



THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Forest Hill

Church of Christ

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Haston Handley, Youth
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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Afternoon Worship.... 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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Number 1

The God of Mormonism (Part 4)

B. J. Clarke

In teaching that Adam was the father of our spirits, it was very easy to go a step further and teach that Adam was also the father of Jesus. In the same speech mentioned above, Brigham Young asserted:

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 ...* I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over-righteous of mankind. However, I have told you the truth as far as I have gone.... 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. 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 (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp.50-51).²¹

For the most part, the Mormon Church supported this teaching for at least fifty years. Some believed the doctrine simply because Brigham Young had declared it to be true. After all, Brigham Young himself had boasted, "I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men that they may not call scripture" (*Journal of Discourses* Vol. 13, p. 95). Sadly, some believed this outlandish claim, as is evidenced by the following quotation:

Concerning the item of doctrine alluded to by Elder Caffall and others, viz., that Adam is our Father and God, I have to say do not trouble yourselves, neither let the Saints be troubled about this matter....If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for the objection to be removed, tell such, the Prophet and Apostle Brigham Young has declared it, and that it is the word of the Lord" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p.534).²²

There, you have it. Brigham Young said it, and that settles it! Whatever happened to the spirit of the noble Bereans, who searched the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so (Acts 17:11)?

Also implied in the above quotation is evidence of the fact that Brigham Young's teaching on this matter was a source of great trouble to some. In fact, the Adam-God doctrine created friction within the Mormon Church even in Brigham Young's day. This is apparent when one examines some of the articles that appeared in the LDS publication, *Millennial Star*. One article admitted that some of the officers had not met in council for three years because of the Adam-God doctrine.²³ In his journal and autobiography, Joseph Lee Robinson commented that he feared Apostle Orson Pratt would apostatize because of his opposition to the Adam-God doctrine (*Journal of Joseph Lee Robinson*, Microfilm copy in LDS Genealogical Library).²⁴

However, the din of dissenting voices did not deter Brigham Young from teaching the Adam-God doctrine. In 1873, just a few years before his death, he declared:

(continued on page 2)

The God of Mormonism (continued from page 1)

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me--namely that *Adam is our Father and God*...Our Father Adam helped to make this earth,...he and his companions came here. He brought one of his wives with him....²⁵

Notwithstanding Brigham Young's persistence in heralding his doctrine, he fell short of making it stick. If you ask the modern day LDS about the Adam-God doctrine be prepared to hear them tell you that they don't believe it. Some, like John A. Widtsoe, who served as a Mormon "Apostle," flatly deny that Brigham Young ever taught Adam was the Father of Christ. In fact, he claimed that only "Enemies of the Church or stupid people" could reach such a conclusion.²⁶

It is remarkable that Mr. Widtsoe could make such a statement, especially in view of the mountains of evidence extant which shows that Brigham Young did teach that Adam was God and the Father of Christ. Consider the diary of Hosea Stout, a prominent Mormon in his day, who made the following entry in his diary under the date of April 9, 1852: "Another meeting this evening. President B. Young taught that *Adam was the father of Jesus* and the only God to us. That he came to this world in a resurrected [sic] body..." (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, University of Utah Press, 1964, vol. 2, p.435).²⁷

As if the above proof were not enough, an ancient Mormon hymnal, from 1856, proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Mormons did, at one time, unabashedly teach that Adam was God, and the father of Jesus Christ. The hymn is entitled "*We Believe In Our God*," and reads as follows:

We believe in our God the great Prince of His race,
The Archangel Michael, the Ancient of Days,
Our own *Father Adam*, earth's Lord, as is plain,
Who'll counsel and fight for his children again.

We believe in *His Son, Jesus Christ*, who, in love
To his brethren and sisters, came down from above
To die to redeem them from death, and to teach
To mortals and spirits the Gospel we preach.

(*Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Liverpool, 1856, p.375, as quoted in "The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," p.16.)²⁸

Despite this "ungettaroundable" evidence, the vast majority of LDS still stubbornly insist that it isn't so. Concerning the view that Adam is God and the father of Jesus Christ, Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed: "As a matter of fact, the 'Mormon' Church does not teach that doctrine. A few men in the 'Mormon' Church have held such views: and several of them quite prominent in the councils of the Church, ... *Brigham Young and others may have taught that doctrine ...*" (*Deseret News*, July 23, 1921).²⁹ Notwithstanding Mr. Roberts' admission that Brigham Young "may have

taught that doctrine," the following citation from Rodney Turner, teacher emeritus at Brigham Young University, nails the case shut. Regarding Brigham Young's teaching, he wrote: "A careful, detached study of his available statements, as found in the official publications of the Church, will admit of no other conclusion than that the identification of Adam with God the Father by President Brigham Young is an *irrefutable fact*."³⁰

Some LDS leaders, while not expressly denying the fact that such a doctrine has been taught in the past, have attempted to downplay the significance of the issue. For instance, Wilford Woodruff, the fourth president of the Mormon Church, pleaded:

Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven's sake, let these things alone...God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know...I say this because we are troubled every little while with inquiries from Elders anxious to know who God is, who Christ is, and who Adam is. I say to the Elders of Israel, stop this (*Millennial Star*, vol. 57, pp.355-56).

In fairness to the Mormon leaders, it should be noted that they no longer officially teach the Adam-God doctrine, even though some members of the church still believe it. We know that in May of 1966, a letter dated May 11, 1966, and from Apostle LeGrand Richards, gave the following reply to a querist: "Your third question: 'Is the Adam God Doctrine, as taught in the Journal of Discourses, true?' Answer: *No*."³² *That's a pretty blunt and telling admission from Mr. Richards. But that is not where it stops. Modern day LDS are so opposed to the Adam-God theory that anyone who is caught teaching this doctrine is, to use the LDS language, "liable to be excommunicated."*

But wait just a minute. What an inconsistency! The Mormon Church affirms that Brigham Young was a prophet, and at the same time they will "excommunicate" a person for believing in his teachings. Another alleged LDS "prophet," Spencer W. Kimball, went so far as to label the Adam-God doctrine "false doctrine." By so doing he put the LDS on the horns of a real dilemma. If Brigham Young was a true prophet, and Spencer W. Kimball was a true prophet, and they taught opposing doctrines, then the Mormon church has some explaining to do. The LDS need to decide whether Brigham Young was a false prophet, or Spencer W. Kimball, or both? Whether they like it or not, when modern day LDS deny the Adam-God doctrine, they are rejecting Brigham Young as a true prophet, for he claimed the Adam-God was a fact revealed unto him by God. Was Brigham Young a liar? If so, why should anything that he said be cited by the LDS as authoritative? If Mormons will not acknowledge that Brigham Young was a liar, then they need to explain why they reject his "prophetic" teaching on the Adam-God doctrine. They cannot have it both ways!

(to be continued)

You are invited to the
57th Anniversary
of the
Knight Arnold - Forest Hill Church of Christ
Sunday, January 10, 2016
Stephen Sutton, Guest Song Director

*Come
worship
with us!*



*Luncheon
to follow
morning
worship
service.*

Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
A.M. Worship 10:30 a.m.
Congregational Singing 1:30 p.m.

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