of the cosmos to the temple, as discussed above.
101. See J. M. Bradshaw, *Tree of Knowledge* for an explanation of how the symbolism of the Tree of Knowledge relates to that of the temple veil.
102. In most depictions of Jewish temple architecture, the menorah is shown as being *outside* the veil — in contrast to the Tree of Life which is at the holiest place in the Garden of Eden. However, Margaret Barker cites evidence that, in the first temple, a Tree of Life was symbolized *within* the Holy of Holies (e.g., M. Barker, *Hidden*, pp. 6-7; M. Barker, *Christmas*, pp. 85-86, 140; J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 366-367). Barker concludes that the Menorah (or perhaps a second, different, representation in arboreal form?) was both removed from the temple and diminished in stature in later Jewish literature as the result of a “very ancient feud” concerning its significance (M. Barker, *Older*, p. 221}, see pp. 221-232).  
  
Mandaean scripture describes a Tree of Life within the *heavenly* sanctuary as follows: “They ... lifted the great veil of safety upward before him, introduced him, and showed him that Vine,” meaning the Tree of Life (M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, GL 1:1, p. 429:3-20; cf. E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, 49, pp. 45-46).
103. Cf. John 16:28.
104. G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 122.
105. Exodus 28.
106. G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 123.



107. Brock in Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, pp. 66-67. For more detail on the theme of changes of clothing in the story of Adam and Eve, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 149-156.
108. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*, p. 41. See also Wyatt's discussion of the arks of Noah and Moses, the Ark of the Covenant, and the story of Utnapishtim in *Gilgamesh* (N. Wyatt, *Water*, pp. 214-216). For additional discussion, see J. M. Bradshaw and D. J. Larsen, *God's Image 2*, pp. 210-221.
109. L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*.
110. See, e.g., Jason Silverman's discussion of the Zoroastrian story of Yima who, after a warning from the god Ahura Mazda, built a four-sided *Vara* ("enclosure") for protection of humans, cattle, dogs, fires, and plants from bad winters and subsequent spring flooding: "The inhabitants of the *Vara* are those who are ritually pure" and the term *vara* normally denotes "an area enclosed for reasons of ritual purity. ... [T]he *Vara* of Yima has three sections, just as the sacred ritual precinct has three grooves that mark it off from the outside world" (J. M. Silverman, *It's a Craft*, p. 207). Silverman goes on to discuss the how the "paradise" of Yima relates to the Persian notion of a walled garden domain, and shows how the *Vara* "functions as a condensation of Zoroastrian eschatological hope — it is a microcosm of the world as it will be *sans* Angra Mainyu's influence" (*ibid.*, p. 210). In this sense, it can be compared with the Jewish idea of a New Jerusalem (*ibid.*, pp. 211-220).
111. M. Meyer, *Secret Book of John*, 29:135-136, p. 130:
- It did not happen the way that Moses said, "They hid in an ark" (Genesis 7:7). Rather they hid in a particular place, not only Noah but also many other people from the unshakable generation. They entered that place and hid in a bright cloud. Noah knew about his supremacy [alternatively, "he (Noah) recognized his authority" (F. Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 29:12, p. 121); or "Noah was aware of his divine calling" (H. W. Nibley, *Enoch*, p. 268)]. With him was the enlightened one who had enlightened them since the first ruler had brought darkness upon the whole earth.
112. J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 77-87. Cf. Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, p. 53; A. S.-M. Ri, *Caverne Syriaque*, p. 208. See the discussion in E. A. Harper, *You Shall Make*, p. 50 concerning readings of Genesis 6:16 in the Targums and the *Septuagint*, and for a description of parallels in 1 Kings 6:6 and Ezekiel 41:7.
113. J. D. G. Dunn et al., *Commentary*, p. 44. In other words, the dimensions of the Tabernacle courtyard have "the same width [as the Ark] but one-third the length and height" (Ronald Hendel in H. W. Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, p. 14 n. 6:14-16). Intriguingly, a cuneiform tablet

from Old Babylonian times describes a Mesopotamian ark that is built on a circular plan (see I. L. Finkel, *Ark Before Noah*, pp. 123-155).

114. See Genesis 6:15 and Exodus 25:10.
115. For more on temple themes in the story of Enoch, see J. M. Bradshaw, LDS Book of Enoch.
116. H. W. Nibley, Foundation, p. 168.
117. See Genesis 11:4. For more on temple themes in the story of the Tower of Babel, see J. M. Bradshaw and D. J. Larsen, *God's Image 2*, pp. 390-396.
118. A. S. Kohav, *Sôd Hypothesis*, p. 48.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
120. While not intending to affirm the validity of all the specific results of Kohav's dissertation research, we note his interesting hypothesis that the compilers of the Hexateuch deliberately coded their primary message in a way that would be deliberately misunderstood by readers unfamiliar with their methods and intentions relating to the preservation of the "First Temple priestly initiation tradition" (*ibid.*, back cover):
- The thesis foregrounds a "second-channel" esoteric narrative from within the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua [that was] a successful if drastic priestly means of preserving the secrecy and ultimate survival of their respective esoteric and initiatory doctrines and methods.
121. R. S. Hendel, *Cultural Memory*, p. 28.
122. D. E. Callender, *Adam*, p. 211.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 212. Cf. J. H. Sailhamer, *Meaning*, pp. 140-148. J. David Pleins criticizes what he calls "loose literalism" for the way it allows the historical and the archaeological to push aside the value of what the scripture actually says (J. D. Pleins, *When*, p. 18):

The trouble with loose literalism is that what tends to capture our attention is the clever explanation rather than the story itself. We quickly move on from the Flood story ... to the seemingly more interesting archaeological problems that stand back of the Bible.

We catch Ryan and Pitman falling into this trap in a section of [their book on Noah's Flood] that extols the virtue and power of ancient myth:

For a myth to survive unscathed from repeated recitation, it needs a powerful story. ... Oral tradition tells such stories. But so does the decipherment by the natural scientist who works from a text recorded in layers of mud, sand, and gravel from the bottom of lakes and seas using all the tools and principles of physics,

chemistry, and biology. The scientific plot can then be given richer detail and new themes from the supporting contributions of the archaeologist, the linguist, and the geneticist.

Figures such as Noah and the Mesopotamian survivor of the Flood, Utnapishtim, are thus relegated to the supporting cast in a grander scientific drama that has as its dramatis personae scores of dislocated village dwellers put on the move by a Neolithic conflagration.

- 124 Emphasis added. From notes of a talk given by Sister Sheri L. Dew, who spoke at a broadcast for the Southeast US Area YSA conference, 9-11 August 2013. She reported this comment as having been made at a meeting of young people at the Bountiful Temple, where Elder Callister was then serving as a temple president. Cf. H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, p. 604 (and see pp. 604-615 generally):

When we enter the temple, we leave one world and step into another. Conversely, when we leave the temple, we leave one world, sometimes with a sigh of relief, and return to the other. If the Latter-day Saints are going to continue building temples, they must make up their minds as to which world they are going to live in. It should not be hard to decide if only we are willing.

- 125 As a result of his experiences, Faulconer gives the following guidance to scripture readers (J. E. Faulconer, *Study*, pp. 11-12):

Assume that the scriptures mean exactly what they say and, more important, assume that we do not already know what they say. If we assume that we already know what the scriptures say, then they cannot continue to teach us. If we assume that they mean something other than what they say, then we run the risk of substituting our own thoughts for what we read rather than learning what they have to teach us. ... [A]ssume that each aspect of whatever passage we are looking at is significant and ask about that significance. To assume that some things are significant and others are not is to assume, from the beginning, that we already know what scripture means. Some things may turn out to be irrelevant, but we cannot know that until we are done.

Similarly, Wright comments that if you read in this way (N. T. Wright, *Authoritative*):

the Bible will not let you down. You will be paying attention to it; you won't be sitting in judgment over it. But you won't come with a preconceived notion of what this or that passage has to mean if it is to be true. You will discover that God is speaking new truth through it. I take it as a method in my biblical studies that if I turn a corner and find myself saying, "Well, in that case, that verse is wrong" that I must have turned a wrong corner somewhere. But that does not mean that I impose what I think is right on to that bit of the Bible. It means, instead, that I am forced to live with that text uncomfortably, sometimes literally for years (this is sober autobiography), until suddenly I come round a different corner and that verse makes a lot of

sense; sense that I wouldn't have got if I had insisted on imposing my initial view on it from day one.

By way of contrast, J. L. Kugel, *How to Read*, p. 666 notes the “subtle shift in tone” that has come with “the emphasis on reading the Bible [solely] in human terms and in its historical context” without the counterbalance provided by traditional forms of scripture reading:

As modern biblical scholarship gained momentum, studying the Bible itself was joined with, and eventually overshadowed by, studying the historical reality behind the text (including how the text itself came to be). In the process, learning from the Bible gradually turned into learning about it. Such a shift might seem slight at first, but ultimately it changed a great deal. The person who seeks to learn from the Bible is smaller than the text; he crouches at its feet, waiting for its instruction or insights. Learning about the text generates the opposite posture. The text moves from subject to object; it no longer speaks but is spoken about, analyzed, and acted upon. The insights are now all the reader's, not the text's, and anyone can see the results. This difference in tone, as much as any specific insight or theory, is what has created the great gap between the Bible of ancient interpreters and that of modern scholars.

126. Moses 6:26-36.
127. S. D. Ricks, Narrative Call.
128. S. Zinner, Underemphasized parallels.
129. H. Koester et al., Thomas, 2, p. 126.
130. G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 96:3, p. 461. Cf. *Ibid.*, 91:1, p. 409, which speaks of “a voice calling me, and a spirit poured out upon me.” Relating to the theme of reigning. Zinner also notes *1 Enoch 96:1*, which speaks of the “authority” that the “righteous” will have over the “sinners” (*ibid.*, 96:1, p. 461).
131. E.g., G. W. E. Nickelsburg et al., *1 Enoch (2012)*, 71:14-16, p. 321.
132. A. George, Stele of Nebuchadnezzar II, p. 160. On the idea that such mixing of peoples was being condemned in the Tower of Babel story, see J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God's Image 2*, p. 400.
133. B. A. Gardner, Second Witness, 6:165.
134. Aramaic would presume a setting for the story no earlier than the beginning of the first millennium BCE.
135. Genesis 10:5, 20, 31.

136. Genesis 11:1, 6. It may be significant that the JST for these verses reads: “*the same language,*” not “*one language.*”
137. V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 350.
138. See J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God’s Image 2*, p. 428.
139. A. LaCocque, *Captivity of Innocence*, p. 66, citing Paul Ricoeur.
140. The way in which the glory of God’s work is ultimately revealed in the simple details of sacred texts, divinely influenced events, and the acts of godly persons is brilliantly described by Chesterton (G. K. Chesterton, *William Blake*, p. 210):

The wise man will follow a star, low and large and fierce in the heavens; but the nearer he comes to it the smaller and smaller it will grow, till he finds it the humble lantern over some little inn or stable. Not till we know the high things shall we know how lowly they are. Meanwhile, the modern superior transcendentalist will find the facts of eternity incredible because they are so solid; he will not recognize heaven because it is so like the earth.

141. J. D. Pleins, *When*, p. 168.
142. N. A. Maxwell, *Disciple-Scholar*, pp. 14-18. Indeed, it is because of the limits of our knowledge that we court danger when we try to effect a premature reconciliation of scientific and religious issues. B. Kent Harrison, former Professor of Physics and Astronomy at BYU, wisely wrote (B. K. Harrison, *Truth*, pp. 153-154):

Some disagreements [between science and religion] are inevitable because our knowledge is incomplete. But we believe in a unified truth and so we eventually expect agreement. It is tempting to seek agreement now. *However, it is inappropriate, and often dangerous, to attempt a premature reconciliation or conflicting ideas where there is a lack of complete knowledge.* If a scientist concludes that there is no God — based on inadequate evidence! — and thereby casts doubt on those who believe in God, he does them a disservice. For example, it is inappropriate for a scientist who accepts organic evolution to claim that there is no God. (However, many scientists do indeed take the position that they cannot comment on religious truth because they have little or no information on it.)

Similarly, if an ecclesiastic states that such and such a scientific idea is not true — based on inadequate evidence! — then he does a disservice to the scientist who has carefully explored that idea. As a hypothetical example, it would be inappropriate for a church authority to make a flat statement that special relativity is invalid because it limits information transmission such as prayer to the very slow (!) speed of electromagnetic waves. It may later turn out to be invalid in some sense, but current experimental and other considerations support it strongly.

*The proper stance, it seems, is to withhold judgment on such questions until we have more information — but also to take advantage of what knowledge we do have.*

An example where reconciliation of scientific and religious issues seems premature is the concern of some that the idea of man being created in the image of God — while an exalting concept to man — would be limiting to God to the extent one considers the human form to be finite and imperfect.

Thus, thoughtful believers might feel inclined to wonder whether the “sense in which the Father’s body is like a human body must be qualified” (B. Ostler, *Attributes*, p. 352). Moreover, it must be remembered that “Latter-day Saints affirm only that the Father has a body [D&C 130:22], not that His body has Him” (C. L. Blomberg et al., *Divide*, p. 88). To what extent might God Himself transcend His bodily form, just as man is more than mortal flesh? Though having appeared to prophets in glorified, corporeal form, would it be unreasonable to infer that God must somehow be capable of transcending fundamental limitations of human understanding deriving from the finite nature of physical senses and measures, the unimaginable scale of what would need to be known, and — if that were not enough — the fact that a perfect knowledge of the state of things seems precluded by the laws of quantum physics themselves? (See J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, Excursus 7: Time and Eternity, p. 537 for a brief overview of philosophical and scientific issues bearing on such questions.)

Moreover, the fact that the existence of God transcends the birth and death of universes attests to the truth that our own identities, being possessed of a similar eternal nature, will also survive the presumed winding-down of our present universe. It also seems evident that our experience of “time” will be different in eternity than in mortality. Elder Neal A. Maxwell concluded: “God does not live in the dimension of time as do we [Alma 40:8; D&C 130:7]. We are not only hampered by our finiteness (experiential and intellectual), but also by being in the dimension of time. Moreover, God, since ‘all things are present’ with Him [Moses 1:6], is not simply predicting based solely on the past. In ways that are not clear to us, he sees rather than foresees the future, because all things are at once present before him” (N. A. Maxwell, *Things*, p. 29).

143. H. B. Eyring, *Faith*, p. 70.
144. G. Bateson, *Mind*, p. 216; G. Bateson et al., *Angels*, pp. 36-49; W. Weimer, *Notes*, pp. 47-49.
145. See 1 Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”
146. H. Eyring, *Reflections*, p. 47.

# JEFFREY M. BRADSHAW



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Jeff helped pioneer the research area of multi-agent systems, and his first book on the topic, *Software Agents*, became a classic in the field and a best-seller for The MIT Press. In addition, Jeff's group at IHMC conducts research topics such as digital policy, identity management, semantic technologies, cyber sensemaking, self-driving cars, and visualizations that exploit principles of human perception and cognition. Results have been applied to scores of commercial and government applications. Jeff has organized a series of Human-Agent-Robot Teamwork (HART) workshops. He chairs the Scientific Advisory Council for the Nissan Research Center—Silicon Valley and co-edits the Human-Centered Computing Department for *IEEE Intelligent Systems*.

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Jeff has an abiding interest in Genesis, temples, and the ancient Near East ([www.templethemes.net](http://www.templethemes.net)). He has lectured at BYU Campus Education Week, the Sidney B. Sperry Symposium, and at FairMormon meetings. He has published commentaries on the book of Moses and JST Genesis 1-11, and other volumes on temple-related topics. His articles have appeared in *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity*, *Element: A Journal of Mormon Philosophy and Theology*, *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, *Meridian Magazine*, and *BYU Studies*. He is a vice president for The Interpreter Foundation and is on the Advisory Board for the Academy for Temple Studies.

Jeff was a missionary in France and Belgium from 1975-1977, and his family has returned twice to live in France: once from 1993-1994 as a Fulbright Scholar and a second time from 2005-2006 as an unexpected "sabbatical" in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. Jeff has served twice as a bishop and twice as a counselor in the stake presidency of the Pensacola Florida Stake. He and his wife, Kathleen, are the parents of four children and nine grandchildren. In 2016, they accepted a call to serve in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kishasa Mission.