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## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

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

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## INTRODUCTION

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One of the most controversial doctrines introduced by President Brigham Young is known as the Adam-God Doctrine, or the belief that “Adam is our Father and our God” and the “only God with whom *we* have to do.” In a nutshell, this doctrine teaches that both God the Father and his wife, our Heavenly Mother, spiritually procreated the human family, then came to Earth to give them physical bodies as well.

This paper was written to be a simple introduction to the various aspects of the Adam-God Doctrine, for the historian or student of the Gospel to gain an appreciation of the Theology of the Adam-God Doctrine, and to better understand it.

There are various other doctrines that are foundational and connected to this doctrine, such as the Pre-existence of mankind, the doctrine of Exaltation, and the plurality of Gods, which are all necessary to be able to comprehend the Adam-God Doctrine. This paper also attempts to lay out the theological framework of these doctrines as well, before exploring and explaining the different aspects of President Brigham Young’s Adam-God teachings.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

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*by*  
*Jacob Vidrine*

## THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

The Adam-God Doctrine can be summarized as the doctrinal revelation and teaching in early Mormonism that God the Father not only procreated humanity as his spirit children in the premortal existence, but after doing so God and His wife came down to Earth to provide physical bodies for their spirit offspring. The Father and Mother descended from their Exaltation into a fallen mortal world, to begin the process of providing physical tabernacles for their spirit children.

The doctrine has four key aspects: First, that mankind are both the spiritual and physical offspring of God. Second, that Adam is the lawful sovereign who rightfully presides over everyone in the Priesthood as the patriarchal head of the human

family. Third, that Adam came from another Earth, was begotten by *his* God on another planet and helped to create this Earth. Finally, when you connect all those pieces together you get the fourth and final piece of the doctrine — that Adam is God the Father, and Eve, the “Mother of All Living,” is the Heavenly Mother of humanity.

Yet there are also other foundational teachings about God that are necessary to understand before one can fully appreciate the Adam-God Doctrine, so this paper will also attempt to lay that foundation. These teachings include that God the Father has a body, that there is a Heavenly Mother, that mankind are the spiritual offspring of God, that mankind can become Exalted to be as God is, and finally that there are a plurality of Gods in the Heavens — as well as Gods above God the Father.

## GOD HAS A BODY

In understanding that mankind are made in the “image” of God it becomes apparent that God has a body like we do. This is self-evident from the numerous places where He appeared to the various prophets and patriarchs throughout the scriptures, if one takes them at face value. God appeared to both Abraham and Moses face-to-face and ate meals with them:

“1 And the Lord appeared unto him [Abraham] in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran

to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: 4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.”<sup>1</sup>

“And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”<sup>2</sup>

“9 Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: 10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. 11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.”<sup>3</sup>

The doctrine that God the Father is a man with a physical form comes out very early in LDS scripture. In Ether chapter 3, Jesus Christ teaches that mankind being made in the “image” of God was to take the spiritual bodily form that Jesus Christ and God the Father possess:

“14 Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. 15 And never have I showed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 18:1–4.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 33:11.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 24:9–11.

created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. 16 Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh.”<sup>4</sup>

One year after the Book of Mormon was published, the Book of Moses further declared that God had a body and that mankind were made in the form of his body:

“8 Now this prophecy Adam spake, as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and a genealogy was kept of the children of God. And this was the book of the generations of Adam, saying: In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; 9 In the image of his own body, male and female, created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created and became living souls in the land upon the footstool of God.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1836, Truman Coe provided an early non-Mormon witness that Latter-day Saints believed in a corporeal God:

“They [Mormons] contend that the God worshipped by the Presbyterians and all other sectarians is no better than a wooden god. They believe that the true God is a material being, composed of body and parts; and that when the Creator formed Adam in his own image, he made him about the size and shape of God himself.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ether 3:14–16.

<sup>5</sup> Moses 6: 8–9.

<sup>6</sup> Truman Coe letter to *The Ohio Observer*, 11 August 1836, cited in Milton V. Backman, Jr. “Truman Coe’s 1836

In the Nauvoo period during the last several years of Joseph Smith's lifetime he began to emphasize this teaching that God possessed a physical body. On January 5, 1841 he taught "That which is without body, parts and passions is nothing. There is no other God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones."<sup>7</sup> On April 2, 1843 the Prophet repeated this instruction, and it was later canonized, stating: "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's."<sup>8</sup> This he taught privately, but it was not until the King Follett discourse in 1844 that he preached this publicly:

"If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible — I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form — like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another."<sup>9</sup>

Brigham Young also emphasized this in his teachings and sermons. On one occasion he preached:

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Description of Mormonism," *BYU Studies* vol. 17 no. 3 <Spring 1977> page 8.

<sup>7</sup> William Clayton "Keys" notebook, *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* <5 January 1841> page 516.

<sup>8</sup> D&C 130:22.

<sup>9</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <7 April 1844> page 305.

“He has limbs that he can walk, for the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day. He conversed with His children, as in the case of Moses at the fiery bush, and with Abraham on the plains of Mamre. He also ate and drank with Abraham and others. That is the God the ‘Mormons’ believe in, but their very religious Christian brethren do not believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which is the God the Bible sets forth, as an organized corporeal being.”<sup>10</sup>

## HEAVENLY MOTHER

Another doctrine necessary to understanding the Adam-God Doctrine comes from the conclusion that if God is a man in possession of a body, that it would make sense for him to not be single, but to have a wife. This is borne out in Genesis stating that both “male and female” were made in the likeness of God, it logically means that God must have a wife, and that this Mother Goddess is our Heavenly Mother.

According to archeological studies, both ancient Canaanites and Israelites worshiped a female consort to God named “Asherah.” While her existence is suppressed in the Old Testament, it appears that ancient Jewish Wisdom literature referred to a female Deity called “Wisdom.” One passage that refers to Heavenly Mother but is obscured in the Masoretic text of the Old Testament (although preserved in the Septuagint) is Psalm 110:3:

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<sup>10</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <24 July 1853> page 238.

“With you is rule on a day of your power among the splendors of the holy ones. From the womb, before Morning Star, I brought you forth.”<sup>11</sup>

This verse appears to have originally referenced the Davidic king as existing “before the Morning Star” — a reference to the pre-existence, but the translators of the Septuagint may have reinterpreted the verse in a Messianic sense as the New Testament authors also interpret Psalm 110.

Jesus Christ also appears to have alluded to Heavenly Mother when he stated “Wisdom is justified by all her children.”<sup>12</sup> The early Christian pseudepigrapha *Clementine Recognitions* also appears to recognize the existence of Wisdom as Heavenly Mother. The *Recognitions* makes this subtle acknowledgement to her existence in stating that Simon Magus’s consort named Luna was teaching that she was the incarnation of Wisdom, while the author of *Clementine Recognitions* retorts that this was folly for “she is, as the dweller with the first and only God”:

“Therefore, after the death of Dositheus Simon took Luna to himself; and with her he still goes about, as you see, deceiving multitudes, and asserting that he himself is a certain power which is above God the Creator, while Luna, who is with him, has been brought down from the higher heavens, and that **she is Wisdom, the mother of all things**, for whom, says he, the Greeks and barbarians contending, were able in some measure to see an image

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<sup>11</sup> Psalm 110:3, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* page 603.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 7:35.

of her; but of herself, **as she is, as the dweller with the first and only God, they were wholly ignorant.**"<sup>13</sup>

While there isn't contemporary evidence of Joseph Smith teaching about Heavenly Mother, the doctrine appears almost immediately after his death. It was referenced in a poem by W.W. Phelps at the dedication of the Seventies' Hall on December 31, 1844:

"Come to me, here's the myst'ry that man hath not seen;  
Here's our Father in heaven, and Mother, the Queen;"<sup>14</sup>

According to Joseph G. Hovey, Brigham Young also spoke on Heavenly Mother on that day, recording that President Young "also spoke of the relation we held to our Father in Heaven and to our Mother, the Queen. If we are faithful we will come in their presence and learn of our first estate."<sup>15</sup> The reason this doctrine appeared so quickly after the

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<sup>13</sup> *Clementine Recognitions* 2:12 in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol. 8 page 100, emphasis added. It is interesting to note that in the very similar *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* Peter affirms that God has a physical form that man was made in the image of: "And Simon said: 'I should like to know, Peter, if you really believe that the shape of man has been molded after the shape of God.' And Peter said: 'I am really quite certain, Simon, that this is the case ...It is the shape of the just God.'" (*Clementine Homilies*, 16:19, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol. 8 pages 316–317)

<sup>14</sup> "Come to Me," Composed for and Sung at the Dedication of the Seventies Hall, 31 December 1844, published in *Times and Seasons* vol. 6 <15 January 1845> page 783.

<sup>15</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <31 December 1844> page 62.

Prophet's death is undoubtedly because he was privately teaching it, as some testified.

Susa Young Gates recorded that Zina Huntington, a plural wife of Joseph Smith, told many individuals a story about Joseph Smith telling her about the existence of a Mother in Heaven:

“Father Huntington lost his wife under the most trying circumstances. Her children were left desolate. One day, when her daughter Zina was speaking with the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the loss of her mother and her intense grief, she asked the question: ‘Will I know my mother as my mother when I get over on the Other Side?’ ‘Certainly you will,’ was the instant reply of the Prophet. ‘More than that, you will meet and become acquainted with your eternal Mother, the wife of your Father in Heaven.’ ‘And have I then a Mother in Heaven?’ exclaimed the astonished girl. ‘You assuredly have. How could a Father claim His title unless there were also a Mother to share that parenthood?’”<sup>16</sup>

While the above statement is second hand and late, it is corroborated by the October 1845 poem “My Father in Heaven” by Eliza R. Snow, which tied her belief in a “Mother in Heaven” to a “key of knowledge” that had been restored, undoubtedly through the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“I had learned to call thee Father, through thy Sprit from  
on high,  
But until the key of knowledge was restored, I knew not  
why.

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<sup>16</sup> Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* <1911> pages 15–16.

In the heavens are parents single? No, the thought makes reason stare!

Truth is reason, truth eternal tells me I've a Mother there."<sup>17</sup>

## MANKIND: THE SPIRITUAL CHILDREN OF GOD

The next foundational teaching necessary to understand Adam-God is the teaching that mankind are the spirit children of God. We spiritually existed before we were born, and that we were the children of God in this Pre-existence. The spiritual fatherhood of God to man is stated in Hebrews 12:9:

“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”<sup>18</sup>

In Joseph Smith's inspired revisions or “new translation” of the Bible, he added a statement in Genesis that explicitly stated that there was a spiritual creation of every living thing before the physical creation:

“And now, behold, I say unto you, that these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth, And every plant of the field before

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<sup>17</sup> *Times and Seasons* vol. 6 <15 November 1845> page 1039.

<sup>18</sup> Hebrews 12:9.

it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground; for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;”<sup>19</sup>

This belief that spirits were all created first before the physical creation also is attested in the ancient Jewish *Book of Jubilees*, nicknamed “little Genesis,” wherein it states that God created “all the spirits of his creatures which are in the heavens and on the earth” before physically creating them on the Earth.<sup>20</sup> Genesis 1:26–27, which Joseph Smith’s revelations indicate was the spiritual creation of man, states:

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”<sup>21</sup>

Mankind receiving the “image” of God is a clear reference to receiving the same physical form. Our “likeness” to God refers to us having free agency to act and choose good and evil for ourselves. The understanding that this “creation”

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<sup>19</sup> Moses 3:4–5.

<sup>20</sup> Jubilees 2:2.

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 1:26–27.

was *procreation* as the offspring of God can be seen in the fact that Genesis uses identical language to describe Adam procreating his son Seth:

“And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth.”<sup>22</sup>

The Book of Mormon also alludes to this doctrine of a Pre-existence (Ether 3:16), as does the Book of Abraham (Abraham 3:22–23). Joseph Smith however did not publicly teach the doctrine of us being the spiritual children of God during his lifetime, instead emphasizing a doctrinal teaching that mankind spiritually are just as eternal as God is:

“Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.”<sup>23</sup>

“The spirit of man is not a created being; it existed from eternity, and will exist to eternity. Anything created cannot be eternal; and earth, water, etc., had their existence in an elementary state, from eternity.”<sup>24</sup>

“I have another subject to dwell upon, which is calculated to exalt man; but it is impossible for me to say much on this subject. I shall therefore just touch upon it, for time will not permit me to say all. It is associated with the subject of the resurrection of the dead, — namely, the soul — the mind of man — the immortal spirit. Where did it come from? All learned men and

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<sup>22</sup> Genesis 5:3.

<sup>23</sup> D&C 93:29.

<sup>24</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 3 <circa 2 July 1839> page 387.

doctors of divinity say that God created it in the beginning; but it is not so: the very idea lessens man in my estimation. I do not believe the doctrine; I know better. ...I am going to tell of things more noble.

We say that God himself is a self-existent being. Who told you so? It is correct enough; but how did it get into your heads? Who told you that man did not exist in like manner upon the same principles? Man does exist upon the same principles. ...The mind or the intelligence which man possesses is co-equal with God himself. ...I am dwelling on the immortality of the spirit of man. Is it logical to say that the intelligence of spirits is immortal, and yet that it had a beginning? The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end. That is good logic. That which has a beginning may have an end. There never was a time when there were not spirits; for they are co-equal [co-eternal] with our Father in heaven.<sup>25</sup>

While some may interpret these statements — and an absence of statements in Joseph Smith's lifetime teaching spirit procreation — to mean that Joseph Smith did not teach the doctrine of spiritual procreation, the reality that it appeared immediately after his death is strong evidence that he taught it. On December 29, 1844 Brigham Young preached:

“But Christ is the head of all for he is our Elder Brother for we were once organized. Before God and Jesus was the first born, or begotten of the Father, and we were

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<sup>25</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <7 April 1844> pages 310–311.

sent here upon this earth to choose bodies and dwell in the flesh as our Father who is in heaven.”<sup>26</sup>

Similarly, Eliza R. Snow acknowledged in her poem “O My Father” (originally titled “My Father in Heaven”) that she had a “*first* primeval childhood” and “former friends and birth” in a “more exalted sphere.” The poem references that there was a “key of knowledge” restored that bestowed this knowledge of the literal Fatherhood of God, indicating that this was not new revelation to herself, but a “key” she was taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith.<sup>27</sup> Indeed the revelation on Eternal Marriage, Plural Marriage, and Exaltation given on July 12, 1843 states that those who are exalted are given the promise of a “a continuation of the seeds forever and ever,” clearly referring to some form of eternal procreative power.<sup>28</sup>

How did the apostles reconcile that our spirits were both eternal *and* begotten by God? The spirit matter or “intelligence” eternally existed, and at some time was begotten into a spirit body by God. Brigham Young taught on one occasion:

“The life that is within us is a part of an eternity of life, and is organized spirit, which is clothed upon by tabernacles, thereby constituting our present being, which is designed for the attainment of further intelligence. The matter composing our bodies and spirits has been organized from the eternity of matter

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<sup>26</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <29 December 1844> page 61.

<sup>27</sup> *Times and Seasons* vol. 6 <15 November 1845> page 1039.

<sup>28</sup> D&C 132:19.

that fills immensity.”<sup>29</sup>

## EXALTATION: BECOMING GODS

Recognizing that we are made in the image and likeness of God as his spiritual children, and are just as eternal in our beings as God is, reveals our divine potential to become all that God is. As Paul wrote:

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”<sup>30</sup>

The Revelation of John also states: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”<sup>31</sup> Peter similarly wrote in 2 Peter 1:4 about becoming “partakers of the divine nature” or as the *New English Bible* translates the verse:

“His divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life and true religion, enabling us to know the One who called us by his own splendour and might.

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<sup>29</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 7 <9 October 1859> page 285.

<sup>30</sup> Romans 8:16–18.

<sup>31</sup> Revelation 3:21.

Through this might and splendour He has given us His promises, great beyond all price, and through them you may escape the corruption with which lust has infected the world, and come to share in the very being of God.”<sup>32</sup>

Why did the apostles of Jesus Christ believe in receiving divine rulership and union of nature with God? The New Testament indicates that the reason for this is because Jesus Christ taught those doctrines to his disciples:

“Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.”<sup>33</sup>

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee... That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”<sup>34</sup>

Joseph Smith began to teach the doctrine of exaltation in the early Nauvoo period, but his

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<sup>32</sup> 2 Peter 1:3–4, New English Bible.

<sup>33</sup> Luke 12:42–44.

<sup>34</sup> John 17:21–23.

revelation on the Three Degrees of Glory alluded to it even earlier, in speaking of those of the Celestial Glory or who come forth in the “resurrection of the Just”:

“54 They are they who are the church of the Firstborn. 55 They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things— 56 They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; 57 And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son. 58 Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God.”<sup>35</sup>

Joseph Smith began to teach Exaltation privately at least as early as 1841 or 1842,<sup>36</sup> and in 1843 began to preach it in public sermons:

“In the resurrection, some are raised to be angels, others are raised to become Gods. These things are revealed in the most holy places in a Temple prepared for that purpose.”<sup>37</sup>

“What was the design of the Almighty in making man? It was to exalt him to be as God! The scripture says ye are gods and it cannot be broken. [We are to become] heirs of God and join heirs [with] Jesus Christ, equal with him [in] possessing all power.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> D&C 76:54–58.

<sup>36</sup> See for example Wilford Woodruff, “Book of Revelations,” 30 January 1842, pages 3–4, LDS Archives; see also William Harris, *Mormonism Portrayed* <1841> page 23.

<sup>37</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 5 <11 June 1843> page 427.

<sup>38</sup> A new Amalgamated Text of Joseph Smith’s 27 August 1843 “Three Grand Orders” speech, in *One Eternal Round* issue #1 “The Nauvoo Priesthood Developments” page 42.

## A PLURALITY OF GODS

One last doctrine that is fundamental to understanding the Adam-God Doctrine is the doctrine of a *Plurality of Gods*. Acknowledging the existence of a Heavenly Mother and the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and Exaltation of Man invariably means there is a plurality of Gods. But how does this fit with the Shema, which Jesus even affirmed in Mark 12:29?

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.”<sup>39</sup>

The apostle Paul addressed this in 1 Corinthians 8:

“5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) 6 But to us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”<sup>40</sup>

So there is only one God to us, but there are many gods *in heaven* — which certainly wouldn't be referring to false idols here on Earth. Early Christian theologians up until the 4<sup>th</sup> century understood it was the *union* of the Gods that made them “one God” — rather than *One Being* of God

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<sup>39</sup> Mark 12:29.

<sup>40</sup> 1 Corinthians 8:5–6.

with multiple persons or manifestations.<sup>41</sup> While among the pre-Nicene fathers it was a commonly understood doctrine that there was a plurality of gods, the Alexandrian school with notable writings by Clement of Alexandria and Origen were the most explicit about this:

“Conformably, therefore, there are various abodes, according to the worth of those who have believed. ...These chosen abodes, which are three, are indicated by the numbers in the Gospel—the thirty, the sixty, the hundred. [Matthew 13:8, 23] And the perfect inheritance belongs to those who attain to ‘a perfect man,’ according to the image of the Lord. ...To the likeness of God, then, he that is introduced into adoption and the friendship of God, to the just inheritance of the lords and gods is brought; if he be perfected, according to the Gospel, as the Lord Himself taught.”<sup>42</sup>

“There are some gods of whom God is god, as we hear in prophecy, ‘Thank ye the God of gods,’ [Psalm 136:2] and ‘The God of gods hath spoken and called the earth.’ [Psalm 50:1] Now God, according to the Gospel, ‘is not the God of the dead but of the living.’ [Mark 12:27] Those gods, then, are living of whom God is god. The Apostle [Paul] too, writing to the Corinthians, says: ‘As there are gods many and lords many,’ [1 Corinthians

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<sup>41</sup> Patristic scholarship recognizes that Subordinationism was the consensus of the early Church Fathers. For one example see Origen, ca. 246, *Dialogue with Heraclides* 1–4, in *Ancient Christian Writers* vol. 54 pages 58–60. For other examples see David W. Bercot “What the Early Christians Believed about the Trinity” audio lecture, Scroll Publishing.

<sup>42</sup> Clement of Alexandria, ca. 195, *Stromata* 6:14, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol. 2 page 506.

8:5] and so we have spoken of these gods as really existing.”<sup>43</sup>

The Prophet began contemplating the subject of a plurality of Gods above God the Father as early as 1839, as D&C 121 promised him:

“28 A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest. 29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.”<sup>44</sup>

The above statement was removed and replaced with a gloss when this letter was published in the *Times and Seasons* in May 1840.<sup>45</sup> Yet by 1842 the Prophet began to privately reveal his doctrine on a plurality of Gods.

On January 30, 1842 Wilford Woodruff recorded that Joseph Smith privately taught them that “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ was once the same as the Son or Holy Ghost but having redeemed a world became the Eternal God of that world,” — indicating that God the Father, having once been a Savior, had a God above Him.

In March 1842 Joseph Smith completed his translation of the Book of Abraham and published it, including in it an account of the Genesis creation narrative that replaced all singular mention of “God” with plural “Gods” performing the creation

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<sup>43</sup> Origen, *Commentary on John* 1:34, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol. 9 page 315.

<sup>44</sup> D&C 121:28–29.

<sup>45</sup> See *Times and Seasons* vol. 1 <May 1840> page 103.

(see Abraham 4:1–5:21).<sup>46</sup> Two months later in May 1842 Joseph Smith introduced the Endowment ceremony, including teachings about a plurality of Gods and Gods above God the Father.<sup>47</sup>

Yet the Prophet did not fully lay out his doctrinal belief to the Saints about a plurality of Gods above God the Father until 1844, in response to apostates criticizing and ridiculing the doctrines he had introduced in private. The Prophet’s famous “King Follett Discourse” on April 7, 1844 laid out his belief that “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret.”<sup>48</sup> Two months later in the Prophet’s last doctrinal sermon, “The Sermon in the Grove,” he explicitly stated he believed there were Gods above God the Father:

“If Abraham reasoned thus — If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and [the Apostle] John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father [i.e. a Grandfather God], you may suppose that He had a Father also [i.e. a Great-Grandfather God]. Where was there ever a son without a father? And where was there ever a father without first being a son? Whenever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor? And everything comes in this way. Paul says that which is earthly is in the likeness of that which is heavenly, hence if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that He had a Father also? I despise the idea of being

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<sup>46</sup> *Times and Seasons* vol. 3 <March 1842> pages 720–722.

<sup>47</sup> For more on this see the upcoming issue of *One Eternal Round* “The Adam–God Doctrine in the Endowment.”

<sup>48</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <7 April 1844> page 305.

scared to death at such a doctrine, for the Bible is full of it.”<sup>49</sup>

The Prophet died without being able to further expound his doctrine on Deity. Yet he laid a crucial foundation in his Nauvoo sermons and private teachings on the nature of God for his successors to complete the full picture of what the Prophet taught concerning the nature of God, the relationship we sustain to him, and the doctrine of the Exaltation of Man.

## INTRODUCING ADAM–GOD: THE PHYSICAL OFFSPRING OF GOD

The first aspect of understanding the Adam-God Doctrine is that besides being the spiritual offspring of God, ultimately mankind are the physical offspring of God as well. Luke 3:38 states this when tracing the genealogy of Jesus, it doesn’t stop at Adam:

“Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”<sup>50</sup>

An article in the *Improvement Era* in 1900 observed about this verse:

“In the third chapter of Luke, we find the lineage of Jesus traced from Joseph to Adam, and in the 38th verse

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<sup>49</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <16 June 1844> page 476.

<sup>50</sup> Luke 3:38.

it concludes as follows: ‘Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.’ [Luke 3:38] It is hardly to be supposed that this language is to be understood literally up to the last statement and that that should be figurative. What object could there be in making the statement that Adam was the son of God if it were not in the same line of fatherhood as all the rest? There is no break in the statement to indicate that it should not be taken in the same literal sense as all the others?”<sup>51</sup>

Beyond this, there is further evidence that the author of Luke had this in mind, as the book of Acts, written by the same author, contains another verse that even more directly states this concept:

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”<sup>52</sup>

This understanding that Adam was the physical offspring of his Father can be seen in a literal reading of Genesis 2:24: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

Joseph Smith began to teach that mankind are the physical offspring of God near the end of his life. Benjamin F. Johnson recalled that the Prophet

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<sup>51</sup> Attenwall Wootton, *Improvement Era* vol. 3 <June 1900> pages 595–596.

<sup>52</sup> Acts 17:27–29.

Joseph Smith “taught us that God was the great head of human procreation — was really and truly the Father of both our spirits and our bodies.”<sup>53</sup> Brigham Young similarly recalled: “Joseph did say in the endowments, ‘We do make man out of the dust of the earth as much as God did make Adam.’ ...Joseph knew from the Lord Almighty that Adam was not made out of an adobe.”<sup>54</sup> According to President Brigham Young, the Genesis account of Adam being created from the ground like an adobe and Eve being created out of Adam’s rib was a “hollow toadstool story” or a “baby story” for people who were not ready for the full understanding of the Creation:

“‘But, Brother Brigham, would you make it appear that Moses did not tell the truth?’ No, not a particle more than I would that your mother did not tell the truth, when she told you that little Billy came from a hollow toad stool. I would not accuse your mother of lying, any more than I would Moses; the people in the days of Moses wanted to know things that was not for them, the same as your children do, when they want to know where their little brother came from, and he answered them according to their folly, the same as you did your children.”<sup>55</sup>

Early evidence that man being the physical offspring of God was a teaching of Joseph Smith

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<sup>53</sup> Benjamin F. Johnson letter to George S. Gibbs, 1903, LDS Archives.

<sup>54</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <20 April 1855> page 933.

<sup>55</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* < 8 October 1854> page 850.

comes from the fact that John Taylor taught it on January 8, 1845:

“When we are all united as the tribe of Ephraim, we shall have an invulnerable bulwark that the powers of hell cannot subvert. We can see the order of the Father taking His place and all being in subjection to him, and when we trace our descent like the branch of the tree, we shall trace the root of it to our Father in Heaven. And we shall be related to Gods, and shall find our union in temporal and spiritual things. We have Fathers — one who is in Heaven and others on earth.”<sup>56</sup>

This was a core aspect of the Adam-God Doctrine that would be taught over the pulpit many times in early Utah. Brigham Young on one occasion taught:

“Things were first created spiritually; the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with Him. Then He commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, precisely as He had been created in this flesh himself, by partaking of the coarse material that was organized and composed this earth, until His system was charged with it, consequently the tabernacles of His children were organized from the coarse materials of this earth.”<sup>57</sup>

Heber C. Kimball also preached upon this:

“Now, brethren, you have got a spirit in you, and that spirit was created and organized — was born and

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<sup>56</sup> Minutes of a Family Meeting in Nauvoo, 8 January 1845, *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* vol. 11 <1920> page 115.

<sup>57</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 4 <8 February 1857> page 218.

begotten by our Father and our God before we ever took these bodies; and these bodies were formed by him, and through him, and of him, just as much as the spirit was; for I will tell you, he commenced and brought forth spirits; and then, when he completed that work, he commenced and brought forth tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in. I came through him, both spirit and body.”<sup>58</sup>

This doctrine can be supported by the revelations of Joseph Smith, wherein the “genealogy of the children of God” was equated to the “book of the generations of Adam,” that God made mankind “in the image of his own body,” and after listing the names of the first seven birthright sons of Adam, concluding “And this is the genealogy of the sons of Adam, who was the son of God, with whom God, himself, conversed.”<sup>59</sup>

Later on in the chapter there is scriptural support for Brigham Young’s assertion that Joseph Smith taught that “we do make man out of the dust of the earth as much as God did make Adam.”<sup>60</sup> In Moses 6:59 it states that the Lord commanded Adam to teach his children:

“That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by the blood,

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<sup>58</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 6 <8 November 1857> page 31.

<sup>59</sup> Moses 6:8–22.

<sup>60</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <20 April 1855> page 933.

even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory.”<sup>61</sup>

## ADAM IS THE PATRIARCHAL HEAD OVER HUMANITY

The next aspect to understanding the Adam-God Doctrine is that in the priesthood, Adam presides over the human family as great High Priest and Patriarch over his posterity. Instead of someone who severely screwed up God’s original plan for humanity, the fall of Adam was a positive event: “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.”<sup>62</sup> Rather than being damned and ignorant of the things of God, Adam was taught the fullness of the Gospel: “And thus all things were confirmed unto Adam, by an holy ordinance, and the Gospel preached, and a decree sent forth, that it should be in the world, until the end thereof; and thus it was.”<sup>63</sup>

Adam’s role as patriarch over the human family is laid out in D&C 107: “And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever.”<sup>64</sup> This teaching was reiterated

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<sup>61</sup> Moses 6:59.

<sup>62</sup> 2 Nephi 2:25.

<sup>63</sup> Moses 5:59.

<sup>64</sup> D&C 107:55.

by Joseph Smith in instruction he gave to the Quorum of the Twelve in July 1839:

“He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion.”<sup>65</sup>

At the October 1840 General Conference Joseph Smith publicly declared this presiding role that Adam held, stating that all dispensations of the Gospel came under Adam’s authority:

“Commencing with Adam, who was the first man, who is spoken of in Daniel as being the ‘Ancient of Days,’ or in other words, the first and oldest of all, the great, grand progenitor of whom it is said in another place he is Michael, because he was the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the plan of ordinances for the salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom Christ was first revealed, and through whom Christ has been revealed from heaven, and will continue to be revealed from henceforth. Adam holds the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times; i.e., the dispensation of all the times [that] have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ, and from Christ to the end of the dispensations that are to be revealed.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 3 <2 July 1839> pages 386–387.

<sup>66</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 4 <5 October 1840> pages 207–208.

In Nauvoo, Joseph Smith began to introduce new priesthood concepts in connection with the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage and Temple Ordinances. The Prophet taught that every faithful man in the Fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood presides as a God over their posterity. Joseph also taught that God had made himself a god to the Latter-day Saints:

“Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.”<sup>67</sup>

“God made Aaron to be the mouthpiece for the children of Israel, and He will make me be god to you in His stead, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and if you don’t like it, you must lump it.”<sup>68</sup>

Brigham Young would recall this statement by Joseph Smith throughout his life, and on several occasions connected it to Adam also being a God:

“If you find out who Joseph was, you will know as much about God as you need to at present; for if he said, ‘I am a God to this people,’ he did not say that he was the only wise God. Jesus was a God to the people when he was upon earth, was so before he came to this earth, and is yet. Moses was a God to the children of Israel, and in this manner you may go right back to Father Adam.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 5 <27 August 1843> page 555.

<sup>68</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 6 <8 April 1844> pages 319–320.

<sup>69</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 4 <8 March 1857> page 271.

According to Willard Richards' account of Joseph Smith's teaching on May 4, 1842, the Prophet laid out the "order pertaining to the Ancient of Days," wherein the Prophet likely explained that Adam was the patriarchal head of humanity and stood as a God to his posterity. In 1845 Parley P. Pratt explained what the "order of the Ancient of Days" was:

"First. His most gracious and venerable majesty King Adam, with his royal consort Queen Eve, will appear at the head of the whole great family of the redeemed, and will be crowned in their midst as a King and Priest forever after the order of the Son of God. They will be arrayed in garments white as snow, and will take their seats on the throne, in the midst of the paradise of God on the earth, to reign forever and ever. While thousands of thousands stand before him and ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him. And if you will receive it, this is the Order of the Ancient of Days — the kingdom prepared and organized to meet Jesus when he comes. This venerable patriarch and sovereign will hold lawful jurisdiction over Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the prophets, apostles, and saints of all ages and dispensations, who will all reverence and obey him as their venerable father and lawful sovereign."<sup>70</sup>

President Brigham Young also taught this in early 1845:

"I will show you the order of the Kingdom as regards my own family; one of my sons is placed here, another

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<sup>70</sup> *Millennial Star* vol. 5 <May 1845> page 191.

there, another there, and so on. Yet I should be their ruler, savior, dictator, and governor. They would have an innumerable posterity but all would join in harmony with my counsel; I should console, comfort, and advise them all. You and your children will rise up and administer unto your children, and you will rule over your posterity, and they may get up in tens, hundreds, thousands, and millions. Yet all will finally join with Adam who will be the King of all; Seth comes next; Seth rules under his father and over all; so this process will never end.”<sup>71</sup>

Samuel W. Richards reiterated this concept in an article defending the Adam-God Doctrine after it was publicly proclaimed in 1852:

“Then Adam is really God! And why not? If there are Lords many and Gods many, as the Scriptures inform us, why should not our Father Adam be one of them? ...He is the *first*, the Father of all the human family, and his glory will be above all, for he will be God over all, necessarily, standing as he will through all eternity at the head of those who are redeemed of his great family.

...In the Patriarchal order of government, each and every ruler is independent in his sphere, his rule extending to those below, and not to those above him, in the same order. While the God of unnumbered worlds is acknowledged to be his God and Father, Adam still maintains his exalted position at the head of all those who are saved from among the whole family of man; and he will be God over all those who are made Gods from among men.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 January 1845> page 66.

<sup>72</sup> *Millennial Star* vol. 15 <10 December 1853> pages 801–803.

## ADAM HELPED TO CREATE THIS EARTH AND CAME FROM ANOTHER PLANET

The next aspect of understanding the Adam-God Doctrine is that not only was Adam the literal offspring of *his* God, but that he was begotten on and lived on a previous Earth and had been faithful and received his Exaltation. As Brigham Young explained:

“Well, he was made of the dust of the earth, but not of this earth. He was made just the same way you and I are made, but on another earth. Adam was an immortal being when he came on this earth; he had lived on an earth similar to ours, he had received the Priesthood and the keys thereof, and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection and his exaltation, and was crowned with glory, immortality and eternal lives, and was numbered with the Gods, for such he became through his faithfulness.”<sup>73</sup>

Anson Call recalled that Joseph Smith also taught that Adam came here from a different planet:

“Now regarding Adam: He came here from another planet an immortalized being and brought his wife, Eve, with him, and by eating of the fruits of this Earth became

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<sup>73</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <1 February 1877> page 3104.

subject to death and decay and he became ‘of the earth earthly’, was made mortal and subject to death.”<sup>74</sup>

Supportive of Anson Call’s testimony that Joseph taught that Adam came from a previous Earth, Joseph Smith appeared to subtly teach this in his instructions on Priesthood in July 1839. At the same time the Prophet also taught that Adam participated in the Creation of the world:

“The Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Genesis 1:26, 27, 28. He had dominion given him over every living creation. He is Michael the Archangel, spoke of in the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel; he stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood; he was called of God to this office, and was the father of all living in his day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven.

The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years. The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent. When they are revealed from heaven, it is by Adam’s authority. ...Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of human family.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Joseph Smith statement as recalled by Anson Call in 1877, John M. Whitaker Papers, Special Collections, University of Utah Library.

<sup>75</sup> *History of the Church* vol. 3 <2 July 1839> pages 385–387.

It should be observed that Joseph here stated that Adam held the “First Presidency” and “keys” *before* the creation of the world. Yet he also said that Adam and Noah “held keys first on earth, then in heaven” — indicating that Adam received his priesthood keys first on a *previous* earth, before he held them in the Creation. The vast scope of Adam’s authority and priesthood dominion is even more explicitly stated by the Prophet a few statements later when he said that he held “the keys of the universe.” The “keys of the universe” clearly indicates the dominion of a God.

Joseph Smith further expounded upon Adam’s role in the Creation in the Endowment ceremony he introduced to close associates in 1842 and 1843 — Adam’s role as Michael particularly referred to his status as one of three Gods who participated in the creation of this Earth, namely Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael.<sup>76</sup> These Gods were understood to be Exalted Men who held the keys of Creation and power to organize worlds. Michael was understood to be acting under the Lord Jehovah, and Jehovah under the Great Elohim. Referencing these three Gods, Heber C. Kimball taught:

“Do you suppose you are going to the earth that Adam came from? That Eloheim came from? Where Jehovah the Lord came from? No. When you have learned to become obedient to the Father that dwells upon this earth, to the Father and God of this earth, and obedient to the messengers He sends — when you have done all

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<sup>76</sup> For more on this see the upcoming issue of *One Eternal Round* “The Adam–God Doctrine in the Endowment.”

that, remember you are not going to leave this earth. You will never leave it until you become qualified, and capable, and capacitated to become a father of an earth yourselves.”<sup>77</sup>

On April 9, 1852 Brigham Young mentioned the three Gods in the Creation in his public proclamation of the Adam-God Doctrine: “It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael.”<sup>78</sup> President Young further explained the relationship these Gods held to each other in the Salt Lake School of the Prophets on June 17, 1871: “Elohim, Yahova and Michael, were father, son, and grandson. They made this Earth and Michael became Adam.”<sup>79</sup>

Similar to how Joseph Smith found several scriptural passages in the Bible to support and argue that there were Gods above God the Father,<sup>80</sup> President Young saw several scriptural passages as containing clues that Adam’s relationship to *his* God extended back to before the creation of this Earth.

One scripture Brigham employed to argue this is Genesis 3:8: “And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees

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<sup>77</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <14 November 1852> page 356.

<sup>78</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <9 April 1852> page 51.

<sup>79</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <17 June 1871> page 2856.

<sup>80</sup> John 5:19, Revelation 1:6.

of the garden.”<sup>81</sup> Remarking on this passage, Brigham explained:

“We can read the history of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and that after they transgressed the Lord came along and they run scampering away into the bushes. How did they know it was him? Just as well as my family know mine, for they had lived with him and had a long experience with him. Just as soon as my family hear my footsteps they know that I am coming, and so did Adam and Eve know the footsteps of the Lord. Just as quick as they heard his footsteps they knew who was coming as though they had seen his face because they were acquainted with him. But this is no knowledge to you and I. He came along and said, where are you, what have you been doing? They had hid themselves. It is evident from this that they knew his footsteps, but what advantage is that to you? Would you know the footsteps of the Lord if you heard them coming into this hall from merely reading this account?

...Well, how can we learn by reading the history of Adam and Eve to know the Lord? If you were to hear the footsteps of the Lord would you know from the history of Adam and Eve that it was the Lord coming? They knew the Lord and his footsteps for they had lived with him and had been in eternity with him, and what I have upon this subject I now say: Adam had been with the Lord and had lived with him upon an earth like this and had been faithful and overcome, and had received his body and was resurrected and was well acquainted with the Lord and was one of his mess mates. He had eaten and drunk with him and had lived with him from

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<sup>81</sup> Genesis 3:8, New King James Version.

generation to generation and in many worlds, probably while many had come into and gone out of existence.”<sup>82</sup>

Another place in the Genesis narrative Brigham employed to support his belief that Adam and Eve had a prior existence as husband and wife is Genesis 2:22–24, which states:

“22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”<sup>83</sup>

Brigham Young commented that rather than this being the first marriage ceremony on Earth, there is no such pronouncement. Instead, Adam merely remarked on the familial relationship he already bore to Eve:

“We had a history this morning of the great celebration of the first marriage that took place on this Earth. I have been trying to find an account of the ceremony. I can find nothing more than that the Lord presented the woman to the man, saying ‘this is bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh.’ I cannot find any account of a ceremony, the Lord gave the woman to the man, this is all the ceremony that I can find.

...As to the great wedding Brother Orson [Pratt] has been telling us about, it is nothing more or less than this:

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<sup>82</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 April 1855> page 936.

<sup>83</sup> Genesis 2:22–24.

Adam's father came to him saying 'Here is the wife you have had so long. Now you are going to have one wife to take with you to yonder earth and if any of your other wives ever go to an earth to become the mother of all living, to become an Eve, it will be another earth, not to that one.' She is called Eve because she is the mother of all living and she is the Queen of that earth. Adam is the Lord of the earth and the Father of all living on this earth as Eve is the mother of all living on this earth."<sup>84</sup>

Other verses can also be employed to show the exalted status Adam held when he was brought here to Earth. One example being Genesis 2:19–20 records that every creature placed upon this Earth was brought to Adam to be named by him, indicating Adam was given a place of authority and dominion, and possessed intelligence, as the “Lord over the Earth,” rather than a relative baby in his development and organization.

## ADAM IS GOD THE FATHER

When one puts together all these various pieces of the puzzle about the relationship man sustains to God, and the exalted status Adam holds in relation to humanity, the complete understanding of the Adam-God Doctrine becomes clear: Adam is God the Father, standing as our Father and God to us. As Brigham Young proclaimed to the world on April 9, 1852:

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<sup>84</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 August 1867> pages 2483–2485.

“Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a *celestial body*, and brought Eve, *one of his wives*, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is MICHAEL, *the Archangel*, the ANCIENT OF DAYS! about whom holy men have written and spoken — HE *is our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom WE have to do*. Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or non-professing, must hear it, and *will know it sooner or later*.”<sup>85</sup>

Brigham would continue to preach on the identity of God the Father throughout the years in his sermons:

“Who was it that spoke from the heaven and said ‘This is my beloved Son, hear him’? Was it God the Father? It was. The Apostles bear testimony that such a voice was actually heard. ...Who did beget him? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is Father Adam. Michael, the Ancient of Days, has he a father? He has. Has he a mother? He has.”<sup>86</sup>

“I tell you, when you see your Father in the Heavens, you will see Adam; when you see your Mother that bear your spirit, you will see Mother Eve.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 1 <9 April 1852> page 50, emphasis in original.

<sup>86</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <19 February 1864> page 763.

<sup>87</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <8 October 1854> page 852.

“Adam was an immortal being when he came on this earth; he had lived on an earth similar to ours, he had received the Priesthood and the keys thereof, and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection and his exaltation, and was crowned with glory, immortality and eternal lives, and was numbered with the Gods (for such he became through his faithfulness), and had begotten all the spirits that were to come to this earth. And Eve, our common mother, who is the mother of all living, bore those spirits in the celestial world.

And when this earth was organized by Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael, who is Adam, our common Father, Adam and Eve had the privilege to continue the work of Progression, [and] consequently came to this earth and commenced the great work of forming tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in, and when Adam and those that assisted him had completed this Kingdom, our earth, he came to it, and slept and forgot all, and became like an infant child.

...Adam and Eve, when they were placed on this earth, were immortal beings with flesh, bones and sinews, but upon partaking of the fruits of the earth while in the garden, and cultivating the ground, their bodies became changed from immortal to mortal beings, with the blood coursing through their veins as the action of life.

...Father Adam's oldest son, Jesus the Savior, who is the heir of the family, is Father Adam's first begotten in the spirit world; who, according to the flesh, is the only begotten, as it is written. In his divinity he [Adam] having gone back into the spirit world, and come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived; for when Adam and Eve got through with their work in this earth, they did

not lay their bodies down in the dust, but returned to the spirit world from whence they came.”<sup>88</sup>

## THE FAITHFUL WILL BECOME ADAMS AND EVES TO FUTURE WORLDS

The logical implication and result of understanding that God the Father and Heavenly Mother came down on Earth to be Adam and Eve to give bodies to their spiritual posterity means that the faithful who are exalted as Gods will also become Adams and Eves to future worlds.

On March 14, 1852, Brigham Young told his prayer circle: “they which are [faithful] after shall receive our resurrected bodies and shall all have the privilege of going as Adams to form an Earth and do likewise.”<sup>89</sup> On March 8, 1857 Brigham preached:

“When you have the privilege of commencing the work that Adam commenced on this earth, you will have all your children come and report to you of their sayings and acts; and you will hold every son and daughter of yours responsible when you get the privilege of being an Adam on earth.”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <1 February 1877> pages 3104–3105.

<sup>89</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <14 March 1852> page 487.

<sup>90</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 4 <8 March 1857> page 271.

The other aspect to the Adam-God Doctrine as taught by President Young is that every exalted woman gets to be an Eve, a “Mother of All Living,” to her own world:

“Many of the sisters grieve because they are not blessed with offspring. You will see the time when you will have millions of children around you. If you are faithful to your covenants, you will be mothers of nations. You will become Eves to earths like this; and when you have assisted in peopling one earth, there are millions of earths still in the course of creation.”<sup>91</sup>

“Now you are going to have one wife to take with you to yonder Earth, and if any of your other wives ever go to an earth to become the mother of all Living, to become an Eve, it will be to another earth not to that one. She is called Eve because she is the Mother of all Living, and she is the queen of that Earth.”<sup>92</sup>

This aspect of Adam-God — that each wife gets to be the Mother of her own world — can be documented as clearly going back to the lifetime of Joseph Smith. The poem “Buckeye’s Lamentation for Want of More Wives,” exposing and mocking the doctrines of plural marriage and exaltation that Joseph Smith had been secretly teaching, notes:

“A *tenfold* glory — that’s the prize!  
 Without it you’re undone!  
 But with it you will shine as bright  
 As the bright shining sun.  
 There you may reign like mighty Gods,

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<sup>91</sup> *Journal of Discourses* vol. 8 <14 October 1860> page 208.

<sup>92</sup> *Complete Discourses of Brigham Young* <25 August 1867> page 2485.

Creating worlds so fair;—  
At least a *world* for every *wife*  
That you take with you there.”<sup>93</sup>

The doctrine of faithful men and women becoming Adams and Eves to future worlds was stated by Orson F. Whitney in a sermon he gave in 1895:

“Mormonism teaches that the worlds on high, the stars that glitter in the blue vault of heaven, are kingdoms of God, that they were once earths like this, that they have been redeemed and glorified by the same laws, the same principles, that are applied to this planet, and by which it will ascend to a perfected and glorified state. It teaches that these worlds are peopled with human beings, God’s sons and daughters, and that every husband and father may become an Adam, and every wife and mother an Eve, to some future planet.”<sup>94</sup>

And thus the doctrine of Exaltation was fully revealed to the Saints in early Utah, through Brigham Young and his worthy contemporaries. This doctrine was that we are really and truly both the spiritual and physical offspring of God, and that we can go on to do the same work that God has done to bring to pass the Immortality and Eternal Life of man.

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<sup>93</sup> Buckeye’s Lamentation for Want of More Wives, *Warsaw Message*, 7 February 1844, italics in original.

<sup>94</sup> *Collected Discourses* vol. 4 <9 June 1895> pages 336–337.

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