

# DIFFERENT THOUGHTS - #7

## ADAM - GOD

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### Introduction

Brigham Young was ordained an Apostle on Feb 14, 1835 at the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, under the hands of the three witnesses. This ordination was then confirmed by the laying on of hands by the First Presidency of the Church. Later he became president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and held that office for nearly thirty years, which is a longer period than that of any other church president. Reports, synopses and reviews of over 1500 of his talks are on record (by comparison, the *Journal of Discourses* contains 324 of these talks).

President Young had so much to say on so many topics over such a long period of time that it has become common to dismiss many of his concepts and statements with the explanation that he frequently contradicted himself, or that many of his teachings were inconsistent. This could not be further from the truth. In commenting on this topic Dr. Hugh Nibley had the following to say about Brigham Young's teachings:

No man ever spoke his mind more frankly on all subjects; all his days he strove to communicate his inmost feelings, unburdening himself without the aid of notes or preparation in a vigorous and forthright prose that was the purest anti-rhetoric. It has been common practice to dismiss any saying of his of which one disapproves (and he makes no effort to please) by observing that he said so much on so many things that he was bound to contradict himself, and therefore need not be taken too seriously all the time. No view could be more ill-advised, for there never was a man more undeviatingly consistent and rational in thought and utterance. . . . Granted that Brigham would admonish the Saints to wear overcoats one day, so to speak, and the next day turn around and advise shirt-sleeves, the element of scandal and confusion vanishes if we only get the main idea, which is, that it is not the rule-book or the Administration but the weather that prescribes the proper dress for the day. All the other apparent contradictions in Brother Brigham's teachings likewise vanish when we grasp the main idea behind them. [Hugh Nibley, *BYU Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Autumn 1970, p.61-62]

Of all Brigham Young's teachings, certainly the most maligned, controversial and misunderstood is called the Adam-God doctrine, or the Adam-God theory. The only difference between the Adam-God doctrine and the Adam-God theory is that if the individual speaking believes it, he calls it the Adam-God doctrine, while if the individual does not believe it, then he refers to it as the Adam-God theory.

### Official Statement by the Church

There has been an official statement made on this subject by President Spencer W. Kimball, made in the Priesthood session of October conference 1976.

We hope that you who teach in the various organizations, whether on the campuses or in our Chapels, will always teach the orthodox truth. We warn you against the dissemination of doctrines which are not according to the Scriptures and which are alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations. such, for instance, is the Adam-God theory. We denounce that theory and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this and other kinds of false doctrine. (See Ensign, November 1976 p. 77)

Several important things can be gleaned from this brief statement by President Kimball:

- The Adam-God theory is not orthodox truth.
- The Adam-God theory is a doctrine which is not in accordance with scripture.
- The Adam-God theory is alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations.
- The Adam-God theory is false doctrine.

At the time this statement was made in the 1976 Priesthood conference, I was serving on a priesthood committee under the direction of Elder Mark E. Petersen. We were at that time working with a number of people who believed the Adam-God theory, and our committee wanted to know more precisely what President Kimball meant by his statement, so through Elder Petersen we made an appointment with him and asked him. In a private interview President Kimball made the following clarifications: He said that he did not say that President Brigham Young did not make the statements which are attributed to him, nor did he claim that they were falsely reported. Neither did he say that Brigham Young taught false doctrine. What he did say and what he meant is that the Adam-God theory is false, and the Adam-God theory is that interpretation which is placed on Brigham Young's words by present day apostates and fundamentalists - their understanding of what Brigham Young meant is false.

Considering both President Kimball's original statement and his subsequent clarification, what we need is an understanding of what Brigham Young meant by his statements which is in accordance with scripture. This is reasonable even without President Kimball's statements, because any of President Young's teachings which are not in harmony with scripture would simply be wrong anyway.

### **Interpretation as a Guide to Understanding**

It has been alleged by some that we are not allowed to interpret Brigham Young's statements at all, but we must take them in the most direct and straightforward understanding of his words as they appear, and allow them to thus interpret themselves. To this, I answer "Why?" This is not the way we approach any other doctrine or teaching of the Church. Why must we make a special exception for Brigham Young's statements about Adam-God?

In Isaiah when we read "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." [Isaiah 6:2], we do not let this stand free of interpretation, but we interpret it in view of Joseph Smith's declaration that "An angel of God never has wings." [TPJS p 162], thus requiring a figurative rather than a literal interpretation of the passage in Isaiah.

Similarly, we do not require the most straightforward interpretation of John 4:24 "God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth." but we interpret it in light of D&C 130:22 "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us."

The Book of Mormon says that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one God. Are we required to accept that in its most direct and straightforward interpretation? Not at all. We know from the Pearl of Great Price that two separate personages appeared to Joseph Smith in the First Vision, so we go through some theological gyrations in order to make it possible for the two seemingly dissonant passages to agree. In order to do that, we interpret and explain the "oneness" of God, and to some that appears to be an invalid interpretation.

God says that sinners will suffer eternal damnation, but from D&C 19:10-12 we know that we must interpret eternal damnation as God's damnation, not a never ending torment of fire and brimstone. My point is that we interpret scripture and statements of the prophets in a manner in which they will harmonize with other scripture and other statements of the prophets all the time with almost every doctrine and concept we believe. Why then must we accept only the most direct understanding of Brigham Young's statements and not interpret them to fit with truth that is known from other sources? Are we to make Brigham Young's teachings on this one subject a rare exception to the general way we come to a correct understanding of all other doctrines?

## **Interpreting Brigham Young's Discourses**

It is my belief that in order to understand Adam God correctly, we must take Brigham Young's statements and interpret and understand them in such a manner that they harmonize with other known statements of Brigham Young as well as with what is known to be true from other reliable sources such as the four Standard Works, teachings of Joseph Smith, the temple ceremony etc. If we do not do this, then we are alternatively assuming by default that Brigham Young was incapable of logical thought, that he was inconsistent, and that he did not understand the four Standard Works, the temple endowment or the teachings of Joseph Smith etc., none of which is acceptable to me.

It is important to note that of the more than 1500 recorded discourses of Brigham Young, only 20 of those discourses can be associated with the topic of Adam-God, and even most of those 20 are orthodox when not improperly inserted into an Adam-God context in which they do not belong. We are considering a teaching of Brigham Young which was brought up in less than 1% of his recorded discourses.

In order to correctly understand Brigham Young's views on the topic of Adam, it is most practical to first review certain scriptural accounts pertaining to Adam, Eve and the creation. Once the scriptural accounts are correctly understood, the views presented by President Brigham Young become much easier to interpret. If we make the assumption that Brigham Young would not intentionally contradict consistent scriptural teachings, then correctly interpreting many of his controversial and even apparently contradictory statements becomes much easier.

### **Adam was not a resurrected being**

One of the worst misconceptions which has been caused by incorrectly interpreting some of Brigham Young's statements is that Adam and Eve were resurrected beings when they entered the garden of Eden. Correct doctrine respecting this topic is most easily demonstrated by reviewing some of Amulek's teachings in the 11th chapter of the Book of Alma in the Book of Mormon. In verse 45, Amulek states:

Alma 11:45

Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption.

From this verse it is evident that once an individual is resurrected, he can never die again, because the spirit and body are inseparably connected through the resurrection. Not only can resurrected beings never die, they can never even become mortal again, because mortality is corruption, and after the resurrection they can no more experience corruption. That Adam did die is universally acknowledged throughout the four standard works:

### **Adam died**

Book of Mormon: In Alma, chapter 12 verse 23, Alma states

And now behold, I say unto you that if it had been possible for Adam to have partaken of the fruit of the tree of life at that time, there would have been no death, and the word would have been void, making God a liar, for he said: If thou eat thou shalt surely die.

Now, we know God told Adam that if he were to partake of the forbidden fruit, he would surely die. We also know that Adam did partake of the forbidden fruit, therefore either Adam died, or God is a liar.

**Bible:** In Genesis, chapter 5, verse 5 we read:

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

Three verses later, Moses uses nearly identical wording to indicate that Seth died.

8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

It is clear that the intent of the author was to inform the reader that Adam died in the same sense in which Seth died, and not in some figurative or representative manner.

**Pearl of Great Price:** Moses 6:12 and Moses 6:16 are virtually identical to the verses quoted above in Genesis 5:

12 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died. . . .

16 All the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

**Doctrine and Covenants:** In D&C 107, verses 42 and 53 both speak of the death of Adam:

42 From Adam to Seth, who was ordained by Adam at the age of sixty-nine years, and was blessed by him three years previous to his (Adam's) death, and received the promise of God by his father, that his posterity should be the chosen of the Lord, and that they should be preserved unto the end of the earth;

53 Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.

**D&C 138** gives additional information about the fact that Adam died: In this Vision of the Redemption of the Dead, President Joseph F. Smith states:

11 As I pondered over these things which are written, the eyes of my understanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great.

12 And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality;

13 And who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer's name.

14 All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

15 I beheld that they were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand.

16 They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the spirit world, to declare their redemption from the bands of death.

17 Their sleeping dust was to be restored unto its perfect frame, bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of joy.

Note that in verse 17 the assurance is reiterated that once resurrected, the spirit and the body will never again be separated. Then, in verse 38, begins a description of those who were in this vast congregation of the righteous dead who were eagerly awaiting their resurrection as Christ entered the spirit world to break the bands of death:

38 Among the great and mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous were Father Adam, the Ancient of Days and father of all,

39 And our glorious Mother Eve, with many of her faithful daughters who had lived through the ages and worshiped the true and living God.

There is no question that Adam and Eve died in the normal sense of the word, and that they remained in the spirit world awaiting their resurrection until the meridian of time. It is therefore beyond any question that Adam and Eve were not resurrected beings in the garden of Eden.

### **Adam is not God**

Some of Brigham Young's discourses have been interpreted to mean that Brigham Young believed that Adam is God, the Eternal Father. These interpretations all directly contradict scripture, and are therefore false and must be discarded by every rational believer of scripture. President Spencer W. Kimball in his closing address at the October 1976 General Priesthood Session stated:

We hope that you who teach in the various organizations, whether on the campuses or in our Chapels will always teach the orthodox truth. We warn you against the dissemination of doctrines which are not according to the Scriptures and which are alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations. Such, for instance, is the Adam-God theory. We denounce that theory and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this and other kinds of false doctrine. [Ensign, November 1976, p 77]

The first and most obvious reason that Adam is not God is that given above. In the Garden of Eden, God was a resurrected being, but Adam was not. It is therefore impossible that they could be the same being. In fact, the scriptures inform us quite explicitly that while Adam was in mortality, God the Father called upon him with his own voice.

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

51 And he [i.e. God] called upon Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. [Moses 6:51-52]

The reference here to "God" cannot refer to Jesus Christ because it was not Christ who made the spirits of men.

### **Adam is subordinate to Jesus Christ**

Another reason that Adam cannot be God, the Father, is because Adam is subordinate to Jesus Christ. This is affirmed in Jude, verse 9 in which Michael (who is Adam) dared not bring a railing accusation against the devil, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee Satan."

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

It has been claimed that the word "durst" is not properly translated, or at least does not carry the meaning "dared not," but the Prophet Joseph Smith certainly interpreted it that way:

Be honest; be men of truth and integrity; let your word be your bond; be diligent, be prayerful; pray for and with your families; train up your children in the fear of the Lord; cultivate a meek, a quiet spirit; clothe the naked, feed the hungry, help the destitute, be merciful to the widow and orphan, be merciful to your brethren, and to all men; bear with one another's infirmities, considering your own weakness; bring no railing accusations against your brethren, especially take care that you do not against the authorities or Elders of the Church, for that principle is of the devil; he is called the accuser of the brethren; and Michael, the archangel, dared not bring a railing accusation against the devil, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan;" and any man who pursues this course of accusation and murmuring, will fall into the snare of the devil, and apostatize, except he repent. [History of the Church, Vol.3, Ch.27, p.394]

The subordination of Adam to Christ is further evidenced by section 78 of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which the individual speaking:

- Appointed Michael to be our prince.
- Established Michael's feet.
- Set Michael upon high.
- Gave unto Michael the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One.

13 Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you; ...

15 That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundation of Adam-ondi-Ahman;

16 Who hath appointed Michael your prince, and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life. [D&C 78:13, 15-16]

The individual speaking identifies himself in verse 20 as our "Redeemer, even the Son Ahman."

20 Wherefore, do the things which I have commanded you, saith your Redeemer, even the Son Ahman, who prepareth all things before he taketh you; [D&C 78:20]

In an article on Priesthood, prepared in July of 1839, the Prophet Joseph Smith rigidly bracketed the position of Adam in the priesthood hierarchy. On page 158 of *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Joseph is cited as stating:

How have we come at the Priesthood in the last days? It came down, down, in regular succession. Peter, James, and John had it given to them and they gave it to others. Christ is the Great High Priest; Adam next. [TPJS 158]

Some have pointed out that this statement is ambiguous, and could either mean that Christ is superior to Adam, or that Christ is subordinate to Adam, depending upon whether "next" is interpreted as "next higher" or "next lower." This statement therefore only requires that the hierarchy of priesthood authority be represented in one of the following two ways,

Jesus Christ		Adam (Michael)
	or	
Adam (Michael)		Jesus Christ

However, in the same article, just 5 paragraphs earlier, Joseph Smith made the following statement:

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 creature. He is Michael the Archangel, spoken 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. [TPJS 157]

Therefore, Noah also stands next to Adam in priesthood authority. With Jesus Christ and Noah, each standing next to Adam in priesthood authority (one higher, and one lower), Adam is bracketed with Christ on one side, and Noah on the other, which means that our representation of the hierarchy of priesthood authority must extend to one of the following:

Jesus Christ		Noah (Gabriel)
Adam (Michael)	or	Adam (Michael)
Noah (Gabriel)		Jesus Christ

Since no one will contend that Noah is superior to Jesus Christ, the second column is demonstrated invalid and the subordination of Adam to Jesus Christ as shown in the first column is established. This is a simple demonstration that the Prophet Joseph Smith understood these scriptures in the same way we understand them.

### **Adam and Eve were Unmarried when they came into the Garden of Eden**

In Kirtland, on November 24, 1835, while performing the marriage for Newel Knight and Lydia Goldthwaite, the Prophet Joseph Smith stated that marriage is an institution of heaven, which was instituted in the garden of Eden:

I had an invitation to attend a wedding at Brother Hyrum Smith's in the evening; also to solemnize the matrimonial ceremony between Newel Knight and Lydia Goldthwaite. My wife accompanied me. On our arrival a considerable company had collected. The bridegroom and bride came in, and took their seats, which gave me to understand that they were ready. After prayers, I requested them to rise, and join hands. I then remarked that marriage was an institution of heaven, instituted in the garden of Eden; that it was necessary it should be solemnized by the authority of the everlasting Priesthood. The ceremony was original with me, and in substance as follows--You covenant to be each other's companions through life, and discharge the duties of husband and wife in every respect; to which they assented. I then pronounced them husband and wife in the name of God, and also pronounced upon them the blessings that the Lord conferred upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, that is, to multiply and replenish the earth, with the addition of long life and prosperity. Dismissed them and returned home. Freezing cold, some snow on the ground. [*History of the Church*, 2:320]

That marriage was instituted in the garden of Eden means that the first marriage was performed in the garden of Eden. The only people who could have been married in the garden were Adam and Eve. The fact that their marriage was performed in the garden means that they were not married when they first entered the garden. Being unmarried prior to living in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve could not possibly be our Heavenly Parents.

### **Adam is a son of God**

Another, and even more positive reason that Adam is not God, The Eternal Father, is because Adam, physically, is a son of God, The Eternal Father. This profound doctrine is scriptural and has been taught by many general authorities of the Church from Joseph Smith, down to the present day. It has never been emphasized as a doctrine of the Church because knowledge of this principle is generally not essential to our salvation. To an individual, however, who has been misled by false interpretations of some of Brigham Young's discourses to the point where they have fallen away or are ready to fall away from the Church, a proper understanding of this principle becomes singularly important.

In understanding this principle, it is appropriate to first turn to Moses, chapter 6, where Moses gives a genealogy of the sons of Adam. Note that this is called a genealogy of "the children of God," and that they were created "in the image of his own 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.

Moses then recites a genealogy of the sons of Adam, from which the following excerpts are significant:

10 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image, and called his name Seth. ...

13 Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begat Enos, ...

17 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan. ...

19 And Cainan lived seventy years and begat Mahalaleel; ...

20 And Mahalaleel lived sixty-five years and begat Jared; ...

21 And Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begat Enoch; and Jared lived, after he begat Enoch, eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Jared taught Enoch in all the

ways of God.

22 And this is the genealogy of the sons of Adam, who was the son of God, with whom God, himself, conversed. [Moses 6:10,13,17,19,20,21-22]

This statement that Adam was the son of God, refers to a real, literal, physical relationship. Adam was physically born on this earth, to our Heavenly Father and his spouse, our Heavenly Mother. Adam's parents were both resurrected beings, hence there were no seeds of death in Adam's physical body, and he would have lived forever had it not been for the fall. A good understanding of Adam's relationship to our Heavenly Father is essential to a proper understanding of many of Brigham Young's controversial discourses, so it becomes imperative to establish a good foundation by providing a number of solid quotations, both from scripture and from a variety of authorities throughout the history of the Church. Both the citations and their sequence have been carefully selected from a larger assortment in order to preempt a number of questions which typically arise during explanations of how Adam and Eve were physically born to our heavenly parents.

The foundational account of the Creation of Adam and Eve is found in Genesis 1:26-27:

26 ¶ 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.

27 So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Verse 27 would be more properly translated from the Hebrew as:

27 So God begat man in his own image, in the image of God begat he him, male and female begat he them.

[footnote: 1. In the original Hebrew, the word translated "man" is {adam} (there is no upper case/lower case distinction in Hebrew). The word translated "made" is {bara} and the word translated "God" is {eloheim} . In Genesis the word {adam} may be translated as "Adam" when context implies the specific individual or "man," "mankind" or even "husband" as the context requires. {bara} is a technological term which means to create from pre-existing material, but its root meaning is to cut or hew. If a statue or figurine were being created it could be translated "carve," but when children are being created the proper translation is "beget." We are more familiar with it in the New Testament Aramaic form "bar" as in Simon bar Jonah (Simon begotten of Jonah). {eloheim} is a plural word, but is normally used as if it were singular. It should perhaps be translated "Gods" in this context as indicated by the "us," and "our" of verse 26.]

In commenting on Genesis 1:26-27 Brigham Young left us no doubts as to his understanding that it was the normal birth process which was being described

"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 created he him; male and female created he them."

I believe that the declaration made in these two scriptures is literally true. God has made His children like Himself to stand erect, and has endowed them with intelligence and power and dominion over all His works, and given them the same attributes which He himself possesses. He created man, as we create our children; for there is no other process of creation in heaven, on the earth, in the earth, or under the earth, or in all the eternities, that is, that were, or that ever will be. [JD 11:122-123, June 18, 1865]

It is true that in Genesis, chapter 3 Adam is spoken of as having been formed of the dust of the ground:

7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. [Ge 3:7]



But in Moses, chapter 6, the Lord specifically defines what it means to be formed from the dust of the ground to become a living soul:

59 ... 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 ... [Moses 6:59]

In Luke, chapter 3, a genealogy of Jesus Christ is given, beginning in verse 23:

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being as was supposed, the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, ...

Luke continues through a total of 70 generations of literal father/son relationships, ending in verses 37 and 38 with:

37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan.

38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

In his inspired revision of the Bible, Joseph Smith modified verse 38 to read "... Adam, who was formed of God, and the first man on the earth," but this does not detract from the argument of Adam having been physically begotten by God. Joseph Smith did not believe that any man ever came into existence without a father. In Teachings he is recorded as saying:

If Abraham reasoned thus--If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also. 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. [TPJS 373]

And Brigham Young was just as clear in specifying that the father of Adam and Eve was none other than our Heavenly Father.

The world may in vain ask the question, "Who are we?" But the Gospel tells us that we are the sons and daughters of that God whom we serve. Some say, "we are the children of Adam and Eve." So we are, and they are the children of our Heavenly Father. We are all the children of Adam and Eve, and they and we are the offspring of Him who dwells in the heavens, the highest Intelligence that dwells anywhere that we have any knowledge of. [JD 13:311-312, April 17, 1870]

President John Taylor also clearly understood and taught these principles:

In regard to the earth, is it the Lord's? Yes. We are told that he made it, that he created all things, visible and invisible, whether pertaining to the earth or the heavens. And where did man originate? As we read it, he originated also from God. Who formed man according to the Bible record? The Lord. Whence came our spirits? We are told that God is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. Then He of course is interested in the welfare of all flesh and all people of all languages, of tongues, of every color, and of every clime. That is the way that I understand these things. Our spirits are eternal and emanate from God. So we, as a people, have always understood and do understand today. We possess our bodies also, and they also emanated from God. The Bible tells us something in relation to these matters in tracing out genealogies. Who was Seth? He was the son of Adam. Who was Adam? The son of God. In another place we are told that "all we are His offspring"--that is, according to that, we are all the offspring of God. [JD 26:34, Dec 14, 1884]

### Message of the First Presidency

In 1909, the First Presidency of the Church (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anton H. Lund) issued an official declaration on the "Origin of Man" in the pages of the *Improvement Era*. It will be noticed by reading the introductory paragraph of this declaration, that it was written in response to an inquiry, and although the First Presidency did not consider the topic to

be doctrinally "vital," it was nevertheless considered to be an important subject closely related to the fundamental principles of the gospel.

## THE ORIGIN OF MAN

By The First Presidency of the Church

"God created man in his own image."

Inquiries arise from time to time respecting the attitude of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon questions which, though not vital from a doctrinal standpoint, are closely connected with the fundamental principles of salvation. The latest inquiry of this kind that has reached us is in relation to the origin of man. It is believed that a statement of the position held by the Church upon this important subject will be timely and productive of good.

The major emphasis of the declaration seems to be the truthfulness and reliability of the scriptural accounts of the creation. Of particular interest to us, on the topic of Adam being born, are the following paragraphs.

Adam, our progenitor, "the first man," was, like Christ, a pre-existent spirit, and like Christ he took upon him an appropriate body, the body of a man, and so became a "living soul." The doctrine of the pre-existence, revealed so plainly, particularly in latter days, pours a wonderful flood of light upon the otherwise mysterious problem of man's origin. It shows that man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body to undergo an experience in mortality. It teaches that all men existed in the spirit before any man existed in the flesh, and that all who have inhabited the earth since Adam have taken bodies and become souls in like manner.

It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth, and that the original human being was a development from lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men. The word of the Lord declares that Adam was "the first man of all men" (Moses 1:34), and we are therefore in duty bound to regard him as the primal parent of our race. It was shown to the brother of Jared that all men were created in the beginning after the image of God; and whether we take this to mean the spirit or the body, or both, it commits us to the same conclusion: Man began life as a human being, in the likeness of our heavenly Father.

True it is that the body of man enters upon its career as a tiny germ embryo, which becomes an infant, quickened at a certain stage by the spirit whose tabernacle it is, and the child, after being born, develops into a man. There is nothing in this, however, to indicate that the original man, the first of our race, began life as anything less than a man, or less than the human germ or embryo that becomes a man. [James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:200-201, 206, November 1909]

Some have felt that this declaration was left intentionally ambiguous, and is therefore not sufficiently clear, but one need only read the following comments by President Joseph F. Smith to know how he believed the statement should be understood.

### Man A Child Of God

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That man as a descendant of Adam, is, in a most literal sense, a child of God is emphatically explained in the following group of brief excerpts from Church records:

#### THE CREATION OF ADAM

BY

PRES. JOSEPH F. SMITH,

## At Stake Conference of Maricopa Stake

President Smith closed the conference with his usual brilliant, thoughtful remarks. He bore a strong testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel and said in part: "I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; I know that God is a being with body, parts and passions and that His Son is in His own likeness, and that man is created in the image of God. The Son, Jesus Christ, grew and developed into manhood the same as you or I, as likewise did God, His Father, grow and develop to the Supreme Being that He now is. Man was born of woman; Christ, the Savior, was born of woman; and God, the Father, was born of woman. Adam, our earthly parent was also born of woman into this world, the same as Jesus and you and I."

JOSEPH E. NOBLE,

Stake Clerk.

(*Deseret News*, Dec. 27, 1913, Sec. III, p. 7)

[*Deseret News Church Section*, Sept 19, 1936 pp 2-3]

Possibly the most clear and definitive statement available on the subject is one which was written by Reed C. Durham after a telephone conversation with Eldere Bruce R. McConkie in 1966. I personally presented a copy of this statement to Elder McConkie in Dec of 1982 and asked if he would verify it. After reviewing it, Elder McConkie said that it accurately expressed his understanding.

### Adam - God Statement

I phoned B. R. McConkie on Friday afternoon, April 29th 1966, at his home in regard to his commentary of Luke 3:38 in his new text on the New Testament.

He answered that he had purposely left the door opened on that Point. He said it was a true doctrine that God the Father, Eloheim, a divine resurrected being came down to this earth after its creation, with a wife and produced in the natural way of sexual intercourse, a child who grew up and became known as ADAM. They did the same and brought forth a girl who grew up and became EVE. They had bodies of flesh and bone etc., but were not mortal (not till they fell). They (Adam and Eve) were not resurrected and not translated beings. God really did create their bodies on this earth. They were not transported here (only their spirits).

He then said that his father-in-law told him that was a true doctrine; that it had been taught a great deal by President J. F. Smith (6th president). He also added that President Joseph Fielding Smith said it was too deep now for most saints--that's the reason for saying about the creation of Adam and Eve in the temple, "It's only figurative ..."

Reed C. Durham, Jr.

According to this account, President Joseph F. Smith, President Joseph Fielding Smith and Elder Bruce R. McConkie all understood that Adam and Eve were born on this earth,, to our Heavenly Father, and our Heavenly Mother, and then placed in the garden of Eden. This is one of the reasons that these three brethren were always opposed to the theory of the organic evolution of man. They, and many others who believe as they did, believe that man did not evolve from any lower order of creation, but that man devolved from the highest order of creation--from God himself.

Many were so open about teaching this principle that the doctrine cannot be considered secret, or even hidden. It was merely not emphasized. The following example is from a response by John A. Widtsoe to a question about Brigham Young's Adam-God sermon. The article is one of a series which was entitled "Evidences and Reconciliations." The series was published monthly in the *Improvement Era*. This article was first published in the December 1943 issue of the *Era*, and was later republished in volume 1 of a three volume set which was a collection of the

"Evidences and Reconciliations" articles. It appeared again in a one volume reprint of the three volume set published in 1960.

Brigham Young's much-discussed sermon says that "Jesus was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven. Enemies of the Church, or stupid people, reading also that Adam is "our father and our God." have heralded far and wide that the Mormons believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of Adam. Yet, the rational reading of the whole sermon reveals the falsity of such a doctrine. It is explained that God the Father was in the Garden of Eden, before Adam, that he was the Father of Adam, and that this same personage, God the Father, who was in the Garden of Eden before Adam, was the Father of Jesus Christ, when the Son took upon himself a mortal body. That is, the same personage was the Father of Adam and of Jesus Christ. In the numerous published sermons of Brigham Young, this is the doctrine that appears, none other. The assertion is repeatedly made that Jesus Christ was begotten by God, the Father, distinct by any stretch of imagination from Adam. This is a well established Latter-day Saint doctrine. [John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations* pp 56-57; also *Improvement Era* 46:769]

One question which frequently arises is how Adam can be a son of God, when Jesus Christ is described in scripture as the Only Begotten Son. This question is answered in another widely referenced and readily available book, *Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie under "Son Of God."

2. Father Adam, the first man, is also a son of God (Luke 3:38; Moses 6:22, 59), a fact that does not change the great truth that Christ is the Only Begotten in the flesh, for Adam's entrance into this world was in immortality. He came here before death had its beginning, with its consequent mortal or flesh-status of existence. *Mormon Doctrine*, p 742]

Another question frequently asked is, if resurrected beings have spirit children, then how can resurrected beings produce physical children? Apparently the type of body produced by an exalted being depends upon what type of materials are available to the body of the mother as she forms the child within her. If only spirit matter is available, then a spirit body will be produced, but if they plant a garden on an earth, and live in and partake of the physical fruits of that garden until their bodies are charged with the physical particles of that earth, then the body formed will be a physical body, and the particles constituting the body thus formed will belong to that earth.

### **Adam Created From Dust of This Earth.**

The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price all declare that Adam's body was created from the dust of the ground, that is, from the dust of this ground, this earth. Moreover, the Lord said to Adam, that if he partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he should surely die. "By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou shalt return unto the ground--for thou shalt surely die--for out of it [i.e, the ground] wast thou taken: for dust thou wast, and unto dust shalt thou return." Now how could he return to the dust of the earth, if his body was not taken from it? [Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., *Doctrines of Salvation* 1:90-91]

We organize according to men in the flesh. By combining the elements and planting the seed, we cause vegetables, trees, grains, &c., to come forth. We are organizing a kingdom here according to the pattern that the Lord has given for people in the flesh, but not for those who have received the resurrection, although it is a similitude. Another item: We have not the power in the flesh to create and bring forth or produce a spirit; but we have the power to produce a temporal body. The germ of this, God has placed within us. And when our spirits receive our bodies, and through our faithfulness we are worthy to be crowned, we will then receive authority to produce both spirit and body. But these keys we cannot receive in the flesh. [JD 15:137, Brigham Young, August 24, 1872]

### **Eve was not created from a rib**

It will be appropriate to answer one more question before proceeding. The question is sometimes asked, if Eve was born, then why do the scriptures say that she was created from Adam's rib? First, President Spencer W. Kimball assured the sisters at Relief Society general conference in October 1975 that the creation of Eve from the rib of Adam was figurative.

The role of woman was fixed even before she was created, and God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is written:

"And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I them. [the story of the rib, of course, is figurative.]

"And I, God, blessed them [Man here is always in the plural. It was plural from the beginning.] and said unto them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over [it]." (Moses 2:27-28) [*Ensign*, vol. 6, March 1976, p 71]

Brigham Young, however, went further and explained the basic meaning behind the figure.

It is said by Moses the historian that the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and took from his side a rib and formed the woman that Adam called Eve--this should be interpreted that the Man Adam like all other men had the seed within him to propagate his species. But not the woman; she conceives the seed but she does not produce it; consequently she was taken from the side or bowels of her father. This explains the mystery of Moses' dark sayings in regard to Adam and Eve. [Brigham Young, "Lecture at the Veil," St. George Temple, Feb 1, 1877]

### Meaning of the word Adam

Another concept which is important to the correct understanding of Brigham Young's dark sayings in regard to Adam and Eve is a particular meaning of the word "Adam." Adam in the Hebrew can have several meanings. As was mentioned above, in Genesis Adam has been translated as "man" (or mankind) and also "husband." It can also have the meaning of "ruddy" (a reddish hue), and "one blood." In the Book of Moses there is another meaning which is alluded to.

34 And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many. [Moses 1:34]

Now, the word Adam does not mean "many," so the intent of this verse is that there are many men who have been named Adam. In context, the implication is that the first man of each earth is always called Adam. Brigham Young verifies this in one of his discourses.

Every world has had an Adam and an Eve, named so simply because the first man is always called Adam and the first woman Eve. [Brigham Young "For this is Life Eternal," Oct 8, 1854 p 7]

One of the meanings of Adam is therefore "the first man," or more specifically, as the Book of Abraham renders it, "first father." Speaking of the priesthood, Abraham states

3 It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me. [Abraham 1:3]

In a church wide satellite fireside, "Using the Scriptures," telecast on 10 May, 1985, Elder Bruce R. McConkie commented on some changes which had been made in the new edition of the Book of Abraham, emphasizing a significant change made in verse 3.

One minor textual change in Abraham is significant. A single letter is changed and a whole new doctrinal meaning is revealed. Heretofore the text read, "the first man, who is Adam, our first father," which is a simple recitation of the fact, also set forth in other scriptures, that Adam, the first man, is also our first father. If he is the first man he is obviously the first father of other men. The new rendition, according with the ancient manuscript, reads, "Adam, or first father," making the word Adam, a synonym for "first Father." That is, the name Adam means first father. (See Abr. 1:3.) [Ensign, Vol 15, December 1985, p 59]

Now, if the name Adam means "first father," then that name is certainly applicable to God, our Heavenly Father, because he was the father of the physical bodies of Adam and Eve, and the one who placed them in the garden of Eden. He was in that sense, the first father of everyone who has ever received a physical body on this earth. Brigham Young believed that one of the names of our Heavenly Father is "Adam." Recognition of this simple fact will resolve the large

majority of the difficulties people encounter in some of Brigham Young's discourses on the subject.

### Joseph Smith's birth date: An example

Joseph Smith was born July 12, 1771. Although simple, straightforward and unobtrusive, this statement is almost universally met with an attitude of resistance and disbelief. When followed by an assurance that the statement is correct, there is often a brief feeling of confusion and even slight disorientation. Those who are students of Church history will assure you that you are wrong, and will generally even supply the correct birth date. The 1771 birth date is correct as it stands. The difficulty is that Joseph Smith is such a well known name that when the words "Joseph Smith" are heard, the mind clicks into autopilot and designates the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was his father, Joseph Smith Sr. who was born on July 12, 1771.

In a similar manner, the name Adam immediately and automatically designates to most people, that individual who partook of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden and became the father of the race of mortals who inhabit this earth. This is especially true of those who are unaware that there is another Adam. Members of the Church should not have difficulty in recognizing both a father and his son as having the same name. We have Joseph Smith and Joseph Smith Sr., and even Joseph Smith III. We have Brigham Young and Brigham Young Jr., John Taylor and John Taylor Jr., and Wilford Woodruff and Wilford Woodruff Jr, to mention just a few of those who are more prominent.

### Two Adams

Brigham Young believed that one of the names of God, our Heavenly Father is Adam, and in many of President Young's discourses he referred to God the Father using that name. There are therefore two Adams, and although President Young did not use the designation, it will be simpler for us in the following discussion to distinguish between the two individuals by referring to them as Adam Sr. (When referring to God, our Heavenly Father) and Adam Jr. (When referring to the embodied archangel, Michael, who partook of the forbidden fruit, fell, and became the father of Cain, Able and Seth etc.). It follows that there are also two Eves, and although in English the designation is never used with women, we shall distinguish between them as Eve Sr. and Eve Jr. This understanding allows us for the first time to correctly interpret a well known biblical passage.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. [Genesis 3:20, (see also Moses 4:26)]

To whom does the pronoun "she", who was the mother of all living, refer? It cannot refer to Eve Jr., because although she was Adam's wife, she was not the mother of anyone at the time. She had never had a child, nor would she be able to have one until after the fall.

22 And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.

23 And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. [2Ne 2:22-23]

It was Eve Sr. to whom Adam was referring who was the mother of all living. Adam was saying: I will name her after my mother, just as I was named after my father. This explanation allows a simple understanding of one of Brigham Young's most difficult statements, found in the Wilford Woodruff Journals. Wilford Woodruff recorded Brigham Young as saying:

"Mother Eve was the daughter of Adam." [WWJ 7:152, Aug 31, 1873]

Note how easily this correlates with the statement quoted above by Brigham Young that Eve was taken from the side or bowels of her father.

Similarly, one would expect the mother of all living to be the spouse of the father of all living. And who is the father of all living? The following is from the Lectures on Faith.

2. Let us here observe, that three things are necessary in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God unto life and salvation.

3. First, the idea that he actually exists.

4. Secondly, a correct idea of his character, perfections, and attributes.

5. Thirdly, an actual knowledge that the course of life which he is pursuing is according to his will. For without an acquaintance with these three important facts, the faith of every rational being must be imperfect and unproductive; but with this understanding it can become perfect and fruitful, abounding in righteousness, unto the praise and glory of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Having previously been made acquainted with the way the idea of his existence came into the world, as well as the fact of his existence, we shall proceed to examine his character, perfections, and attributes, in order that this class may see, not only the just grounds which they have for the exercise of faith in him for life and salvation, but the reasons that all the world, also, as far as the idea of his existence extends, may have to exercise faith in him, *the Father of all living*. [Lectures on Faith, Lecture 3, p.33, emphasis added]

The almost universal question asked by those hearing of two Adams for the first time is: "If there are two Adams, why didn't Brigham Young just say so instead of leaving his talks so confusing?" There are two distinct answers to this question, and we will present one of them now, and save the other to a more appropriate place which will be treated later.

Actually Brigham Young and others did on many occasions distinguish, or at least try to distinguish, between Adam Sr. and Adam Jr. He did not use those particular designations, but that is because it was not the vernacular of the time. The terms Jr. and Sr. were legal terms, and were frequently used in writing, but they were not common terms employed while speaking. Brigham Young did on occasion refer to the Prophet as Joseph Smith Jun., but he never did refer to the father of the Prophet as Joseph Smith Sen. In every instance in speaking of the father of the Prophet, he used the more common term, "Father Smith." The following paragraph is a good example of the way in which such designations were used at that time.

I have reflected much concerning the family of the grandfather and father of Joseph the Prophet. Their family connections were very extensive; and it has been a subject of deep regret to me that there were so few in that large circle who have been valiant for the truth since the death of the Prophet. Still I do not know but that Joseph had quite as many of his connections valiant for the truth, in proportion to their number, as Jesus had; for Jesus had many brothers and sisters, and the most of them were opposed to him, and continued so during the greater part of their lives. I used to think, while Joseph was living, that his life compared well with the history of the Saviour; though the most of *father Joseph Smith's* family have believed and obeyed the Gospel, and have lived their religion in a good degree. Many of them are not here. Some of them I have known in the Eastern States that never have gathered with us. But the old stock are pretty much dead, and I do not know but what all of them are. *Father John Smith* was the last one, in this Church, of the brothers of father Joseph Smith; and he died, and is buried here. *Grandmother Smith* lived in Kirtland a short time after she gathered. [Journal of Discourses, Vol.5, p.97, Brigham Young, August 2, 1857, emphasis added]

Brigham Young was not consistent in using the words "Father Adam" to refer to Adam Sr. and "Adam" or "our father Adam" to refer to Adam Jr., but in most instances in which he refers to both Adams in the same discourse, he does attempt to make that distinction. It is inconsistent to complain that Brigham Young did not specify that there were two Adams, and at the same time refuse to understand the words which Brigham Young chose to tell us just that. Others of the general authorities also used the term Father Adam to refer to Adam Sr. Note in the following that Orson Hyde is discussing the instruction given "of" Father Adam, not "to" Father Adam.

There is hardly ever a commandment given to any person or persons before whom a temptation is not placed to decoy them, if possible, from an obedience to that commandment. Our parents in the garden of Eden had had but little experience in this world; and it seemed that they must have a trial corresponding with the experience and knowledge they had of things as they were. The instruction of Father Adam was, "of all the trees in the garden thou mayest eat, excepting one; and in the day thou eatest of that, thou shalt surely die." The Lord said, Adam and Eve, you may enjoy yourselves; but there is one tree I command you that ye shall not eat of; for in the day that ye do, ye shall surely die." [JD 5:16, Orson Hyde, June 14, 1857]

There is another scripture in the Doctrine and Covenants which in its original form distinguishes between the two Adams. When this account of Joseph Smith's vision was first published in the Deseret News on September 4, 1852, someone, knowing that Michael was Adam, felt that the sentence did not make sense and modified it. Subsequent publications in Millennial Star and History of the Church have retained the modification. The account has since been incorporated into Section 137 of the Doctrine and Covenants in its modified form. In the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants it reads

5 I saw Father Adam and Abraham; and my father and my mother; my brother Alvin, that has long since slept; [D&C 137:5]

In its original form, however, it read

I saw Father Adam, and Abraham and Michael and my father and mother, my brother Alvin that has long since slept, [Dean Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, vol 2, p 157.]

In 1861 in speaking of this same vision of Joseph Smith's, Heber C. Kimball maintained the distinction between Adam and Father Adam as he related what Joseph Smith saw. He said that it was Adam who opened the gate of the Celestial City, but it was Father Adam who led them to the throne to be crowned

This brings to my mind the vision that Joseph Smith had, when he saw Adam open the gate of the Celestial City and admit the people one by one. He then saw Father Adam conduct them to the throne one by one, when they were crowned Kings and Priests of God. I merely bring this up to impress upon your mind the principles of order, but it will nevertheless apply to every member of the Church. [JD 9:41, Heber C. Kimball, March 17, 1861]

### **Interpretation of Brigham Young**

In interpreting Brigham Young's comments, one must therefore determine by the context of the discourse whether he was speaking of Adam Sr. or Adam Jr. This simple process will relieve 98% of the difficulties encountered in understanding Brigham Young's discourses on the topic of Adam. The same process applies to an interpretation of the statements of many of his close contemporaries such as Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde.

When someone cites Brigham Young's notorious statement: "He [Adam] is our father and our God and the only God with whom we have to do," there is no real problem. Brigham Young is not saying that Adam Jr. is God, instead he is saying that the name of God is Adam Sr.

When Heber C. Kimball's Journal is referenced as saying: "The Lord told me that Jesus Christ was the son of Adam," we must understand that President Kimball was speaking of Adam Sr.

Ninety-eight percent of all of Brigham Young's problematic discourses on Adam-God can be correctly understood by ascertaining from the context whether he is speaking of Adam Sr. or of Adam Jr.

### **The Remaining Two Percent**

Those problematic discourses of Brigham Young which are not so simply resolved are all caused by either incomplete or inaccurate reporting, but may be easily discussed by giving examples illustrative of four broad categories:



1. Interpreting, rather than quoting, Brigham Young.
2. Grammatical difficulties.
3. Brigham Young's choice of words.
4. Incorrect Reporting.

### **Interpreting, Rather than Quoting, Brigham Young**

In many instances people have reported Brigham Young's views on Adam-God, but rather than report what Brigham Young actually said, they report what they thought they heard, or what they understood Brigham Young to have said, and they are frequently very wrong. A good example of this type of problem is Edward Tullidge in chapter 18 of his 1877 book, *Women of Mormondom*, published after Brigham Young's death, with just a few subtle changes, makes some very erroneous statements:

"Adam is our Father and God. He is the God of the earth."

So says Brigham Young.

Adam is the great archangel of this creation. He is Michael. He is the Ancient of days. He is the father of our elder brother, Jesus Christ-the father of him who shall also come as messiah to reign. He is the father of the spirits as well as the tabernacles of the sons and daughters of Adam!

Michael is one of the grand mystical names in the works of creations, redemptions, and resurrections. Jehovah is the second and the higher name. Eloheim-signifying the Gods-is the first name of the celestial trinity.

Michael was a celestial, resurrected being, of another world.

"In the beginning" the Gods created the heavens and the earths.

In their councils they said, let us make man in our own image. So, in the likeness of the Fathers, and the Mothers-the Gods-created they man-male and female.

When this earth was prepared for mankind, Michael, as Adam, came down. He brought with him one of his wives, and he called her name Eve.

Adam and Eve are the names of the fathers and mothers of worlds.

Adam was not made out of a lump of clay, as we make a brick, nor was Eve taken as a rib-a bone-from his side. They came by generation. But woman, as the wife or mate of man, was a rib of man. She was taken from his side in their glorified world, and brought by hm to earth to be the mother of a race.

These were father and mother of a world of spirits who had been born to them in heaven. These spirits had been waiting for the grand period of their probation, when they should have bodies or tabernacles, so that they might become, in the resurrection, like Gods.

When this earth had become an abode for mankind, with its Garden of Eden, then it was that the morning stars sang together, and the sons and daughters of God shouted for joy. They were coming down to earth.

The children of the sun, at least, knew what the grand scheme of the everlasting Fathers and the everlasting Mothers meant, and they, both sons and daughters, shouted for joy. The temple of the eternities shook with their hosannas, and trembled with divine emotions.

The father and mother were at length in their Garden of Eden. They came on purpose to fall. They fell "that man might be; and man is, that he "might have joy."

They ate of the tree of mortal life, partook of the elements of this earth that they might again become mortal for their children's sake. They fell that another world might have a probation, redemption and resurrection.

The grand patriarchal economy, with Adam, as a resurrected being, who brought his wife Eve from another world, has been very finely elaborated, by Brigham, from the patriarchal genesis which Joseph conceived. [Tullidge, *Women of Mormondom*, 179-181]

There are no references cited, Tullidge is not quoting from any documented source, he is explaining what he heard, or rather, what he thought he heard, and he is simply wrong. Not understanding the principles himself, he has misunderstood, and put back into Brigham Young's mouth things which Brigham Young never actually said. Errors of this kind are frequent in diaries and journals as people record (sometimes a day or two after the event) their impressions of what they saw or heard.

Another example of an abusive interpretation of one of Brigham Young's statements comes from his discourse of January 12, 1862. Brigham Young's comments on this occasion were as follows:

How has it transpired that theological truth is thus so widely disseminated? It is because God was once known on the earth among his children of mankind, as we know one another. Adam was as conversant with his Father who placed him upon this earth as we are conversant with our earthly parents. The Father frequently came to visit his son Adam, and talked and walked with him; and the children of Adam were more or less acquainted with their Grandfather, and their children were more or less acquainted with their Great-Grandfather; and the things that pertain to God and to heaven were as familiar among mankind, in the first ages of their existence on the earth, as these mountains are to our mountain boys, as our gardens are to our wives and children, or as the road to the Western Ocean is to the experienced traveller. [JD 9:149]

This statement has been cited to demonstrate the supposed existence of father Gods, grandfather Gods, and great-grandfather Gods, but it neither says nor implies anything of the sort. Brigham Young's statement says that Adam [Jr.] was acquainted with his father [Adam Sr.] and that his [Adam Jr.'s] children [Cain, Abel, Seth etc.] were more or less acquainted with their grandfather [Adam Sr.], and that their children [i.e. the children of Cain and Seth] were more or less acquainted with their great-grandfather [Adam Sr.].

God [Adam Sr.] is	Father to	grandfather to	great-grandfather to
Adam Jr.	X		
Cain, Abel, Seth etc-		X	
Their children			X

In attempting to understand Brigham Young it is important to distinguish between what he actually said, and people's impressions, understandings or insinuations of what they thought he meant.

**Punctuation Difficulties.**

In Pitman shorthand of the 1850's, there was no means provided for punctuation; there were paragraph markers at best. Although this is not usually a problem, there are instances where incorrect punctuation during the transcription of the shorthand report has led to major differences in intended meaning. A classic example of this occurs in a manuscript discourse of Brigham Young which was recorded on February 19, 1854. As transcribed by the reporter, Brigham Young said:

Who was it that spoke from the heaven and said "this is my beloved son, hear him,"? Was it God the Father? It was. The Apostles bear testimony that such a voice was actually heard. This is my beloved son, and if it is true the Holy Ghost begat him I would add, which was begotten by one of my neighbors, hear ye him. Who was the Savior begotten by? O, by his father or his brother, or

some other person. So the Holy Ghost begetting the Savior looks to me. It makes me think of a story I heard in a dramatical performance once, that a certain individual was born of one of his Aunts, but he had no mother. It appears as reasonable to me to say a cousin or a fellow laborer of the Savior's begat him, as to say the Holy Ghost begat him. Who did beget him? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is Father Adam; Michael; the Ancient of Days. Has he a father? He has. Has he a mother? He has. Now to say that the Son of God was begotten by the Holy Ghost, is to say the Holy Ghost is God the Father, which is inconsistent, and contrary to all the revelations of God both modern and ancient. [Watson, *Brigham Young Addresses*, 19 Feb. 1854.]

But with only slight modification in punctuation, a more conventional understanding in complete harmony with Brigham Young's recorded views on the subject appears.

Who was it that spoke from the heaven and said "this is my beloved son, hear him,"? Was it God the Father? It was. The Apostles bear testimony that such a voice was actually heard. This is my beloved son, and if it is true the Holy Ghost begat him I would add, which was begotten by one of my neighbors, hear ye him. Who was the Savior begotten by? O, by his father or his brother, or some other person. So the Holy Ghost begetting the Savior looks to me. It makes me think of a story I heard in a dramatical performance once, that a certain individual was born of one of his Aunts, but he had no mother. It appears as reasonable to me to say a cousin or a fellow laborer of the Savior's begat him, as to say the Holy Ghost begat him. Who did beget him? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is Father Adam. Michael, the Ancient of Days, has he a father? He has. Has he a mother? He has. Now to say that the Son of God was begotten by the Holy Ghost, is to say the Holy Ghost is God the Father, which is inconsistent, and contrary to all the revelations of God both modern and ancient. [Watson, *Brigham Young Addresses*, 19 Feb. 1854.]

### **Brigham Young's choice of words.**

There were times when Brigham Young's words, although properly recorded, were not technically accurate when scrutinized by critics. There were instances when he could have made a better choice of his words. Take the following paragraph as an example:

After men have got their exaltations and their crowns--have become Gods, even the sons of God--are made Kings of kings and Lords of lords, they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit; and that is the first of their operations with regard to organizing a world. Power is then given to them to organize the elements, and then commence the organization of tabernacles. How can they do it? Have they to go to that earth? Yes, an Adam will have to go there, and he cannot do without Eve; he must have Eve to commence the work of generation, and they will go into the garden, and continue to eat and drink of the fruits of the corporeal world, until this grosser matter is diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them, according to the established laws, to produce mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children. [JD 6:275, Brigham Young, August 28, 1852.]

As published, Brigham Young stated that God [Adam Sr.] created "mortal" tabernacles for his spiritual children, but the term "mortal" is not completely correct for describing that state in which Adam Jr. and Eve Jr. (i.e. the spiritual children) found themselves before their fall. Hindsight would allow us to use "physical tabernacles" as more appropriate wording than "mortal tabernacles." It is also possible that Brigham Young was describing the entire process of their birth followed in course of time by their fall as comprising the "established laws" by which their tabernacles were made. In either event, Brigham Young is speaking of Adam Sr. and Eve Sr. as resurrected beings creating physical bodies for Adam Jr. and Eve Jr., and not Adam and Eve as fallen resurrected beings (fallen Gods having returned to a state of mortality) creating the mortal tabernacles for Cain, Abel, Seth etc., as has been claimed by some who advocate apostate interpretations of the Adam-God theory. In understanding Brigham Young, it is important that we not accept unreasonable interpretations which have him contradicting scripture as well as other statements made by himself.

### **The April 9, 1852 Discourse**

Probably more than any other, the discourse which has given rise to the most wide spread and incorrect interpretations of Brigham Young's views on Adam-God is his April 9, 1852

discourse. It has since been called Brigham Young's Adam-God sermon.

Over the years this particular discourse received sufficient attention that it warranted a response by the First Presidency of the Church which was published by James R. Clark in *Messages of the First Presidency*. This response, which may be considered an official interpretation, will be presented first, in order to facilitate a proper understanding of the report of the discourse, which will then be presented. Written in 1912 to Samuel O. Bennion, then president of the Independence Missouri Mission, this message states:

Salt Lake City, Utah

February 20, 1912

Prest. Samuel O. Bennion

Independence,

Dear Brother:

Your question concerning Adam has not been answered before because of pressure of important business. We now respond briefly, but, we hope, plainly. You speak of "the assertion made by Brigham Young that Jesus was begotten of the Father in the flesh by our father Adam, and that Adam is the father of Jesus Christ and not the Holy Ghost," and you say that Elders are challenged by certain critics to prove this.

If you will carefully examine the sermon to which you refer, in the Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, you will discover that, while President Young denied that Jesus was "begotten of the Holy Ghost," he did not affirm, in so many words, that "Adam is the father of Jesus Christ in the flesh." He said, "Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden and who is our Father in Heaven. Who is our "Father in Heaven"? Here is what President Young said about him; "Our Father in heaven begat all the spirits that ever were or ever will be upon this earth and they were born spirits in the eternal world. Then the Lord by his power and wisdom organized the mortal tabernacle of man." Was He in the Garden of Eden? Surely He gave commandments to Adam and Eve; He was their Father in Heaven; they worshiped Him and taught their children after the fall to worship and obey Him in the name of the Son who was to come.

But President Young went on to show that our father Adam,--that is, our earthly father,--the progenitor of the race of man, stands at our head, being "Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days," and that he was not fashioned from earth like an adobe, but "begotten by his Father in Heaven." Adam is called in the Bible "the son of God" (Luke 3:38). It was our Father in Heaven who begat the spirit of him who was "the Firstborn" of all the spirits that come to this earth, and who was, also his Father by the Virgin Mary, making him "the only begotten in the flesh." Read Luke 1:26-35. Where is Jesus called "the only begotten of the Holy Ghost?" He is always singled out as "the only begotten of the Father." (John 1:14; 3:16, 18, &c) The Holy Ghost came upon Mary, and her conception was under that influence, even of the spirit of life; our Father in Heaven was the Father of the Son of Mary, to whom the Savior prayed, as did our earthly father Adam.

When President Young asked, "who is the Father?" he was speaking of Adam as the father of our earthly bodies, who is at our head, as revealed in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 107, verses 53-56. In that sense he is one of the gods referred to in numerous scriptures, and particularly by Christ (John 10:34-36). He is the great Patriarch, the Ancient of Days, who will stand in his place as "a prince over us forever," and with whom we shall "have to do," as each family will have to do with its head, according to the holy patriarchal order. Our father, Adam, perfected and

glorified as a God, will be the being who will carry out the behests of the great Elohim in relation to his posterity. (See Daniel 7:9-14.)

While, as Paul puts it, "there be gods many and Lords many (whether in heaven or in earth), unto us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints worships Him, and Him alone, who is the Father of Jesus Christ, whom He worshiped, whom Adam worshiped, and who is God the Eternal Father of us all.

Your brethren,

(signed)

JOSEPH F. SMITH,

ANTHON H. LUND,

CHARLES W. PENROSE,

First Presidency.

[James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:266-267]

In a fundamentalist publication *Michael, Our Father and Our God*, Joseph W. Musser documented a letter written by Joseph fielding Smith on April 9, 1935. Eighty-three years after the original discourse, and as president of the Quorum of the Twelve, President Smith said:

"Dear Brother:

I have before me your letter of yesterday in which you say that the question of the Godhead has caused considerable discussion among some of the Elders because of certain things published in early days purporting to come from President Brigham Young and others.

First let me say, the discourse from which you quote purporting to have been delivered by President Brigham Young, is one which, for some reason is widely circulated and everybody seems to know about it and have placed upon in their interpretation to the effect that Adam is our god, the only God with which we have to do, and that he is the Father of Jesus Christ; but they do not seem to know that President Brigham Young spoke perhaps a thousand times in which he declared that Jesus Christ is the Son of God the Father who created Adam, and that Adam is the Son of god. The remarkable thing is that this one thing, which perhaps ought to be forgotten, is remembered, and all else, which should be remembered, is forgotten or never considered. I will say frankly that I believe President Brigham Young was not properly quoted in this discourse. He did not see it before it was published in England. I firmly believe this for the implication in the discourse is foreign to all that President Brigham Young taught. For proof of this see Brigham Young's discourses.

Now, it is a fact that Adam is our god; we are and will be subject to him; he will preside over all of his posterity and will be the immediate personage unto whom they will look for counsel and direction. Adam holds the keys of salvation for this earth, under the Holy One of Israel. The Holy One is, of course, Jesus Christ. See D.& C. 78:16. Adam, as Michael, will stand at the head of his posterity, just as each father will over his immediate family, but all under the direction of Jesus Christ. What Presidents Young and Kimball had in mind was this very thing.

I am enclosing an article - OFFICIAL - which will, I believe, explain all of this apparent mystery to you.

Sincerely your Brother,

(Sig.) Joseph Fielding Smith."

[Joseph W. Musser, *Michael, Our Father and Our God*, 4th Edition 1963, page 5.]

In the Musser book, President Joseph Fielding Smith was ridiculed for expressing his belief that the discourse was not properly recorded. As will be shown below, it can now be demonstrated that not only was the talk not properly recorded, but the major discrepancy in the talk occurs just at the most critical juncture for causing the popular misunderstanding.

Brigham Young's discourse was delivered before approximately 2500 Elders and brethren assembled in the new adobe tabernacle which was located at the site of the present Assembly Hall. It was in an evening priesthood session, which began at 6:00 p.m., Friday, April 9, 1852, on the fourth day of general conference. Bishop Edward Hunter was the first speaker in that session, and he spoke about his conversion to the Church. He was followed by President Young, who spoke briefly on the value of preaching good doctrine and practices followed by a short sermon on tithing. It would have been about 7:30 or 8:00 p.m. when he began his sermon on Adam-God. The sermon is reproduced here in double columns. The left column is from the Wilford Woodruff Journal, as he recorded it longhand, and the right column is from the *Journal of Discourses*

**Comparison Table**

Wilford Woodruff Journal 4:129-130	<i>Journal of Discourses</i> 1:50-51
I will now preach to you another sermon	My next sermon will be to both Saint and Sinner.
There is one great master and head in all kingdoms and governments, So with us.	
	One thing has remained a mystery in this kingdom up to this day. It is in regard to the character of the well beloved Son of God, upon which subject the Elders of Israel have conflicting views.
Our Father in Heaven is a tabernacle. He created us in the likeness of his own image.	Our God and Father in Heaven is a being of Tabernacle, or, in other words, he has a body, with parts the same as you and I have; and is capable of showing forth His works to organized beings, as, for instance, in the world in which we live, it is the result of the knowledge and infinite wisdom that dwell in His organized body.
The Son has also a tabernacle like the Father &	His son Jesus Christ has become a personage of tabernacle, and has a body like his father.
the Holy Ghost	The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Lord, and issues forth from Himself, and may properly be called
is a minister to the people	God's minister to execute His will in immensity; being called to govern by His influence and power;
but not a tabernacle.	but <i>He</i> is not a person of tabernacle as we are, and as our father in Heaven and Jesus Christ are. The question has been, and is often asked,
Who begat the Son	who it was that begat the Son of the Virgin Mary. The infidel world have

of God?	concluded that if what the Apostles wrote about his father and mother be true, and the present marriage discipline acknowledged by Christendom be true, then Christians must believe that God is the father
Infidels say that Jesus was a bastard	of an illegitimate son, in the person of Jesus Christ! The infidel fraternity teach <u>that to their disciples</u> .
but let me tell you the truth concerning the matter. Our Father begat all the spirits that were before any tabernacles were made.	I will tell you how it is. Our Father in Heaven begat all the spirits that ever were, or ever will be, upon this earth; and they were born spirits in the eternal world. Then the Lord by His power and wisdom organized the mortal tabernacles of man. We were made first spiritual, and afterwise temporal. Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and Sinner!
When our Father came into the garden he came with his celestial body & brought one of his wives with him	When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a <i>celestial body</i> , and brought Eve, one of his wives with him.
and eat of the fruit of the garden until he could beget a tabernacle,	
	He helped to make and organize this world. He
and Adam is Michael	is MICHAEL, <i>the Archangel</i> , the ANCIENT OF DAYS! About whom holy men have written and spoken - <i>He is our FATHER</i>
our God and all the god that we have anything to do with	<i>and our GOD, and the only God with whom we have to do</i> . Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or non-professing, must hear it, and <i>will know it sooner or later</i> . They came here, organized the raw material, and arranged in their order the herbs of the field, the trees, the apple, the peach, the plum, the pear, and every other fruit that is desirable and good for man; the seed was brought from another sphere, and planted in this earth. The thistle, the thorn, the brier and the obnoxious weed did <i>not</i> appear until after the earth was cursed.
They eat of this fruit & formed the first tabernacle that was formed	When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their bodies became mortal from its effects, and therefore their offspring were mortal.
and when the Virgin Mary was begotten with child it was by the Father and in no other way	When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by <i>his Father</i> in heaven,
only as we were begotten	after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and overrighteous of mankind. However, I have told you the truth as far as I have gone. I have heard men preach upon the divinity of Christ, and exhaust all the wisdom they possessed. All Scripturalists, and approved theologians who were considered exemplary for piety and education, have undertaken to expound on this subject, in every age of the Christian Era; and after they have

<p>The world don't know that Jesus Christ, our elder brother, was begotten by our Father in Heaven.</p>	<p>done all, they are obliged to conclude by exclaiming "great is the mystery of godliness," and tell nothing.</p> <p>It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organizing element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.</p> <p>Again, they will try to tell how the divinity of Jesus is joined to his humanity, and exhaust all their mental faculties, and wind up with this profound</p>
<p>[Ben E. Rich, who was not present, said Brigham Young said here: Jesus, our elder brother was begotten in the flesh by the same character, who talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven]</p>	<p>language, as describing the soul of man, "it is an immaterial substance!" What a learned idea! Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven.</p>
<p>Handle it as you please, it will either seal the salvation or damnation of man.</p>	<p>Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation.</p> <p>I have given you a few leading items upon this subject, but a great deal more remains to be told. Now remember from this time forth, and forever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon this subject, when I</p>
<p>When you go to preach &amp; believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Ghost, don't lay hands upon the heads of females for the reception of the Holy Ghost lest it beget them with child and you be accused.</p>	<p>replied, to this idea--"if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be very dangerous to baptize and confirm females, and give the Holy Ghost to them, lest he should beget children, to be palmed upon the Elders by the people, bringing the Elders into great difficulties." Treasure up these things in your hearts.</p>
<p>I have told you nothing in this thing but what you have read in the Bible, I do not frame it.</p>	<p>In the Bible, you have read the things I have told you to-night; but you have not known what you did read. I have told you no more than you are conversant with; but what do the people in Christendom, with the Bible in their hands, know about this subject? Comparatively nothing.</p>

Brigham Young then concluded his comments with a few more remarks on the topic of tithing.

As can be seen by comparing the two accounts, Wilford Woodruff was a good reporter. He captured in brief nearly every major concept which Brigham Young presented throughout the discourse. His comments are short and succinct. Brigham Young's drawn out statement "The infidel world have concluded that if what the Apostles wrote about his father and mother be true, and the present marriage discipline acknowledged by Christendom be correct, then



Christians must believe that God is the father of an illegitimate son in the person of Jesus Christ!" becomes simply: "infidels say that Jesus was a bastard." What is most interesting, however, about Wilford Woodruff's synopsis account is that in two places the synopsis contains more information than exists in the shorthand "verbatim" account. These have been represented above by leaving a gap in the published report across from the additional information provided by Wilford Woodruff. Since it is impossible for a synopsis to contain more information than a full stenographic report, this means that the stenographic report is incomplete.

The first omission occurs right at the beginning of Brigham Young's sermon:

"There is one great master and head in all kingdoms and governments. So with us."

This appears to be an introductory statement to explain that he is preparing to tell us something about God, who is our great master and head. It is not uncommon for impromptu speakers to thrash around a little at the beginning of a new topic before they settle in on their train of thought, nor is it uncommon for reporters to omit in the transcription of their report some introductory thoughts which do not blend readily with the discourse they are reporting. This may well have been the case here.

The second omission is of a more critical nature. Brigham Young was making an important declaration to all inhabitants of the earth:

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.

A very unconventional statement by itself, and anything but a yawner. With our present understanding, we must presume that he is speaking of God the Father (Adam Sr.) and our Heavenly Mother (Eve Sr.), but in the published report the next sentences disallow this interpretation:

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 -

But between these two statements, the Wilford Woodruff journal documents a significant bridge. After stating that our Father (i.e. Adam Sr.) came into the garden with a celestial body and brought Eve (i.e. Eve Sr.), with him, Brigham Young made a statement to the effect that they then partook of the fruit of the garden until they could beget a tabernacle. If the subsequent two sentences refer to the "tabernacle" (i.e. Adam Jr.) who was begotten, then certainly

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.

It is apparent that the report of the discourse has been corrupted right at this critical juncture, and we have neither an accurate nor a complete account of what was said. It is important to note that the Wilford Woodruff account successfully bridges the gap between talking about Adam Sr. and talking about Adam Jr., which the published account does not. There is additional support for this bridge in the journal account of Samuel Hollister Rogers, who was also present at this meeting. Samuel Rogers records the following:

April 16, 1852. Conference commenced on the 6 and continued until the 11, it was held in the new tabernacle, adjourned until the 7 of next October. We had the best conference that I ever attended during the time of the Conference President Brigham Young said that our spirits were begotten before that Adam came to the Earth, and that Adam helped to make the earth, that he had a Celestial body when he came to the earth, and that he brought his wife or one of his wives with him, and that Eve was also a Celestial being, that they eat of the fruit of the ground until they begat children from the Earth, he said that Adam was the only God that we would have, and that Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost, but of the Father Adam, that Christ was our Elder brother. The argument that he used to show that Christ was not begotten by the holy ghost was a caution to the Elders that when they should go to preach the Gospel, to be careful how they laid their hands on the sisters, for the

reception of the holy ghost, lest the Holy Ghost should get them with child and that it would be laid to them.

[Samuel Hollister Rogers Journal (typescript), MS d 1910 CHD; page 145]

Note that Elder Rogers also includes the same transition as does Wilford Woodruff, at the same point in the discourse. After Adam and Eve came to the earth with celestial bodies.

"that they eat of the fruit of the ground until they begat children from the Earth,"

This is immediately followed by the information that Adam was the only God with whom we have to do. We therefore have a second witness that the discourse as originally published is corrupted and cannot be relied upon to determine what Brigham Young was attempting to express.

Word counts of the two reports can give us an approximation of how much material was omitted. The following table compares the relative sizes of the Journal of Discourses account and the Wilford Woodruff account:

Wilford Woodruff Journal		Journal of Discourses	
JD par 1	008 words	Paragraph 1	010 words
	015 words	[Paragraph 2]	[missing]
JD par 3	077 words	Paragraph 3	195 words
JD par 4	021 words	Paragraph 4	041 words
JD par 5	014 words	[Paragraph 5]	[missing]
JD par 6	072 words	Paragraph 6	190 words
JD par 7	000 words	Paragraph 7	044 words
JD par 8	068 words	Paragraph 8	099 words
JD par 9	021 words	Paragraph 9	060 words
TOTAL	293 words	TOTAL	1061 words

Subtracting 015 (the number of paragraph 2 words) and 014 (the number of paragraph 5 words) of the Wilford Woodruff account which are not included in the Journal of Discourses, we have 1061 words in JD reported in 264 words by Woodruff. This represents approximately 3.6 times as many words in JD as are in WW. Multiplying paragraphs 2 and 5 of the Wilford Woodruff account back into the equation, we see that each paragraph could represent an omission of approximately 50 words.

### Other difficulties

There are a few other problems among the Brigham Young materials, but they all relate to an inaccurate reporting or transmission of the text. As another example, among the manuscript papers of Brigham Young is the report of a sermon delivered before the Deseret Theological Institute on April 25, 1855 relative to Adam-God. An initial reading of this report would lead one to conclude that Brigham Young's sentiments on this occasion were not completely consistent with the interpretations given in this paper. A closer reading, however, reveals some interesting aspects of this report. First, the report is unsigned, giving us no indication of who it was who reported the discourse. Second, the discourse does not flow coherently. There are points in the discourse where the thought shifts abruptly, without a meaningful transition, which is atypical of Brigham Young's discourses. After careful consideration, I believe the report to have been made by someone inexperienced in reporting discourses of this nature, who was not able to keep up with the speaker. There are recurrences of paragraphs which appear to trail off into a quick summary rather than a quotation, followed by a jump in thought. It appears as though someone hurriedly reported as much as they were able, but often fell behind the speaker, and then occasionally omitted a portion of the talk in order to catch up. What remains does not represent an accurate portrayal of Brigham Young's feelings on the subject of Adam-God.

## The Eugene England Letter

In October of 1982 a letter was made public which had been written on February 19, 1981 by Bruce R. McConkie in response to some questions which had been asked him by Eugene England. In this response Elder McConkie told Eugene England that Brigham Young had apparently taught that Adam [Jr.] was God, but that he was simply wrong. When this letter was printed and distributed by an anti-Mormon group, we went to Elder McConkie and told him that we had been teaching differently than he had been teaching, and we did not want to be teaching anything that was incorrect. We told Elder McConkie that if we were wrong, we wanted to know, and we would quit teaching it. After considerable discussion Elder McConkie told us to keep teaching what we had been teaching, because it was he that was wrong. He said if he had known of our views, he never would have said what he did in his letter to Eugene England, and we had his permission to tell anyone we wanted that Elder McConkie had said he was wrong in saying that Brigham Young had taught that Adam was God.

### Why didn't Brigham Young just say so?

We return now to the question raised earlier: If it is this simple, why didn't Brigham Young just say so? As was pointed out previously, there is some indication that he did try to make the distinction between Adam Sr. and Adam Jr., but that doesn't sufficiently answer the question. After years of working with Brigham Young's discourses, it has become apparent that Brigham Young avoided the topic of Adam God unless he was prodded in that direction. There were brethren among the General Authorities of the church who occasionally taught wrong doctrine on the subject, and Brigham Young seldom broached the topic except in those instances when there had been some incorrect information taught, either in discourses or in writings by the Church leaders. On those occasions, Brigham Young generally got up, said what he had to say in order to correct the false information, and then either quit speaking or switched to another topic. He did not try to make the concept crystal clear, nor did he ever attempt to establish it as a Church doctrine.

Brigham Young's concepts of Adam and God do not appear to have gone through a growth, or learning process. Instead they emerge full blown, early in the 1850's, which would indicate that he did not develop the knowledge by himself, but was taught it by someone else, either directly or through revelation. He credits much of his understanding about God and Michael etc. to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Did I ever see a man who could instruct me in these matters, until I saw Joseph Smith? I never did. And after I had made a profession of religion, I would ask the most powerful preachers whether they knew anything about God - where He is located, where Heaven is, and where Hell is, who is the Father, who is the Son, and what the distinction is between them, who is Michael the archangel, who is Gabriel, and so on. Could they tell a thing about it? No: and I am a witness that no man in Christendom knew anything about it, unless it was revealed by the Spirit to him. [JD 5:124]

Although I cannot cite anything to support the idea, I can think of no reason which better explains the existing historical data than to suggest that the Prophet Joseph Smith told Brigham Young not to teach the concept to the people until they were ready to understand it. It would appear that out of respect to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young never taught the sacred principles behind Adam God in their simplicity, but only taught what he felt he must to insure that the Saints were not misled by false doctrine taught by a few of their priesthood leaders.