



**The
Unknown
God**

***Adam-God
Theory or Doctrine?***

THE UNKNOWN GOD

An LDS Bishop's counsel
to a member of his ward
on the 'Adam-God theory'

& Exhaustive Reference
on the Subject

Messenger Publications

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Dedication

With gratitude to a patient wife, encouraging associates, and ultimately to the divine being about whom this book is written. It is but a small token of my love for all of you.

This book is dedicated to a conscientious Bishop who took the time to counsel a Church member and colleague, and to a dear friend who was not afraid to ask difficult questions. Herein lie the answers.

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The Unknown God

Introduction

“It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God.”¹ Stated Joseph Smith, the first prophet of this dispensation, to whom the Priesthood was given, through whom the Gospel was restored to earth, and by whom was founded the Lord's Church. His mission began with a visitation from God the Father and His Son, and with this vision came the knowledge that they were not one in the same being, as the rest of the Christian world erroneously believed, but divine individuals with bodies, after whose physical image we had been created. Only a few weeks before his death, Joseph gave insights into the origin of God that showed there was still so little we understand about deity, and still so much to learn. He revealed to his listeners in the inspired King Follett discourse, that our God was but one of many, and that God Himself was once as we are now, and progressed to the position He now occupies in the heavens.

Whilst some would charge the Prophet with apostasy and orchestrate his death, others lead by his appointed successor, Brigham Young, would hold fast to the truths he taught. Brother Brigham had always been a faithful friend and disciple, and a powerful Apostle and leader amongst the Saints. Following Joseph's martyrdom he lead God's people far from their Nauvoo homes to the midst of the Rocky mountains, where he built up God's kingdom, and ensured the Gospel would not only survive, but flourish amongst the faithful followers of the Almighty. Yet, as the years have passed since his death, many of President Young's teachings, have been steeped in mystery, and sometimes avoided completely by those seeking to avoid controversy. Whereas, if a careful study were taken of such issues it would be found that Brigham was under no misunderstanding as to what he believed, and as to what his predecessor, Joseph and the Scriptures taught. This book has been written to convey in a plain manner what he saw as the simple truths about God's identity and origin, which have since become the source of difficulties for those who have not studied thoroughly his original comments in context.

Our treatment of this subject is conveyed in the form of a dialog between two Latter-day Saints who begin with very different

interpretations of what Brigham Young is supposed to have taught on the subject of Adam's relationship to God, in which they explore thoroughly what the prophet actually said, and how his words have been so often misunderstood. This does not pretend to be a scholarly work, although each quote is referenced, and an effort has been made to cover every major point of the controversy. Neither is it a fully comprehensive treatment, as other books have already made an admirable effort in trying to accomplish this, and the credulity of the story would have to be sacrificed and the patience of the reader stretched beyond its limits to accommodate every remark ever made on this subject. It has been the intention of the author to deal more with common objections, rather than just trying to provide evidence to substantiate either or both point of views, to clear away any common misconceptions, so that the reader may approach the subject with an open mind, which is receptive to reason and to the Spirit.

1 History of the Church 6:305.

1 - The Issue Arises

Bishop: Joe, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to meet with me at such short notice. As a Bishop I have always made it my responsibility to be a friend to all the members of the ward, and hope that most of them would feel comfortable sharing with me any serious problems or concerns they may have. I don't claim to have all the answers or to be perfect, but I believe that God has called me to this position, and that he will direct me to give inspired counsel to those who are in need of some help. It seems to me that if anyone is in need of help at the moment it is you. The Stake President is very concerned about you and fears that he may have to call a disciplinary council to resolve the situation. I would like to think that, as your Bishop, any difficulties you may be having with the Gospel can be resolved between us and the Lord, before it ever becomes serious enough to warrant going before the High Council.

Suffice it to say, that everything I've heard so far is second-hand, and I would have been tempted to overlook the rumors if they were not so serious, but President Anderson is convinced that those who informed him of your situation are telling the truth. I would be grateful if you could tell me in your own words whether the accusations made against you are true, and if they are - you will receive all the assistance I can give you to resolve them, and if I become convinced they have no basis in fact I will defend you and ensure you are exonerated.

Joe: Bishop Grant, I have always known you to be a good man, and an exemplary Latter-day Saint. I am convinced of your sincerity, and believe that you only want what you feel is best for me. Your orthodoxy and loyalty to Church policy and your leaders however, I feel, will inevitably leave you thinking of me as an apostate, although I feel as devout and firm in my faith as I have ever done.

Bishop: I find it a little strange that although you feel my motives are beyond question, you also think that I would believe you an apostate if you were indeed as dedicated to the Church as you say you are.

Joe: Forgive me for correcting you Bishop, but I did not say that it was my dedication to the Church that was unwavering, but rather the dedication I have to my beliefs.

Bishop: Are you admitting then that those beliefs are not in accordance with the Church's teachings? What faith are you firm in if it is not the Church?

Joe: I still consider myself a member of God's Church, although I admit that my views put me out of favor with the current teachings of the Church.

Bishop: Let me tell you a story I feel may be relevant to your situation: A few years before I was called as Bishop, a young woman was put on my home teaching list. She had some friends who were members of an Evangelical Protestant church which indoctrinated its members to believe that we Mormons had been deluded into joining a Satanic cult, whilst they all along had true Christianity. They frightened her away from the Church, and they left her confused and bitter. I spent years visiting her before she saw the mistake she made, and now looks back at her time away from the Church as a time of emptiness and loneliness. I would hate to think of you making the same mistake she did.

Joe: Having been a missionary and having seen someone I've been teaching prejudiced against Mormonism because of rumors and slander, I know how you feel. Perhaps I should clarify what I feel my position is in relation to the teachings of the Church. I have not lost my belief that this is the only true Church, but I have come to the conclusion that the Church has not remained "true to the faith that our parents have cherished, true to the truth for which martyrs have perished," as we sang last Sunday in the sacrament meeting.

Bishop: I think I'm beginning to understand. Am I right in saying that you believe the Church has strayed from the truth, and that you alone possess the truth?

Joe: I don't claim to have a monopoly on the truth, and I'm not necessarily saying that what the Church teaches now is untrue. Although I do believe there are truths the Church no-longer accepts.

Bishop: Don't you feel that as circumstances change the Church has to often change with them?

Joe: Only when those changes don't conflict with what God states is the truth, or are unalterable principles or ordinances. If I may use a quote from Joseph Smith, "The Gospel has always been the same."¹

Bishop: You won't hear me dispute Joseph Smith, Joe, but you're covering a great deal of ground. One thing us Mormons have a lot of are truths, principles, and ordinances. What did you have in mind?

Joe: What do you know about the Adam-God Doctrine?

Bishop: Enough to know that the so-called Adam-God theory isn't true.

Joe: That's what I used to believe. I thought it had its origin in ambiguous statements, mis-rendered sermons, and that President Young was mistaken or misunderstood. How little I knew.

Bishop: What made you change your mind?

Joe: The evidence. But not that alone, I believe the Spirit guided me, to learn about Brigham's teachings on the doctrine, in opening my understanding, and in providing a witness of its truthfulness.

Bishop: I certainly believe that Adam was a god, for the scriptures say that God gave Adam dominion "over all the earth"², but he was cast out of God's presence, and Satan is now called "the god of this world."³

Joe: My beliefs go far beyond that point though. I have come to believe that our Heavenly Father came to earth as Adam to begin the process of providing mortal bodies for his spirit children.

Bishop: You seem pretty committed to your views on this matter. Nevertheless, I do believe that you have come to the wrong conclusion, and would like to see you yet recognize this before it becomes the issue that decides your Church membership. Therefore, I think it would be a good idea for us to re-examine this evidence you speak of, and perhaps I will be able to offer a different perspective on this issue.

Joe: I have no objection to discussing these things in greater detail. I wouldn't like you to think that I have arrived at this conclusion lightly, or without a great deal of thought and prayer. I'm confident enough that my

belief in this doctrine is justified, that I am willing to put it to the test of an in-depth study of the evidence with you.

Bishop: Let us arrange to meet again in about a weeks time. This will allow me to do some study of my own, and will give you some further time to think of the consequence of taking the stand you have made. I pray that at our next meeting I will not only be able to appeal to your intellect, but that you will allow the spirit into your heart to convince you of the truthfulness of the Church's current teachings.

Joe: I appreciate you being willing to take the time to discuss this with me, and hope that in our next meeting you will yet see that I have not made my mind up prematurely on this point, but that my stand is not much different from what the Church once taught to the Saints before the turn of the century.

Bishop: We will see about that, Joe, we will see what we learn at our next meeting, you and I.

1 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 264, 1 September 1842.

2 Genesis 1:26,28.

3 2 Corinthians 4:4.

2 - A Question of Accuracy

- Was Brigham just misquoted?
- How can we tell whether he was or wasn't?
- What have Church leaders said about the Journal of Discourses?
- Could Brigham have not noticed such an inaccuracy ?
- What about those who dispute their accuracy?

Bishop: I'm glad you decided to come. I've put in a lot of thought, study, and prayer into the points I intend to bring up today. I hope that we can speak over these issues without contention, although you might have come expecting to disagree with me, and may be determined to maintain the same position. But I hope you will lend me a listening ear, and an open mind, as I intend to afford you the same courtesy.

Joe: You will have my full attention, and I will not disregard anything you have to say. Be prepared, however, to find that proving me wrong will not be as easy a prospect as you might have expected it to be.

Bishop: I assure you that almost every hour that has not been taken up fulfilling my duties as a Bishop and as a husband and father, has been spent researching this theory. I have read everything I could find on this subject, from books such as *Evidences & Reconciliations*, and *Doctrines of Salvation*. I also borrowed a book off the High Priest Group Leader called *Adam - Who Is He?* by Mark E. Petersen, and I can see you have a few books of your own. No doubt, there are some points you'd like to bring up, but I hope you'll agree that the first issue we need to address is whether Brigham taught this theory that is attributed to him.

Joe: I agree that that is the best course to take if we are unanimous in our belief that Brigham Young was indeed a Prophet of God.

Bishop: Whilst I'll admit to being perhaps a little more acquainted with the life and teachings of our modern prophet, I still have a testimony of Brigham, and especially the role he played in leading the Saints across the plains, like Moses led the children of Israel through the desert.

Joe: I admire as much as you do his great physical achievements in building up the kingdom, but I'd like to think that the teachings he left us are his greatest monument.

Bishop: I agree, it is the same with any Prophet of God. They are great men, but the truths they teach remain after they are gone.

However, to get back to the subject at hand, as far as the Adam-God theory goes, I do not attribute its origin to Brigham Young, as it seems to me that the accuracy of the sermon upon which this theory hangs is suspect to say the least.

Joe: What makes you think that he was misquoted on that occasion?

Bishop: Of the hundreds of sermons Brigham Young gave which we have recorded in the Journal of Discourses, it should be expected that at least one of them could have been erroneously transcribed or might have been printed incorrectly. President Young's much-debated April 1852 Conference discourse, in which he was supposed to have taught the Adam-God theory, is no exception. There is no way we can be absolutely certain that it perfectly represents what Brigham said, but because it contradicts what the Scriptures have to say about Adam I believe that he must have been misquoted. Knowing you believe Brother Brigham to be a prophet and assuming you accept the scriptures as the word of God - wouldn't you say that this is a reasonable assumption?

Joe: Whilst your argument seems rational enough, I'm afraid I don't agree at all. Firstly, I don't believe that in the printed version of that sermon that he contradicted the Scriptures, although that is another issue entirely. Secondly, your assumption that he might have been misquoted might be possible, were it not for the fact that I don't believe Brigham would have let such inaccuracies go uncorrected and uncommented upon.

Bishop: I imagine that being Church President is a busy job. Perhaps he didn't have the time to make an issue out of it, or there were more pressing matters which were of a greater priority than reading the report of his remarks to check whether he had been misquoted, and so he could have been unaware of it entirely. Joseph Fielding Smith was also of this opinion, and said, "in all probability the sermon was erroneously transcribed!"¹

Joe: Despite Elder Smith's assertions, I believe that there is enough evidence to show that not only does the printed sermon reliably represent what he said, but that Brother Brigham was very conscientious about his speeches being printed accurately.

Bishop: I would be interested to see any evidence to that effect, although I can't imagine how you hope to prove the correctness of discourses which were given and recorded over one hundred years ago.

Joe: Well, if we begin by broadly looking at the Journal of Discourses itself, how involved Brother Brigham was in ensuring the accuracy of his printed sermons, then specifically at this admittedly controversial sermon, and the background behind both, I believe we can establish that there is no possibility of Brigham's words having been misrepresented.

Bishop: Go ahead, by all means, but realize that I'm not so easily convinced.

Joe: I'm glad to hear it, and appreciate you giving me this chance.

You have doubtless seen copies of the Journal of Discourses on the shelves of a few members homes or in LDS-orientated book stores. It takes up a wide shelf or two by itself, spanning 27 volumes, and covering the public sermons of the General Authorities of the Church between 1852-1887. The nearest equivalent we have today is the bi-yearly Conference reports printed in the Ensign. Although the accuracy of the Ensign is not questioned, the accuracy of the Journals has been in recent times.

The approval of the First Presidency regarding the Journal of Discourses was established in June 1853 through a letter which served as the preface to the first volume (of which I have a photocopy here in front of me). In this letter it spoke of the "poverty and hardships" George D. Watt had undergone "to acquire the art of reporting in phonography," or in other words, shorthand, "which he has faithfully and fully accomplished." They began by stating he had acted "by our counsel", "almost without fee or reward", and they spoke of the work he was accomplishing in publishing the 'Journals' to be "of mutual benefit" and requested the co-operation of the Saints in helping Brother Watt achieve his objectives in this area.

Bishop: This has provided me with an interesting historical insight, but even with the best of intents and loftiest of goals, how do we know that he achieved what the First Presidency hoped he would, which presumably would be to publish the speeches of Church leaders so they were available to those Saints who weren't present to hear them, and to preserve their words accurately so as to be available to future generations?

Joe: There are many indications that the Journal of Discourses continued to enjoy approval of the First Presidency throughout its publication, and President George Q. Cannon, who belonged to that quorum even said that “the Journal of Discourses deservedly ranks as one of the standard works of the Church...”²

As I mentioned earlier, there are many indications that Brigham was very conscientious about his sermons being printed accurately, for example, he commented at the end of one of his discourses printed in the *Deseret News*³, that “(The above is all of the remarks made at the time, that I deem proper to print at present.)”, and added his initials at the end.

Bishop: You have used the *Deseret News* as an example; however, it is the Journal of Discourses which there seems to be some question over.

Joe: I was just trying to give an example which showed that President Young took an active role in reviewing those publications in which his sermons were to appear even before they went to press, although the 'Journals' themselves can adequately prove the same point. Take for example the following excerpts: “In printing my remarks I often omit the sharp words, though they are perfectly understood and applicable here; for I do not wish to spoil the good I desire to do. Let my remarks go to the world in a way the prejudices of the people can bear, that they may read them, and ponder them, and ask God whether they are true.”⁴ and, “(The following discourse was delivered by President Brigham Young; it was not revised by our respective President, but is presented as reported...)”⁵ From both examples we see that he would even edit or revise his remarks, which is certainly a meticulous process which would have involved him carefully studying his own discourses.

Bishop: I can see that you have put a considerable amount of study in this issue yourself, and your reasoning is very persuasive. I still have some reservations though, and would like to find out what some of our

other Church leaders have said on this issue.

Joe: I can save you having to go to the trouble. Allow me to read you a statement by Wilford Woodruff on this subject: “I have read some of the sermons Brigham Young published in the Journal of Discourses - some of them - they are in my library, and I presume are considered correct as published. They are published by the church of which I am President. They are correct in so far as every man had a chance to correct his own discourses, or should do so if he has a chance. Sermons reported by George D. Watts, one of the official reporters, were considered reported correctly, and when they are found in the Journal of Discourses, they are considered correct. Some of my own sermons are published there, and they are correct.”⁶ And in more recent times, John A. Widstoe (an Apostle) wrote in the preface to his compilation of President Young's sermons that “The public utterances of few great historical figures have been so faithfully and fully preserved.”⁷

Bishop: The Journal of Discourses was printed in England though, and would not have been read by the Church President until a while after it was originally printed.

Joe: But even when his discourses were going to appear in publications as far afield as England, President Young was still able to intercede to ensure that any inaccuracies were dealt with before being put into print. For example, Elder Petersen's book, *Adam: Who is he?* relates how Brigham Young sent a telegram to Joseph F. Smith in England to prevent the publication of a sermon of his in the Millennial Star over which there was some question.⁸

Bishop: I have read that book myself recently in my attempt to prepare myself for this meeting. I think you will find that he cites Charles W. Penrose as being someone who disputed the 'authenticity' of some of the sermons.

Joe: Yes, that is true, he did dispute the accuracy of some of the sermons, that is “some of the sermons attributed to Joseph” Smith, and not those given by Brigham or anyone else. Those sermons were disputed because they had originally been recorded in longhand, unlike the rest of those in the Journal of Discourses which had been taken down in shorthand, and therefore being word for word accounts of what was

said.

Bishop: Seeing that neither of us can claim to be qualified historians, do you know what faithful Latter-day Saint scholars have had to say on this particular issue?

Joe: B.Y.U. Professor Rodney Turner, whilst a student at that university in 1953 wrote a Masters thesis on *The Position of Adam in Latter-Day Saint Scripture and Theology*, and in his exhaustive study on this point concluded that, “There is not the slightest evidence from Brigham Young, or any other source, that either his original remarks on April 9, 1852, or any of his statements were ever misquoted in the official publications of the Church.”

Bishop: It seems that I must reluctantly admit that that sermon of President Young's may have been accurate after all, but it still might surprise you to learn that this fact alone does not convince me of the truthfulness of the Adam-God theory, as there is more than one way to interpret Brigham Young's remarks and reconcile them with current Church teachings.

Joe: Now we are agreed on this point, let us look at the sermon in question itself, I have brought the first volume of the 'Journals' with me, and if you are willing we can turn to page fifty and begin reading.

Bishop: Yes, that would be a good idea, go ahead and read, and I'll save my comments until after you are finished.

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- 1 Doctrines of Salvation 1:96.
 - 2 Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, Preface, 1861.
 - 3 Deseret News, 12 Nov 1856.
 - 4 Journal of Discourses 5:100, 2 August 1857.
 - 5 Journal of Discourses 19:66, 19 July 1877.
 - 6 Complainant's Abstract of Pleading and Evidence, Temple Lot Case, p. 309.
 - 7 Discourses of Brigham Young, Preface.
 - 8 John M. Whitaker Journal, p. 95, as quoted in Adam: Who is he?, p. 17-18.

3 - A Question of Interpretation

- What about Adam's immortal body?
- The only God with whom we have to do, what does it mean?
- The first of the human family, who is he?
- Could we have only understand if we were there?
- Is this all based on just one sermon?

Joe: I'll miss out the paragraphs over which there is no controversy, and go straight to the more relevant sections:

Brigham Young: “Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of Days! about whom holy men have written and spoken. He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do. Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or non-professing, must hear it, and will know it sooner or later. 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 not appear until after the earth was cursed. When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their bodies became mortal from its effects, and therefore their offspring were mortal.

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over-righteous 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 done all, they are obliged to conclude by exclaiming “great is the mystery of godliness,” and tell nothing.

... Again, they will try to tell how the divinity of Jesus is joined to his humanity, and exhaust all their mental faculties, and wind up with this profound language, as describing the soul of man, 'it is an immaterial substance!' What a learned idea! 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.”¹

Bishop: Before you give me your interpretation of what he meant, allow me the opportunity of putting forward a different viewpoint.

Take Brigham's statement about Adam having a celestial body for instance, now some might argue that this meant he was a resurrected being, but we know that God lives in a celestial kingdom, and our spirits have their origin in that celestial world, so what other bodies can we expect Adam, or any of his other children to have other than celestial ones?

Joe: And how do you propose to explain the fact that Adam is spoken of as “the only God with whom we have to do”?

Bishop: I can use myself as an example. As far as those holding the Aaronic Priesthood and the sisters and children of the ward are concerned I am their Priesthood leader, even those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood come to me for counsel, and I am also able to assign them callings within the ward. My position is not due to any academic qualifications or success in business, and those who I stand over as a judge in Israel are not looking to me to lead the ward because of any personal loyalty they have towards me, but because of the office which I hold, what it represents, and the responsibilities it gives me. In turn I answer to the Stake President, just as you do regarding your Church membership, as you are a Melchizedek Priesthood holder. So we have a hierarchy in which the members look immediately to the Bishop,

who in turn looks to the Stake President, and all of us ultimately look to the President of the Church to direct the Saints. In terms of those who preside over us in an eternal sense, who will stand as judges of our acts, who have qualified as gods and have earned that title, Adam certainly holds a high place in that chain of command. God has no doubt given him responsibilities that are uniquely his, and regarding which he is “the only God with whom we have to do.”

Joe: That explanation would be reasonable enough if it were not for the fact that President Young goes on to say that the Father is “the first of the human family”, and that “Jesus ... was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden.”

Bishop: I can understand how his reference to the Father being “the first of the human family” is misunderstood so easily, especially by non-Mormon Christians, as they don't believe God to be the Father of our spirits, but with that fact in mind its obvious why he speaks of God as the first of all humans, as he was ultimately our Father before anyone else. It was God who provided us with the opportunity of coming into mortality, and Adam was merely the means through which he accomplished this. Notice that he didn't say that God himself was human, but even supposing that he did, there would have been no impropriety in that, as God referred to himself as a man when speaking to Enoch and Moses².

His most debated sentence of all though is undoubtedly, “Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden...” It is true that if you were to ask most people, “who is it that lived in Eden”, they would say that Adam and Eve did, but the Bible tells us they were not the only ones, for “they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.”³ So we see who it was that Brigham had in mind; not Adam, but our Father in heaven, whose Only Begotten son was Jesus.

Joe: I must admit you have certainly made a good case for your beliefs and the current teachings of the Church.

Bishop: I cannot claim all the credit for my comments, I have utilized what I have learned from Elders Widstoe and Joseph Fielding Smith, and am indebted to them for giving me a clear understanding of Brigham Young's statements, which have been the source of confusion for so many like yourself.

Joe: I don't see myself as being confused, and despite the explanations you have offered I still take a very different view.

Bishop: I am just as prepared to listen as I am to counsel and explain, and I'm not afraid to have my views challenged. If I don't understand you I can't help you, I realize that. So if you feel that there are errors in my reasoning or that I have not taken into account some fact that would mean I would need to reassess my conclusions, then I'm willing to hear what you have to say.

Joe: Thank you again for taking the time to hear what I have to say. With all the effort you have put in, I almost wish I could say that I agree with your interpretation of Brigham's remarks, but I see things very differently.

Take for instance the idea that we all have celestial bodies, from what I read in Joseph's vision of the degrees of glory it says that a celestial body is the reward of the righteous that is received by those who rise in the first resurrection.⁴ Also, when President Young speaks of Adam as “the only God with whom we have to do”, I must agree with Paul the Apostle who spoke of “gods many, and lords many”, but said that despite this, “to us there is one God, the Father...”⁵ Which seems to say to me that God the Father who came to earth as Adam is 'the only God with whom we should have anything to do with.'

I'll concede to you the validity of your argument that God the Father was in the garden of Eden with Adam, but as for the Father being “the first of the human family” I believe that must mean that he began the human race himself and lived as a human among them as Adam. For it is Adam who is called “the first man” and “the first father”⁶, not God the Father in his role as the Father of our spirits.

Bishop: I wonder if the only way to completely know what Brigham meant in his sermon is if we lived in the time and were of the same background as those he addressed it to.

Joe: Luckily, some of the Saints who were present when that talk was given recorded their memory of it and reaction to it in their journals after they heard it. Hosea Stout, a faithful Latter-day Saint who had attended conference and heard Brother Brigham speak, wrote that, “President Brigham Young taught that Adam was the Father of Jesus and the only

God to us.” Wilford Woodruff summarized Brigham's teachings on this occasion thus, “Adam is Michael or God and all the God that we have anything to do with.” And Joseph Lee Robinson also understood the Church President to mean that, “Adam was God our Eternal Father.”

Bishop: You have certainly done your homework well, but with only this one sermon to base a testimony on I am not prepared to allow my view of God to be totally altered, as you have.

Joe: Who said anything about there only being one sermon in which he taught this doctrine? Since we have now established the competence of those who recorded early General Authorities sermons, now we can move on to looking at other times at which the prophet Brigham elaborated on this subject, and how - it is my belief - those statements can leave us with only one conclusion: that he taught the Adam-God doctrine (or theory as you call it).

Bishop: Realize though that further ambiguous remarks are unlikely to sway me from my belief that God was not Adam. However, I remain willing to listen to whatever evidence you feel you have to present, and will treat your views and especially the research you feel substantiates those views with seriousness and respect, as long as you are willing to consider any alternative explanations I may have.

Joe: I appreciate your intent in trying to show me what you believe to be the truth in these matters. I have been grateful for the thought you have put into your replies, and the many good points you have made. I believe that ultimately our study will lead us closer together in our opinions, but whatever the outcome we will have gained a greater appreciation and understanding of each others beliefs and convictions.

Bishop: Indeed we have Joe, and I am already looking forward to our next meeting.

1 9 April 1852, Journal of Discourses 1:50-1.

2 “Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name.” - Moses 7:35, see 7:35.

3 Genesis 3:8.

4 “These are the who shall have part in the first resurrection ... These are they whose bodies are celestial.” - Doctrine and Covenants 76:64-70.

Dedication

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- 5 1 Corinthians 8:5.
6 Abraham 1:3.

4 - A Question of Evidence

- Were there any other sermons on the subject?
- How were Adam and Eve created?
- Will we one day fulfill similar roles to Adam or Eve?
- Did he teach Adam was the father of our spirits?
- Was it just an opinion?

Bishop: In our last meeting I gained a greater appreciation for your views, although my conclusions remain different from those you have made, I realize that you have not come to accept the Adam-God theory without putting some serious thought into the subject.

Joe: There came a point at which I realized that this doctrine was either true or false, and that the decision I made about it could mean risking my Church membership, a prospect which I would have rather avoided, but am now faced with since I gained a testimony of its truthfulness.

Bishop: Are you really prepared to risk your membership on the basis of your opinions?

Joe: I believe that this issue has become more than a matter of opinion to me. But may I ask, do you really believe my membership should be threatened because of holding unpopular opinions?

Bishop: That is a matter for the Stake President to decide, my interest is in helping you to see that there are other ways of looking at this subject which don't involve you having to make a choice between what Brother Brigham taught and what the Church teaches now.

Joe: That is why I hope by utilizing some more of Brigham's sermons I will be able to show that he did indeed teach this doctrine.

Bishop: I'm prepared to be proved wrong, but remain unconvinced that I will be, although I am interested to listen to the quotes from Brigham Young you've collected.

Joe: Thanks for giving this time to consider what Brigham had to say, for it his teachings which I believe will ultimately be on trial in my Church court.

Bishop: I'm still hoping that you might be able to avoid that possibility, and that we can iron out any misinterpretations of Brigham's words between us.

Joe: I'm grateful for the chance to talk these things over. Since we established the accuracy of the Journal of Discourses, we'll begin with some other sermons from its volumes. I think that the following excerpt shows that Brigham was well acquainted with the life of our Father in heaven, how He came to be a God, and the roles He has fulfilled (including the role of Adam):

“... the Father, after He had once been in the flesh, and lived as we live, obtained His exaltation, attained to thrones, gained the ascendancy over principalities and powers, and had the knowledge and power to create - to bring forth and organize the elements upon natural principles. This He did after His ascension, or His glory, or His eternity, and was actually classed with the Gods, with the beings who create, with those who have kept the celestial law while in the flesh, and again obtained their bodies. Then He was prepared to commence the work of creation, as the Scriptures teach. ...

Things were first created spiritually; the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with Him. Then He commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, precisely as He had been created in this flesh himself, by partaking of the course material that was organized and composed this earth, until His system was charged with it, consequently the tabernacles of His children were organized from the coarse materials of this earth.”¹

Bishop: President Young had a unique way of describing the path to exaltation. I wholeheartedly agree with him that our Heavenly Father commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, which I believe was achieved by creating Adam from the dust of the earth.

Joe: But doesn't it say that His method of creating life upon the earth was “precisely as He had been created in the flesh himself”?

Bishop: Of course another assumption we could make is that our Heavenly Mother begot Adam and that Moses spoke figuratively about the creation of man in his account in the book of Genesis.

Joe: I do believe that his Heavenly Mother begot Adam, but that our Heavenly Mother was the earthly “mother of all living”, Eve.

Bishop: That remains just speculation though. Surely if God became Adam, then when we become Gods we will yet have the same opportunity? Yet we are repeatedly taught that becoming a God is the ultimate achievement.

Joe: The role of being a Father or Mother of spirits is only one stage in our role as Gods, which something Brigham did teach repeatedly. To give one example of his teachings on this subject:

“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.”²

Joe: This wasn't the only occasion on which Brigham taught that the righteous would serve as Adams or Eves, and that the heavenly parents of spirit children would begin the process of creating physical bodies for them through procreation.

Bishop: What other evidence do you have that Brigham taught Adam was the Father of our Spirits?

Joe: In the October 1854 Conference, President Young gave a discourse that Wilford Woodruff regarded as, “the greatest sermon that ever was

delivered to the Latter-day Saints”, and in which explained at length the Adam-God doctrine, including Adam's role as our Heavenly Father, as well as his mortality:

“Adam is the Father of our spirits. He lived upon an earth. He did abide his creation, and did honor to his calling and Priesthood; and obeyed his master or Lord, and probably many of his wives did the same. And they lived, and died upon an earth, and then were resurrected again to Immortality and Eternal Life.”

Bishop: Was this sermon published in the Journal of Discourses also?

Joe: No, it wasn't published at the time, but was recorded by one of the same stenographers whose accounts were printed in those volumes, and others present made their own notes which substantiate the accuracy of his version. It has been reprinted in Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young and Teachings of President Brigham Young (*Volume 3*), and a number of other publications, and its accuracy has never been questioned by LDS scholars.

Bishop: Then I'd be interested to hear some more of Brother Brigham's words on this subject on that occasion.

Joe: Certainly. He also said:

“I reckon that Father Adam was a resurrected being, with his wives and posterity; and in the Celestial Kingdom they were crowned with Glory, Immortality and Eternal Lives; with thrones, principalities and powers. And it was said to him, 'It is your right to organize the elements; and to your creations and posterity there shall be no end, but you shall add kingdom to kingdom and throne to throne; and still behold the vast eternity of unorganized matter.'

Adam then was a resurrected being; and I reckon, our spirits and the spirits of all the human family were begotten by Adam, and born of Eve. ...

And I reckon that Adam came into the Garden of Eden and did actually eat of the fruit that he himself planted. And I reckon there was a previous understanding, and the whole plan was previously calculated, before the Garden of Eden was made, that he would reduce his posterity to sin, misery, darkness, wickedness, wretchedness, and to the power of

the Devil, that they might be prepared for an Exaltation. For without this they could not receive one. ...

Adam planted the Garden of Eden. And he with his wife Eve partook of the fruit of this earth, until their systems were charged with the nature of Earth, and then they could beget bodies for their spiritual children. ...”

Bishop: Whilst Brigham seems to have developed a quite an elaborate theory, the fact that he says “I reckon” at the start of the first three paragraphs you quoted, seems to suggest to me that he thought of it as no more than an opinion.

Joe: Alma speaks of it being his opinion that the souls and bodies of the righteous would be resurrected at the resurrection of Jesus³, but his words were not any less true because he spoke of it as his opinion⁴. Brother Brigham did go on to state in the same sermon: “I tell you, when you see your Father in the heavens, you will see Adam; when you see your Mother that bore your spirit, you will see mother Eve. And when you see yourselves there, you have gained your exaltation; you have honored your calling here on the Earth. Your body has returned to its mother Earth; and somebody has broken the chains of death that bound you, and given you a resurrection.” He sounds pretty certain to me.

Bishop: Notwithstanding his public pronouncements on this matter I maintain it may have just been an opinion, nothing more.

[The meeting is interrupted briefly at this point by a knock at the Bishop's door by the custodian, who is checking whether there is anyone left in the building. The Bishop informs him that will let himself out with his own keys.]

1 Journal of Discourses 4:217-8, 8 February 1857.

2 28 August 1852, Journal of Discourses 6:275.

3 “I give it as my opinion, that the souls and the bodies are reunited, of the righteous, at the resurrection of Christ.” - Alma 40:20.

4 “Many bodies of the Saints which slept arose.” - Matthew 27:52, see 3 Nephi 23:9.

5 - A Question of Opinion

- Was Brigham acting as a Prophet when he said it?
- Did he speak as prompted by the Spirit?
- Did he claim it to be a revelation?

Joe: If you don't mind me saying, Bishop, you seem to have changed your views all of a sudden. You began by asserting that Brigham was misinterpreted, and yet now accept he did indeed teach the Adam-God doctrine, but believe it to have just been an opinion.

Bishop: With the evidence you've brought forward it became clear that I would no-longer be able to successfully argue that Brother Young didn't teach the Adam-God theory. However, I remembered Joseph's saying that, "a prophet is only a prophet when he acting as such", and that they, just like us, must have their moments of speculation, just as Brigham did on those occasions he made the remarks you have quoted.

Joe: Undoubtedly there were times when President Young speculated privately about the mysteries of the gospel, but he made it clear that when he spoke publicly that he wished what he had to say be taken seriously, and that his words could be relied upon. "If there is ... any member of this Church ... who can bring up ... the first sentence that I have delivered to the people as counsel that is wrong, I really wish they would do it; for they cannot do it, for the simple reason that I have never given counsel that is wrong, that is the reason." he said.¹

Bishop: It seems to me, however, that counsel and teachings are two different things. I may be inspired as a Bishop to give counsel to an individual on how he should overcome a particular problem in his life, this is not the same as when I give a talk from the stand reflecting on what a particular principle means to me personally.

Joe: He is not speaking of addressing individuals though, but discourses which he delivered to the people. He further explained, "I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call it scripture."²

Bishop: The Doctrine and Covenants tells us that when anyone speaks as “moved upon by the Holy Ghost” their words can be called scripture.³ Of course we can only know if someone was been “moved upon by the Holy Ghost” is if we are “moved upon by the Holy Ghost” ourselves.

Joe: When Brigham gave his controversial sermon in 1852 which we began our discussion upon, the Deseret News recorded that the Holy Ghost was “resting upon him in great power, while he revealed some of the precious things of the kingdom.”⁴

Bishop: Yet there is no specific mention of whether the Spirit attended him during his remarks on God being Adam.

Joe: That the Adam-God doctrine was revealed through the Spirit, and the truthfulness of it was attested to by the Spirit is something that Brother Young was not silent upon. For instance, he testified: “I have had many revelations; I have seen and heard for myself, and know these things are true, and nobody on earth can disprove them ... What I know concerning God ... I have received from the heavens, not alone through my natural ability.”⁵

Bishop: I know I must seem like I am being pedantic, but I have yet to see where Brigham specifically states that Adam being God was a revelation.

Joe: I'll do better than that, I'll produce some of his statements in which he declared it to be a doctrine, not a mere theory as many have supposed it to be, and in which he says that it was God who revealed to him the truthfulness of it:

“Some years ago I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our Father and God. That will be a curse to many of the Elders of Israel because of their folly with regard to it. ... It is one of the most glorious revelations of the economy of heaven. Yet the world holds it in derision.”⁶

“I tell you this about my belief about that personage who is called the Ancient of Days... I did not understand so until my mind became so enlightened with the Spirit and by the revelations of God.”⁷

“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.”⁸

Joe: Brigham was not alone in his testimony, whilst his teachings on this matter also created controversy during his lifetime, there were many who shared the belief as he did. As he said himself, “Some have grumbled because I believe God to be so near to us as Father Adam. There are those who know that doctrine to be true.”⁹

Bishop: I am not yet one of those who do, and I am still unconvinced that you should be willing to lose your Church membership because of your belief in it.

Joe: I cannot deny what I know to be true, in doing so I would fear losing my exaltation far more than I do through losing my name upon the records of the Church. If we look back at the discourse we began with, it seems to me that Brigham Young made it clear that it was an issue of such importance that our reaction to it could determine our eternal standing before the Lord, or as he put it, “Now, let all who hear these doctrines pause before they make light of them or treat them with indifference for they shall prove our salvation or damnation.”¹⁰

Bishop: One thing I must admit that you have made clear to me is that I do need to look again in greater depth at this subject. There are so many points I need to ponder over, and put into further study and prayer. There are so many things I need to gain a greater understanding of. That is not a concession that you are right, but it is an admittance that you have much more knowledge than I in this area, and I would appreciate it if I could borrow the notes you have been quoting from to investigate this further.

Joe: Thank you for considering what I've had to say so sincerely. I hope I haven't seemed like an adversary trying to gain ground, and defeat your arguments. You're welcome to have this copy of my notes. (*He hands them to the Bishop*)

Bishop: I believe I have gained a little insight into why this means so much to you. I am glad we have persisted with each other, and hope that

in all my objections to your beliefs that I haven't also been objectionable.

Joe: Not at all, I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me to share my thoughts and feelings with you, and to see that you have thought everything through so thoroughly.

Bishop: Finishing this evening's meeting on such good terms, I'm sorry to have to remind you of your Church court scheduled for next week. I would like to have the chance to meet with you again before then.

Joe: I look forward to it.

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- 1 Journal of Discourses 16:161, 31 August 1873.
 - 2 29 January 1870, Journal of Discourses 13:95.
 - 3 Doctrine and Covenants 68:4, November 1831.
 - 4 Deseret News, 17 April 1852.
 - 5 18 May 1873, Journal of Discourses 16:46.
 - 6 8 October 1861, 'A Few Words of Doctrine', Brigham Young Papers.
 - 7 25 April 1855, Deseret Theological Institute.
 - 8 Deseret News, 18 June 1873.
 - 9 7 October 1857, Journal of Discourses 5:331.
 - 10 9 April 1852, Journal of Discourses 1:51.

6 - A Question of Origins

- What did Joseph teach about it?
- How does it relate to the role Jesus plays?
- What did Brigham learn from Joseph on about it?
- Can an immortal being become mortal?
- Did Joseph receive a revelation about it?
- Why did Joseph not teach this publicly?

Bishop: Towards the end of our last meeting you quoted President Young's statements to the effect that the Adam-God doctrine was a revelation, and yet Joseph, through whom the Gospel was restored, did not seem to teach it, and the scriptures seem to refute the idea. I can see why some question whether he was indeed a prophet when faced with such contradictions.

Joe: Whilst it is true that Joseph did not seem to publicly teach the Adam-God doctrine, certainly not in as explicit terms as Brigham did, yet he did speak of Adam fulfilling a uniquely divine role. He spoke of our 'first father' being the "head of the human family", and presiding "over the spirits of all men".¹

Bishop: But surely he is subject to his immediate Priesthood head, Jesus, in this calling, just as the Savior (and all of us) are subject to our Heavenly Father.

Joe: Joseph's teachings show, however, that even Jesus is subject to Adam in Priesthood hierarchy. He states that it is Adam who "holds the presidency of all dispensations"², and therefore even over the dispensation of the meridian of time in which Christ personally headed his Church. In fact, it is he who ultimately holds, "the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times"³, with the Prophet Joseph acting under his direction.

Bishop: Perhaps he was just speaking of his authority as pertains to this earth, whilst the authority of Jesus - I have heard it said - extends beyond this world.

Joe: Whatever role Jesus may fill beyond this planet is another matter, as far as the godly authority of Adam goes, Joseph declared that he holds “the keys of the universe”⁴, and that it was through Adam that, “Christ has been revealed, and will continue to be revealed.”⁵

Bishop: So do you believe then that Brigham was just developing ideas that originated with Joseph?

Joe: I would say, from the evidence I've seen, that the doctrine was fully developed before Joseph's death, and that Brigham learned about it in private meetings, without needing to develop the concepts propounded in the Prophet's sermons to their natural conclusion.

Indeed, if I may quote from the notes I have here, Brigham said, “I never saw any one, until I met with Joseph Smith, who could tell me anything about the character, personality and dwelling place of God, or anything satisfactory about angels, or the relationship of man to his Maker.”⁶

Bishop: There were certainly many unique ideas about God that were taught by Joseph which the Church accepts, although I have yet to see any evidence that Brigham learned this particular doctrine from Joseph, and would be interested to hear about what you have collected on the subject.

Joe: “It was Joseph's doctrine that Adam was God,” stated Brigham, “God comes to earth and partakes of the fruit.”⁷

Bishop: Is there any recollection of Joseph having spoken of Adam being God in the sense of him being our Heavenly Father though?

Joe: Joseph's friend, Patriarch Benjamin F. Johnson recorded that, “He taught us that God was the great head of human procreation - was truly the Father of both our spirits and our bodies.”⁸, similarly, John Taylor remembered Joseph posing the rhetorical question, “Adam is the Father of our bodies. Who is to say He is not the Father of our spirits?”

Bishop: You are as impressive as ever in providing quotes to support your position, yet I would of hoped that Joseph may have left us more of an explanation of how an immortal God came to be the mortal Adam.

Joe: Luckily we have some record of how this process occurred from Joseph, as he told his dear friend Anson, “Now regarding Adam: He came here from another planet - an immortalized being and brought his wife Eve with him - and by eating of the fruit of the earth, became subject to death and decay - was made mortal and subject to death.”¹⁰

Bishop: Is there any account of when Joseph received such a revelation?

Joe: There are several accounts of the Prophet (and others present with him) having received a vision of the Celestial Kingdom, in which they saw “the Father seated upon a throne” and “the mother also.” Following which, Joseph told those who shared his vision, “They are our first parents, Adam and Eve.”¹¹

Bishop: Why did Joseph keep a doctrine of such importance to himself? What reason did he have for not teaching it publicly?

Joe: If Joseph had lived longer, he may have had the opportunity and inclination to reveal to the Saints as a body what God had revealed to him personally on this subject. Yet, perhaps he did not feel the members were yet ready to either understand or accept such sacred truths, and so he only entrusted it to his closest associates. As he said only a couple of weeks before his martyrdom, “Without a revelation, I am not going to give them the knowledge of the God of heaven.”¹²

Bishop: I never expected to learn so much on this subject. When we began our discussions I thought I'd be teaching you, and yet you have surprised me time and time again with your depth of knowledge, and the reasonableness of your arguments. I find myself with only one defense left against accepting this doctrine, and that is the scriptural evidence against it. No matter how impressive and persuasive your reasoning has been before, I still cannot imagine how the Bible can be reconciled with this doctrine, and believe me I have tried.

Joe: I have to admit to having expected to be condemned without an opportunity to explain or defend myself when we first met, and that I have been pleased to find you so open-minded, and willing to listen and consider what I've had to say. As our exchanges have developed I have been less intent on meeting the challenge of answering objections you've

brought up to the Adam-God doctrine, and have felt as if we have been embarking on an important study, which we have both benefited from. I am relieved to hear that you feel similarly. I will endeavor to respond to the passages you have questions over with the same reasonableness you have credited me with.

Bishop: I look forward to hearing what you have to say.

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- 1 2 July 1839, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 9).
 - 2 5 October 1840, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 169 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 40).
 - 3 5 October 1840, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 167 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 39).
 - 4 2 July 1839, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 9).
 - 5 5 October 1840, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 167 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 39).
 - 6 18 May 1873, Journal of Discourses 16:45-6; see Deseret Weekly News 22:308.
 - 7 Meeting of Quorum of Twelve, 4 April 1860; see Wilford Woodruff Journal, 16 December 1867, and Brigham Young Papers, 14 May 1876.
 - 8 Letter to G.S. Gibbs, October 1903.
 - 9 L. John Nuttall Papers, 13 January 1880.
 - 10 Joseph Smith to Anson Call, John M. Whitaker Papers.
 - 11 Zebedee Coltrin, Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, 25 August 1890, and Salt Lake School of the Prophets minute book, 11 October 1883; see Heber C. Kimball, 17 March 1861, Journal of Discourses 9:41, and Diary of Oliver B. Huntington 2:207.
 - 12 16 June 1844, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 371.

7 - A Question of Understanding

- Is it in harmony with the Bible?
- Was Adam literally created from the dust?
- Did he commit sin by eating the fruit?
- What do we mean by 'the fall'?
- Did Adam die as we do?
- What evidence do we have in scripture?
- Why is it not taught by the Church now?

Joe: The first thing I think that we ought to understand when approaching the creation account in the book of Genesis is that - although it may seem to some that Moses and Brigham were telling two opposite versions of the same events - we must realize that they were just adapting the same story to the capacity of the audience they were addressing.

The Children of Israel to whom Moses writings were directed were living a lesser law, and had a lesser knowledge. They had rejected the higher teachings and laws, and were not willing or capable to learn and live them. So therefore they were given a more figurative account of the creation. The account of man's 'creation' as given in the Endowment gives us a much clearer picture of what Moses meant.

Bishop: This aside, some very definite statements are made in the scriptures regarding the life of Adam whilst upon the earth, and also concerning his death. For instance, how may ways can we interpret, “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground”¹

Joe: Interestingly the Scriptures say, “all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.”² Yet we realize that we were conceived through the act of procreation, and as Joseph Smith says, “everything comes in this way.”³, for there is no other process through which spirits can be tabernacled. Adam was no different. Our bodies are ultimately made up of the basic elements of matter; the 'dust' the scriptures speak of, and even our spirit consists of a finer form of the same material⁴.

Brigham's inspired teachings show us that Adam was once as we are now, and was born in the same way on another earth. Moses' account

in the Bible and Pearl of Great Price gives only a limited perspective in these matters, and relates a symbolic account adapted to the understanding of the wayward children of Israel.

Bishop: But many people believe that Adam was earthly not just in the sense that he was made from the dust of the earth, but that he displayed the worldly frailty of committing sin.

Joe: I wonder if they can find in the scriptures any mention of when or how it speaks of him having sinned, I know I can't.⁵ If they are referring to his partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, then it is perhaps more accurate to say he transgressed a natural law, to obey a higher law.⁶ According to Nephi, he had to partake of the fruit to be able to have children⁷. So, as Joseph Smith said, "Adam did not sin in eating the fruits."⁸ He opened up to his posterity who would inhabit this earth the possibility of temptation and trials, but without this he could not offered them the prospect of exaltation.

All that Adam did he must have agreed to fulfill before coming to the earth.⁹ If he had not gone through those experiences we would not be here to benefit from his acts. We should look upon what they did with appreciation.

Bishop: I agree that "Adam fell that men might be"¹⁰, yet how can a God fall?

Joe: Sadly, the word fall is misapplied to what is one of the most important stages in the plan of salvation. Mankind may have lost the immediate presence of the Gods, but the way was opened that we could make it back to their presence, and become Gods themselves through the opportunity Adam gave them¹¹.

Apostle, Orson F. Whitney explained these momentous events thus, "In order that God's spirit children might have the opportunity to take bodies and undergo experiences on this earth, two heavenly beings came down in advance and became mortal for our sake. This is the true significance of the fall of Adam and Eve. It was not a mere yielding to temptation - they came on a mission, to pioneer this earthly wilderness, and open the way so that a world of waiting spirits might become souls, and make a stride forward in the great march of eternal progression."¹²

It is true that Adam did subdue his personal glory, but in doing this he would have added to his eternal glory, because "it is the work and

glory of God to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man”¹³. Whilst partaking of the mortal foods of this earth it transfused blood through his veins, blood being the basic element of life in mortal man. This does not lessen the role he plays in eternity, it just means that for a time he fulfilled a different calling to enable Him to accomplish his mission as our Heavenly Father.

Bishop: You speak of Adam having an aspect of mortality, and yet the Bible gives the impression that he was fully mortal, by actually referring to him dying.¹⁴

Joe: The scriptures tell us that Moses died also, and was even buried¹⁵. We understand from ancient writings¹⁶, the Book of Mormon¹⁷ and modern revelation¹⁸ though, that he did not die in the sense of his spirit and body separating, he but left his life on this earth to fulfill a mission elsewhere. In the ancient Hebrew language the word “die” was almost identical to that of “change.”

It must also be remembered that Adam was immortal whilst in the garden of Eden. The scriptures state that there is only one way of becoming immortal and that is by living through a previous mortality and being resurrected¹⁹. Once a person reaches that state their spirit and body cannot be separated again²⁰. Adam died in the sense that he changed from having an element of mortality within him, to returning to a state where his personal glory would attend him again.

Bishop: You have certainly given me a greater understanding of how these passages can be interpreted so differently, and to be fair, you have answered any and all of the objections I have put forward against the Adam-God doctrine. Yet, perhaps you could indulge me on one last point?

Joe: What is on your mind?

Bishop: Well, you have shown me a great deal of evidence that Brigham did indeed teach this doctrine, a fact I can no longer dispute, and that Joseph himself seemed to have endorsed it. But although you have explained how their teachings fit into the context of the book of Genesis, yet I am left wonder, why is it that the scriptures do not seem to contain any evidence for a truth of such importance?

Joe: I'm sure that after only a little reflection on the matter, that you could think of many concepts which are true, but which you would struggle to find mention of in scripture, thinking of the temple ceremony as an example. There are sacred matters which receive very little mention in holy writ precisely because they are so holy that it has not always been wise to write them. However, I do believe there are many indications within the standard works that the same being who fulfilled the roles of Adam, Michael, and the Ancient of Days, is the same character who we speak of as our Father in Heaven. I think that one example of this will suffice:

That Adam will yet fulfill the role of being the Ancient of Days, whom Daniel prophesies about in the book of his name, was a truth first revealed to Joseph Smith only a few months after the Church was organized. We learn from the Old Testament that a being whose clothes and hair radiated pure white, who would sit upon a fiery throne, with a hundred thousand ministering unto him would open books of judgment, he would give unto the Son of Man the kingdoms of the world and dominion over all of them, and the Saints in turn would inherit God's kingdom forever.²¹

These same events are played out in the book of Revelation, in a vision which John the Beloved received whilst a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos: The same throne, with the appearance of fire²², thousands ministering unto he who sits on the throne, the books of judgment being opened, and Jesus coming to him and being rewarded²³. The only major difference between the two accounts being a clarification John makes about the Ancient of Days. The servants, the heavenly creatures, and the elders who praise Adam proclaim him to be, "Lord God Almighty"²⁴, they worship him and praise him saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things."²⁵ The world's Biblical scholars have not overlooked these passages, and within the pages of most bible dictionaries and commentaries, they define the term 'Ancient of Days' as but another title for the 'Almighty God'²⁶.

Bishop: Well Joe, I hate to admit it, but you have left me without any excuse for not accepting taking this doctrine seriously. I realize the onus now lies on me to pray for a spiritual confirmation of the truthfulness of Brother Brigham's teachings. Yet I must admit to have some difficulty understanding how a truth as forcibly and repeatedly taught by Brigham Young could have fallen so far from favor and become classed as a

heresy.

Joe: No doubt there were also those from the first day the Adam-God doctrine was taught that disbelieved it, who sought to influence others with their views, but I wouldn't attribute its 'downfall' within the Church to them. As the members have sought further acceptance amongst the world, especially the respect of other Christian denominations, they began avoiding some of the more controversial Mormon teachings about God, and some of the leaders began discouraging discussion of such doctrines as this one. Later authorities would come from an era in which the Adam-God doctrine was looked upon with suspicion, and some of them saw such reticence about it as a sign that it was disapproved of, which led to the current stance that it is not an official Church doctrine.

Bishop: Official or not, the teachings of the prophets cannot be ignored, and truth cannot be overlooked or avoided because of misunderstandings or false accusations against it. I've made up my mind to attend your court and speak up for our right, or rather, your right to believe as you choose.

Joe: I do not wish you to lose your membership too, for I do fear that will be the inevitable result, so I would advise you to be very circumspect with what you say if your intent on speaking in my defense. All I will ask for is the right to believe as I do, I will not ask them to accept the Adam-God doctrine, although, for their sakes, I will hope they will not reject it.

Bishop: You are respectful and courteous of others to the very end, I do hope the High Council will afford you the same courtesy, although I am saddened that the Stake President felt this disciplinary court had to be called at all.

Joe: Well if he turns out to be as willing to listen as you Bishop, I may yet have him on our side.

[After their goodbyes they go to their respective homes, both pleased with a discussion that has brought the both of them a greater understanding not just of the Adam-God doctrine, but the beginnings of a friendship.]

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- 1 Genesis 2:7.
 - 2 Ecclesiastes 3:20, See Genesis 3:19.
 - 3 16 June 1844, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 373 (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 380); see Teachings, p. 198 (Words, p. 107).
 - 4 “All Spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure.” - Doctrine and Covenants 131:7 (17 May 1843).
 - 5 Doctrine and Covenants 107:43 (28 March 1835) implies that Adam was perfect, because his son, “Seth was a perfect man” and was “like unto his father in all things.”
 - 6 “This was a transgression of the law, but not a sin in the strict sense, for it was something Adam and Eve had to do!” Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation 1:114-115.
 - 7 “If Adam had not transgressed ? they would have had no children” - 2 Nephi 2:22-23.
 - 8 9 February 1841, Words of Joseph Smith, p. 63.
 - 9 “It was the design of the Lord that Adam should partake of the forbidden fruit, and I believe that Adam knew all about it before he came to this earth.” - Brigham Young, 3 June 1855, Journal of Discourses 2:302.
 - 10 2 Nephi 2:25
 - 11 “Behold, the man is become as one of us.” - Genesis 3:22.
 - 12 1915, Improvement Era 19:402-3.
 - 13 Moses 1:39.
 - 14 “And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” - Genesis 5:5.
 - 15 “So Moses the servant of the Lord died ? and he [the Lord] buried him ? but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.” - Deuteronomy 34:5-6.
 - 16 “A cloud stood over him on the sudden, and he disappeared ? he went to God.” - Flavius Josephus, Antiquities 4:8:48.
 - 17 “The Lord took Moses unto himself.” - Alma 45:19.
 - 18 “For the Lord took him unto his fathers.” - JST Deuteronomy 34:6
 - 19 “God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal.” - 2 Nephi 9:13.
 - 20 “Their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided.” - Alma 11:45.
 - 21 Daniel 7:9-10,12-14,22.
 - 22 Revelation 4:2,5.
 - 23 Revelation 5:1,6,11-12.
 - 24 Revelation 4:8.
 - 25 Revelation 4:11.
 - 26 For example, “The Judge is the Ancient of days himself, God the Father, the glory of whose presence is here described. He is called the Ancient of days, because he is God from everlasting to everlasting.” - Matthew Henry's Bible Commentary, 4: 1072.

8 - The Trial

Stake Pres: It is a sad occasion when one of our dear brothers in the Priesthood is called to appear before a disciplinary council such as this one. It is sadder still in your case, Brother Joe, as you stand before us a worthy member of the Church, who has served diligently in all his callings, and could have yet proved to have been such a capable teacher or leader within the Stake. Yet, if what we have heard is true, you seem to have too easily forgotten the experiences which led you to be an active member of the Church, and the blessings that could await you if you were to follow the council of the Lord's representatives .

It is our understanding that you have departed from the Church's accepted teachings regarding our Father in Heaven, and do now consider Adam to be your God. We have also been informed that you have shared this belief with others, one of which, through concern for your spiritual welfare, brought your acceptance of this theory to our attention. How do you respond to this allegation?

Joe: It has not been my intention to try to convince others of the truthfulness of this concept, although I admit that when I first came across these ideas I asked for the opinions of friends and associates as to what they thought of it. I had no idea my actions might be interpreted as promoting doctrines contrary to the current teachings of the Church.

Stake Pres: I cannot judge what your intentions were, but I know that as a result of your actions, that at least one of those you taught has been left confused and upset by what you told them.

Joe: If you and I have the same person in mind - it is my impression that it is not what they learned (most of which subsequently came through their own study) that has caused their dilemma, but rather the Church's attitude towards it.

Bishop: I fear that there may be a danger of us discouraging personal study amongst our members. As a Bishop I have often encountered youth who have developed doubts or who form unorthodox views, before they gain a testimony for themselves, but if I had dissuaded them from studying further they would never have seen the wisdom of the

Church's position.

Stake Pres: Bishop, I respect your motives in this matter, but it is apparent that Brother Joe is not a youth. He has accepted the Gospel as an adult, he has been given the Melchizedek Priesthood, and a certain standard must be expected from such members. I have heard no indication that he was ignorant of the Church's position, nor that he considers himself in doubt over what he believes. Is this the case, Brother Joe?

Joe: I had an idea of the current LDS leaders' views on this matter, it is true, and I have a testimony of the truthfulness of Brother Brigham's teachings on this subject. So in both respects you are correct, yet I cannot agree that I should lose my fellowship in the Church for believing what a prophet of God taught in times past. It seems to me that its what President Young taught that is really at issue here.

Stake Pres: The real issue - as has been made apparent to me by our Area Presidency, whom I have consulted on this matter - is whether you are prepared to accept current Church doctrine, and to sustain your leaders who wish you to relinquish your adherence to this theory of yours, to cease your study of it, and not enter into discussions with any others on this subject. Without taking such a step, I fear, that the outcome of having your name removed from the records of the Church will be inevitable.

It is not our position to determine what current Church doctrine should be, so I cannot see how anything useful would be achieved by discussing what you believe was once taught over one-hundred years ago. It is our position, however, to ensure that teachings contrary to the accepted position of the Church are not allowed to spread and cause disharmony, or weaken the faith of the members.

Bishop: If I may interject again, I believe that Brother Joe might be willing to keep his beliefs to himself if it were asked of him. It seems to me that this would be a reasonable compromise.

Stake Pres: Our position stands, the policies in this matter are clear enough, and even the High Council is obliged to adhere to them. Brother Joe, before we make our decision, would you like to give us any final remarks in your defense.

Joe: I must admit a great disappointment, as I had hoped to be able to explain the doctrine which I'm being condemned for my belief in, I also hoped that I might have been allowed the liberty of believing as I do when you realized that I was not promoting my views as official Church doctrine. My insistence in refusing to deny what I know to be true, does not come from any unwillingness to follow my leaders, but rather a determination to follow God, and to be true to what He has revealed to me, and what He would undoubtedly be willing to reveal to you if you were to study, ponder, and pray about this matter. As for myself, in the words of Brigham Young, "I know the God in whom I believe, and am willing to acknowledge Him before all men."¹

Stake Pres: Then it is my sad duty as your local Priesthood leader, acting on behalf of the Church, to say that from this moment forward you shall no longer be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you shall have your name removed from its records, and lose all rights and privileges that you once enjoyed.

[Following the court proceedings, Joe and Bishop Grant have an opportunity to talk to one another about the Stake President's decision]

Bishop: How could they not accept the teachings of Brigham Young on the identity of God? How could they disbelieve a doctrine which was restored through Joseph and which Brigham taught repeatedly, and had the truthfulness of confirmed to him by revelation? Had I not understood these matters I could have so easily dismissed them, and failed to have received a spiritual witness of the truth. But now I have such a witness I look back in disbelief at how I could have thought I knew all the principles of the Gospel, and yet have overlooked one of its most important truths. My debt of gratitude to you is great, Joe, for sharing with me your knowledge on this subject.

Joe: The Court was carried out as most disciplinary councils are now, it seems to be the common practice and a matter of policy to base the issue on whether a person is willing to relinquish their beliefs and accept the greater wisdom of their leaders, even if this would mean abandoning their testimony of a doctrine taught by the prophet Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. It does my heart good on what might seem such a solemn occasion to hear that you too have gained a testimony of this

truth, and I hope you are able to avoid the same outcome, but from what I know of you I am sure you would not give up what you know to be true, just like I was not prepared to. It strikes me that it has not just been me on trial, nor so in the case of other members who have stood accused of believing false doctrine on this matter, but it has rather been Brother Brigham whom they have made their judgment against, and I look forward to the time when he shall return to defend his own teachings, as I know he shall.

[The Bishop puts his arm around Joe in a brotherly gesture, and tells him he agrees with his sentiments. They continue to meet from that point on, sometimes in Joe's home and often in the home of the Bishop. Their faith in this doctrine and in all principles of the gospel growing with each occasion they and their families study together.]

Commentary

Should we be excommunicated because of our beliefs?

“I do not like the old man being called up for erring in doctrine. It looks too much like the Methodists, and not like the Latter-day Saints. Methodists have creeds which a man must believe or be asked out of their church. I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please, it feels so good not to be trammelled. It does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine.”

(Joseph Smith Jun., April 8th, 1843, History 5:340)

“Persons sometimes say that they have enjoyed the spirit of the work as much since they were cut off as while they were in the Church. Have they enjoyed the Spirit? Yes. Why? Simply because they were wrongfully cut off. They were cut off in such a way that it did not take the Spirit of God from them. And the reason why they were cut off was because they did not come up to the particular standard of perfection of those who dealt with them, or they did not come up to their feelings. I have heard of a man who was cut off because he would not believe that Adam was our Father and God. 'Well, but was it not so?' Its being so does not change the fact that we are sinners and need salvation, and such preaching does not help men and women to repent of their sins.”

(Francis M. Lyman, Millennial Star 24:100, 15th February 1862)

Note: Some Latter-day Saints who believe in the Adam-God doctrine do maintain their membership in the Church if they have tolerant or sympathetic local leaders, or keep their beliefs entirely to themselves, although many others have been excommunicated where this is not the case.

1 Journal of Discourses 11:121 (18 June 1865).

Conclusion

Upon Mars hill, in ancient Greece, Paul spoke of the superstitious Athenians, and their altar to an Unknown God¹. Rather than condemn them as pagans, he recognized the sincerity of their devotion, and related the Gospel to them in a manner using concepts familiar to them. Referring to their statue of an unnamed deity, he stated, “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” Following which he spoke to them of a divine Father in heaven, who, “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,”² and as their poets had wisely said, “we are also his offspring.”³

In our latter days, another apostle and prophet of Jesus Christ, has restored the simple truth that God “created man as we create our children; for there is no other process of creation”⁴, and that “We are his children, literally, spiritually, naturally, and in every respect.”⁵ This simple truth, once taught so frequently to the Saints⁶, forms the basis of the (so-called) Adam-God doctrine, which sees our God as a spiritual Father who took upon Himself the role of Adam to provide mortal bodies for his heavenly children, that they might have the opportunity to progress to the same exalted state that He and all the Gods enjoy.

Joseph once remarked, “There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God.”⁷ President Brigham Young was a man who not only understood the character of God, but endeavored to endow all the Saints with the same understanding. He taught as ‘one having authority’⁸, he having learned this doctrine from Joseph, received further knowledge from the heavens upon it, and taught it with the Spirit of God witnessing its truthfulness.⁹ This was the pattern he followed in all his public discourses, as he declared, “I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call it scripture.” Let this go to the people with ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ and if they do not obey it, you will see the chastening hand of the Lord upon them.”¹⁰

To possess the same knowledge and understanding that Joseph and Brigham possessed does not always come easily, as our dear prophet advised, “the things of God are of deep import; and time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out.”¹¹ Ultimately, there is only one means through which we can know of this doctrine’s truthfulness, as Brother Brigham said, commenting upon his own teachings, “Whether you receive these things or not, I tell

you them in simplicity. I lay them before you like a child, because they are perfectly simple. If you see and understand these things, it will be by the Spirit of God; you will receive them by no other spirit. (by the same token no one can reject them with the spirit of the Lord.) No matter whether they are told to you like the thunderings of the Almighty or by simple conversation; if you enjoy the Spirit of the Lord, it will tell you whether they are right or not. I know my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and this is eternal life.”¹² And life eternal will be the reward of those who come to such a knowledge¹³, and who meet up to the responsibilities that come with it.

Our God and Father Adam wishes to see us reach the same state and have the same opportunities as he did. As he looked upon the earth he had organized with his brethren, one can envisage him remarking, “I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end.”¹⁴ With the knowledge of His identity and role, and through a life of righteousness, we too can look forward to the same prospect, as promised by Brigham Young, “After men have got their exaltations, and their crowns, have become Gods, even the sons of Gods, are made King of Kings and Lord of Lords, they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit, and that is the first operation with regard to organizing a world. Power is then given to them to organize the elements, and then to 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 go 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 corporal 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. This is a key for you.”¹⁵

It is my hope and prayer that the reader of this book, will not throw away the key of knowledge that God has given us through his anointed servants upon this doctrine, but that they will come to understand and embrace it, and in doing so, will become closer to God, until they ultimately come into his presence, and have the opportunity of fulfilling the role of being an Adam or Eve themselves.

- 1 Acts 17:22-23.
- 2 Acts 17:26.
- 3 Acts 17:28.
- 4 Journal of Discourses 11:122 (18 June 1865).
- 5 Journal of Discourses 14:136 (21 May 1871).
- 6 Journal of Discourses 4:217; 6:332; 7:286; 9:283; 13:250; 14:111; 17:143; 18:259.
- 7 Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 343, April 1844.
- 8 Matthew 7:29.
- 9 For example, it was recorded in the minutes of his April 1852 Adam-God sermon, that “the Holy Ghost” was “resting upon him in great power” - Millennial Star 14:356.
- 10 Deseret News, 2 February, 1870.
- 11 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 137, 15 March 1839.
- 12 Journal of Discourses 4:218 (8 February 1857).
- 13 John 17:3.
- 14 Brigham Young, Deseret News Weekly 22:308.
- 15 Journal of Discourses 6:275 (28 August 1852)

Background

Brother Malcolm was working in the purchasing department of the Church Offices when Bishop Mayo, who was in the accounting section, first heard of his belief in the Adam-God doctrine. Bishop Mayo was then serving as Bishop of one of Britain's biggest wards, and in that capacity as well as in earlier leadership roles he had come across the problems and misunderstandings of many members, whom he was usually able to help through his counsel. However, Malcolm was not the type to follow after fanciful theories, he had previously been a Branch President himself, and the depth of his studies was evidenced by his library of Mormon books, probably the largest personal collection in Europe. In fact Brother Malcolm's studies on this subject had begun in trying to prove another Saint - who believed in the Adam-God doctrine - that he was wrong. Now the roles, it seemed, were reversed, as he was the one passing on reprints of Brigham Young's sermons to the Bishop to investigate.

Having a strong testimony of Brigham Young, and being well studied, the Bishop, was quick to recognize that it was not a theory he was dealing with, but rather was a true doctrine. Malcolm's wife was quick to embrace this doctrine along with her husband, but the Bishop's wife was far more reticent at first. It was following a confrontation with the Stake President, who declared that Brigham Young had taught false doctrine, that Sister Mayo was told by the Lord, "Brigham Young was not a liar", and subsequently came to a knowledge of the identity of God for herself. Brother's Malcolm and Mayo have since written articles about this doctrine themselves, in a British LDS periodical known as the Truth Seeker. Their story has been - in part - the inspiration behind the circumstances and characters who are featured in this book.

About the Author

This is the author's first book, although he has written articles for Truth Seeker and the Messenger, which he was also helped edit, as well as writing fiction and poetry. He is a convert to the Church, after he had begun reading the Book of Mormon and having sought out the missionaries to teach him further and baptize him. After returning from his own mission, he was married in the temple in to his beautiful wife, and they have since had several children join their family. He currently works in the computing field.

This book was originally intended to be a short play, to be performed for the benefit of a dear friend who had come up with many of the objections to the Adam-God doctrine which the Bishop is represented as giving. It was not finished in time for their visit on that occasion, and would have probably been left incomplete had not a few associates who saw what had been written encouraged the author to develop it into a book. It was finished just in time for his friends next visit, a year later.

The author of this book can be emailed at
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Bibliography

Sadly too many books have been written by people who do not understand the Adam-God doctrine for those who do not really want to understand it, and just contribute to misunderstandings about it. I have listed below some of the more notable books, articles, and booklets on the subject - both in favor and against the doctrine:

Favorable Studies

- Michael - Our Father and Our God (*Joseph W. Musser, 1938*)
- Michael-Adam (*Ogden Kraut, 1972*)
- Adam-God Maze (*Culley K. Christensen, 1981*)
- Adam-God (*Craig L. Tholson, 1991*)

Neutral LDS Studies

- The Position of Adam (*Rodney Turner, 1953*)
- The Adam-God Doctrine (*David J. Buerger, Dialogue, Spring 1982*)
- What About the Adam-God Theory? (*Van Hale, 1983*)
- Another Look at Adam-God
(*Carl Broderick, Dialogue, Summer 1985*)

Unfavorable Orthodox LDS Studies

- Adam - Who Is He? (*Mark E. Petersen, 1976*)
- Be Not Deceived (*Elwood G. Norris, 1978*)
- Adam-God Doctrine (*Alma G. Allred*)
- Adam-God (*Eldon Watson, 1998*)

Anti-Mormon

- Adam is God? (*Chris A. Vlachos, 1979*)
- Adam-God Teaching – A Theory or a Doctrine? (*John Farkas, 1991*)

Other Books

- Journal of Discourses (*George D. Watt ed., 26 vols, pub. 1854-86*)
- Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young
(*Eldon Watson, 6 vols, pub. 1979-84*)
- Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith
(*Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. ed., pub. 1938*)
- Words of Joseph Smith
(*Andrew Ehat & Lyndon Cook ed., pub. 1980*)
- Wilford Woodruff Journal (*Scott Kenney ed., 9 vols, 1833-1898*)