

Adam-God Theory or Doctrine?

By John R. Crane

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This paper presents an analysis of Adam-God, sometimes called “doctrine”, sometimes called a “mystery”, sometimes called “a theory”, sometimes renounced or condemned as “false doctrine”. Strictly speaking, the Hebrew word *Adam* means “man”, and we know from the teachings of Joseph Smith, and if we could search deeply within ourselves, we would know that we (as “man” or humankind) have our roots in God, will eventually return to God, and we are manifestation of God in this world. The problem is if we try to do what Brigham did: whenever we find the word “God” anywhere in the Gospel, substitute “Adam”, the name for that specific personality, the husband of Eve, the first flesh upon the earth, in place of the God we worship, and the God which we are trying to become like, we run into a lot of difficulties reconciling the two. Brigham Young saw some of those difficulties and fabricated unsupported, unscriptural, and downright false doctrine on the fly in order to justify his conclusions. The result was a doctrinal disaster and an embarrassment to the church. The church gradually retreated from this doctrine, but the core implications of this doctrine remain and continue to haunt the church today.

I will refer extensively to a book called *Adam-God*, by Craig L. Tholson, which contains great coverage of the evolution and devolution of the subject. The book contains original quotations from LDS church leaders, both pro and con, concerning Adam-God, and follows how, between 1890 and 1920, the church gradually walked Adam-God back from being doctrine that members were required to believe, to the point where, today, it renounces Adam-God as false doctrine and excommunicates members for believing in it. Bro.Tholson lost his membership for his whole-hearted belief in Adam-God, and for documenting how the church walked this doctrine back over the years.

This book is available in print from Amazon and other sources on the Internet. The book is out of print and very expensive to obtain a hard copy. I am also providing a link where you can download it for free. I suggest having a copy of the book and looking up the references. More details on Craig L. Tholson, his book, and the link are in the Appendix,

Much of Adam-God survives in the church today: in King Follett and other teachings of Joseph Smith, in the Book of Moses, and in the temple endowment. Brigham Young actually makes the claim that the belief didn’t originate with him, but was taught the belief by Joseph Smith, even while also claiming to have received a revelation from God on the subject. There are elements of the belief that are easily identified as false, and cannot be traced back to Joseph Smith, while others are true, and while denied by the church, were actually taught by Joseph Smith.

The doctrine of Adam-God came about, I believe, in combination with the doctrine of polygamy. Just like the “ghosts of polygamy”, you still see the ghosts of Adam-God haunting the doctrines and policies of the church. Just like polygamy, the church quietly believes parts of Adam-God, even while openly denying it and denouncing anybody who openly believes or teaches it. Just don’t call it “Adam-God”. My personal belief is that, when you see it in its entirety, not just the one or two remarks of Brigham Young that have been sensationalized, you will see that the underlying foundations are true, consistent with the scriptures, and inform, rather than contradict Gospel doctrine, while the inferences drawn by men, not given through revelation, need to be corrected.

There is a very important reason why the church doesn't talk too much about prominent early women. If it did, they would have to dredge up old quotes by Eliza R. Snow, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, and other prominent women of Mormonism who endorsed polygamy, and the Adam-God theory. Yes, the woman who wrote about our Father and Mother in heaven was actually thinking about Adam and Eve.

What Brigham Young Taught

This is a brief summary of Brigham Young's teachings about Adam-God as I understand them from his discourses on the subject. For details, see the Appendix for quotes by Brigham and other church leaders. For even more details, see Tholson's book (also referenced in the Appendix).

Following is a point-by-point summary outline drawn from Brigham Young's teachings about the subject over the years. Brigham said a lot about this subject. He couldn't leave it alone. Some of these points contradict one another. I have pointed out some of these contradictions. As you read this, you will probably think of more. Orson Pratt, as we shall see, pointed out some of these contradictions to Brigham Young and got in trouble for doing so, while most other apostles just "fell in line".

- Adam and Eve's bodies were formed from the dust of another earth.
- Adam and Eve were born in mortality on another planet, just are born on this planet.
- Eve was taken out of Adam's side.
 - **The three above statements cannot all be true.**
 - **Were they both formed or born? Which is it? When did this occur? This is completely out of harmony with the Biblical story. If the story in the Bible is symbolic of what really happened, these conflicting narratives are not even close.**
- Adam and Eve gained their exaltation prior to coming to this earth.
- Adam and Eve parented all the spirits that eventually came to this earth.
- Brigham hints that all of mankind was originally in the same (exalted?) state as Adam and Eve.
- Adam (as Michael) assisted in the creation of this earth.
- Adam took Eve (one of his wives) and came to earth as immortal gods.
- Adam and Eve were immortal celestial beings in the Garden of Eden, but unable to bear children.
 - **Why? They were immortal. They had children before. What was stopping them?**
- By partaking of the elements of this earth, Adam and Eve, in process of time, became mortal.
 - **This is totally contrary to the story in the Bible.**
 - **Why and how did a perfect Celestial being create a planet that would kill him?**
 - **If they were immortal, why would they need the Tree of Life?**
 - **How did a perfect Celestial being lose his knowledge of his former life?**
 - **God said they could eat of every tree, except the forbidden tree. Wouldn't every tree contain elements of the earth?**
 - **In the Bible, Eve first partook of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and Adam partook afterward and this made them mortal.**
 - **BY makes no mention of the temptations Satan.**
 - **There is no mention of a fall and being shut out from the Presence of God.**
- Adam repeated this same process on other worlds with each of his other wives.
- After dying, Adam and Eve received a celestial resurrection.
 - **In fact, Brigham stated that he wasn't sure if Adam died. Brigham Young was not a student of the scriptures. He said he didn't have time to read them. It was later pointed out to him that the story of Adam's death is in Genesis 5:5.**

- According to Brigham Young, the only thing necessary for Adam and Eve's exaltation was a polygamous marriage, resulting in a Celestial resurrection.
- Instead of the Everlasting Covenant, in which baptism of water, fire, and the Holy Ghost are the gateway to Eternal Life and being One with the Father and Christ in their kingdom, Brigham replaced this with the "New and Everlasting Covenant" of "Celestial Marriage" as the ticket to "exaltation" in your own kingdom, where your power and "glory" depends on how many people you control.
- Adam and Eve fell. They needed a redeemer. They needed to repent. They needed the ordinances of faith, repentance, and baptism. But, the BY explanation leaves all of this out.
- BY claimed Adam had power to resurrect himself. A fallen being! If Adam could do that, then we, all being in the same state, could also resurrect ourselves.
- BY makes it sound like Adam and Eve were exalted instantly, contrary to what Joseph Smith taught in King Follett: "Here, then, is eternal life -- to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power. ... When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel -- you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave."
- Christ had to specifically redeem Adam and Eve, and by extension us, who chose to follow in their footsteps. BY says an angel resurrected Christ, but can't say who. There were witnesses to the resurrection of Christ. If the resurrection of Adam and Eve was so important, why are there no witnesses? Why couldn't Adam then resurrect the rest of us, or we resurrect ourselves? This narrative negates and denies the entire plan of salvation and the need for a savior, not only for Adam, but for the rest of us.
 - "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." (Rom 5:14)
 - "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor 15:22)
- Adam is the father of all our spirits. Jesus was the firstborn of all the Spirit children of Adam and Eve. In addition, Adam, as our Father in Heaven, and as Jesus' Father in heaven, overshadowed Mary and became Jesus' father, after the flesh.
 - In order to believe this, you have to believe the previous point that Adam was exalted, because as a fallen, unresurrected being, Adam could not be the father of Christ.
 - To further contradict this notion, President Joseph F. Smith had a dream, which is canonized as D&C Section 138, in which he saw Adam and Eve among the spirits in the spirit world waiting for Christ to come resurrect them.
 - So, was Adam resurrected and exalted or was he a spirit? Was Christ the first fruits of them that slept, or was it Adam?
 - In partial support of Brigham Young, Orson Pratt makes the following point: Mary was not conceived by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost overshadowed her and purified her in order to bear the Presence of God. (This was similar to the ascension of Moses in Moses 1:1.)

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." (Luke 1:35). In the experience of Moses, he was able to distinguish between God, a being of glory, and Satan, a being with a counterfeit glory. If Adam-God was an unresurrected spirit, he would not have sufficient glory such that Mary would need to be transfigured to enter his presence.

- Adam is our Heavenly Father and the "only god with whom we have to do".
 - **All the above points show how ridiculous and inconsistent this notion really is. Jesus' god is our god. Jesus' father is our father. (John 20:17) We worship the same God that Adam, Moses, and Jesus worshipped.**

False ideas about God vs Knowing God: Where they each lead

When you start deconstructing Adam-God, you begin to see the flaws. In order to justify Adam being our Heavenly Father, the god we worship, you have to invent many other doctrines, which are not supported by the scriptures or revelation.

This theology creates a justification for a man, like Brigham Young, to actually live out Adam-God in his own life. You see a man setting up a petty kingdom with himself as authoritarian dictator, where he controls all the resources, demands strict obedience in thought and deed on pain of death, subjugates women, tolerates human slavery, replaces the doctrine of Christ with a doctrine of dead works and ordinances, where each man's worthiness consists in obtaining a kingdom for himself through fear, domination, and control. What's wrong with this? He is just doing what his "Adam", his "god", has done in other worlds.

This is a world where men have rejected the living God, and set themselves up as Gods, and set up their own counterfeit kingdoms in pale imitation of the true order of God, which they could have had, had they not broken the connection to heaven.

Because that, **when they knew God, they glorified him not as God**, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.**

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: **Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator**, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: ... (Romans 1: 21-26)

The following is an excerpt from a revelation I received on January 20, 2020, while inquiring of the Lord concerning the meaning of Romans, chapter 1.

Much has been spoken about the wrath of God and about it being kindled against all ungodliness. What is more ungodly than twisting a scripture meant to teach a holy principle and using it to demean and diminish my children?

The apostle Paul is writing to the Roman saints to comfort them in their faith, and to remind them that the **Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto life and salvation. There is no comfort and no power when the words of the Gospel are used to afflict, punish, and condemn.** The people who do this are guilty of the very things Paul is accusing sinners of doing. Before

condemning people with the words of Romans Chapter 1, they should read the words of Romans Chapter 2, and liken it unto themselves. They have no excuse or justification to condemn others for sins which they, themselves are committing.

Romans 1 is not speaking about unbelief in God. It is speaking about disbelief in God. **That which is known about God is manifested in the world around you, and it is also written in the conscience of every man and woman.** Let us reason together. Which is worse? to not believe in God, or to believe in a false God? Even people who don't believe in God understand right from wrong, for it is given to them.

The fundamental sin is to refuse to know and acknowledge God as God, and to worship the creation of your own mind instead of the creator of all. What makes it worse is once having known God, to turn your back on Him and worship some idol, some anti-Christ, some false image of God -- the "god" which condemns, in place of the God which forgives.

Fortunately, the real world encroached on the little telestial kingdom of Brigham Young and curtailed his power and influence, and that of his successors. But unfortunately, there is so much of that mindset still in the church today. It's poisoning peoples' minds. It's affecting even those who desire to become true followers of Christ, yet they err in many instances because of the traditions and unbelief of men, which they still can't quite shake off.

We can fix this. First, by realizing the truth that every human being on this planet, including Adam and Eve, had a noble and exalted past. Second, by realizing that "we are fallen, and we can't get back up by ourselves". We need to worship a god who has overcome the fall, who is now outside the box, who can assist us to also rise up and come outside the box. This is why (1) Adam is a god, but (2) Adam can't be our god, because he is fallen with the rest of us.

This is why Nephi prophetically condemned the latter-day Gentile church:

And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men; (2 Nephi 28:5)

For you who don't believe in any kind of a god, you will have to admit that we each have a conscience – some kind of innate sense of right and wrong. That conscience is an outpost of the true and living God inside of each of us. It is our ideal of the best that each of us can become. Atheists may be able to deny the God of heaven because they are not able experience Him, but they cannot deny the "little god" within them. Many atheists are much more honest, ethical, and moral than their god-believing counterparts.

Faith in God is more than just a blind belief in a god that will do for us what we can't or won't do for ourselves. **Faith in God is a participatory act.** Once we have reestablished our connection or recognized the connection that already exists, we can **work jointly with God** to lift (exalt) us and back us back (redeem) to the status which we once enjoyed, and in the process, to learn and gain immensely, things which we could not have learned otherwise. This isn't a new gospel. This is the a new way of looking at *The Gospel*. It combines and reconciles faith, works, intentions, hearts, minds, and personal agency. It empowers rather than demeans. It replaces the shallow pride of Adam-God (Adam pretending he is God) with Adam reconnecting with God.

So, let's go look at this "religion" which we are supposed to believe, and see if we can find the true god in all of this. And, having found Him, come to understand **what it means** to know Him, and then **actually come to know Him**, which knowledge is eternal life.

The Creation Gods in the Endowment

Before anybody "triggers" on the idea of the temple endowment, we need to clarify a few things. The endowment is nothing more than a symbolic teaching tool to teach you the realities of life. It has no power to save you, but if you learn the lessons of the endowment and apply them in life, the principles will bring you to Christ, who will, then, save you. One purpose of the endowment is to teach you the principles of making covenants and how obedience to those covenants results in greater light, knowledge, power (responsibility), which lead to making greater covenants. Covenants teach you the fellowship which exists among the gods, which you will need to understand and participate in, as you grow toward exaltation.

Joseph Smith spoke of there being a family of the gods.

Where was there ever a son without a father? And where was there ever a father without first being a son? (HC, Vol. 6, p. 473-479))

Joseph F. Smith recorded in his journal the teachings which President Brigham Young delivered to them in the School of the Prophets:

Elohim, Jehovah and Michael were father, Son and grandson. They made this Earth and Michael became Adam. (Brigham Young, as recorded in the Joseph F. Smith Journal, 17 June 1871 entry; Church Archives)

There is a "chain of command" among the gods, descending from "father" to "son". We see this throughout the temple endowment ceremony, where a council of the gods meets and plans the works of God which are to take place on the earth.

Brethren and Sisters, as you sit here, you will hear the voices of three persons who represent the **Elohim, Jehovah** and **Michael**. Elohim will command Jehovah and Michael to go down and organize a world. The work of the six creative periods will be represented. They will also tell of the organization of man upon the earth in their own likeness and image, male and female. However, this is simply figurative, so far as the man and the woman are concerned.

There is a lot that could be said about these so-called "creation Gods", but I just want to point out a few facts for the sake of understanding. Each one of these beings (or groups of beings) is in a covenant relationship with one another, seeing each other as their Father or their Son, respectively.

(Within the family of God, there are many types of covenants and many type of relationships. They aren't limited to just familial and marriage relationships. There are many that we have no knowledge of, and it is wrong to condemn something which God has not condemned, or something of which we have no knowledge. D&C 132:7 Enumerates a number of possible types of eternal relationships, which must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. But, the Lord, alone, is the Holy Spirit of Promise. He employs no servant there.)

The names Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael could be applied to each of them, but for simplicity in discussion, the framers of the endowment have applied these arbitrary names, which are not strictly given names, but the names of titles, roles, or offices:

Elohim – This is a plural word, a feminine singular noun with a masculine plural ending. It means gods, judges, or mighty ones. It could refer to one god, a council of Gods, or to a male-female exalted couple.

Jehovah – A title meaning “I was, I am, I shall be.” Or “the self-existent one.”

Michael – A title meaning “Who is like God”. Michael is the archangel, chief of all the angels.

Brigham Young referred to them as the Father (Elohim), Son (Jehovah), Grandson (Adam). Or alternatively as the son, father, and grand-father.

In his book *A Witness to the Heavenly Realm*, PR, the anonymous author of the Pure Revelation blog, describes his many visits to heaven and his visits to various gods in various heavens, in various levels of exaltation. He is unclear about his names and rankings of the various relationships between the gods. When people press him for more details, he advises them to “take it to the Lord”.

Well, I have taken it to the Lord, and I believe that PR provides all the necessary information, and it is up to the reader to arrange the clues. I believe that PR also believes that Adam is a god, but not the father god we worship or “with whom we have to do.” But I don’t think the church understands these nuances, and PR is trying to hang onto his membership, while still providing as much information as he can.

These are my inferences from my reading, descending from greatest to least. Read *Witness to the Heavenly Realm*, then verify this with the Lord.

- Elohim (Eternal Father)
- Great Jehovah
- Father (Adam-Michael)
- Jesus Christ

These are the clues I used from his writings:

- “Jesus created the world under the direction of Great Jehovah and Michael.”
- “Archangels serve under Great Jehovah and the Eternal Father, Adam-Michael being the greatest of the archangels.”
- “Thrones are categories of angels and consist of kings, queens, the Elohim.”
- “Archangels are the great and noble ones.”

Christ

Where does Jesus Christ fit in? I put him below Michael-Adam, Jesus is not included among the creation gods of the endowment, but he assisted in the creation, and when Christ refers to himself as being the creator, he’s probably speaking on behalf of all of the gods. I place Christ initially below the angels, but because of His condescension for the atonement, He then ascended above the angels and received a much more excellent glory.

“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest [look upon] him? You made him [them] a little lower than the angels; you crowned him [them] with glory and honor” Heb. 2:6,7

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? You have made him [them] a little lower than the angels [Elohim] and crowned him [them] with glory and honor." Ps. 8:4,5

Christ was made lower than the angels, but after completing the atonement, ascended above the angels [in estate] Incidentally, both verses include us ("man") as also being made lower than the angels, though not exalted as was the Son of Man.

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, **when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.** Heb 1:3,4

Joseph Smith informs us that "Adam presides over the spirits of all men." Not only does He preside over us, but it is Adam whom the Son of Man will stand before to be given his "glory and dominion." Now, we ask who it is that Christ will receive all things from. Jesus has said that:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me... (John 6:37)

And in another place he has said:

The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. (John 3:35)

Wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet. (D&C 58:22)

Joseph then, is describing this very event:

Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but [Adam] retains his standing as head of the human family. (HC 3:387)

This is why Christ (not Adam) is "the only God with whom we have to do."

Joseph further explains Adam's exalted relationship to us:

Our Savior speaks of children and says, "Their angels always stand before my Father." The Father called all spirits before him at the creation of man, and organized them. He (Adam) is the head, and was told to multiply. The keys were first given to him, and by him to others The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent. When they are revealed from heaven, it is by Adam's authority. (HC 3:387, 386)

Let's examine a familiar revelation in the D&C, and see it with new eyes:

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

Who hath appointed **Michael** your prince, and established his feet **[Adam]**, and set him upon high **[Michael]**, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the

Holy One [**Elohim**], who is without beginning of days or end of life. (D&C 78:15-16)

Who is the Son of Man?

For the **Father** judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the **Son**: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, **because he is the Son of man**. (John 5:22,27)

... **Man of Holiness** is his name, and the name of **His Only Begotten is the Son of Man**, even Jesus Christ. (Moses 6:57, 7:35).

Mos 6:57 Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, **and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man**, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.

Mos 7:35 Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Counsel is my name; and Endless and Eternal is my name, also.

The title “Man of Holiness” also applies to Adam.

Mos 4:28 And I, **the Lord God [Elohim]**, said unto mine **Only Begotten [Jehovah]**: Behold, **the man [Michael->Adam]** is become as one of us to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand and partake also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever,

This is the God with whom Moses spoke on the exceeding high mountain and called to him out of the burning bush. This God commanded Moses to worship **him**, not Adam-Michael.

Mos 1:17 And he also gave me commandments when he called unto me out of the burning bush, saying: **Call upon God in the name of mine Only Begotten, and worship me**.

Mos 1:31 And behold, the glory of the **Lord** was upon Moses, so that Moses stood in the presence of **God**, and talked with him face to face. And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.

Mos 1:32 And by the **word of my power**, have I created them, **which is mine Only Begotten Son**, who is full of grace and truth. [**Elohim, Jehovah, Michael**]

Mos 1:33 And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by **the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten**.

Mos 1:34 **And the first man of all men have I called Adam**, which is many.

Joseph F. Smith’s vision of the Redemption of the Dead

Adam and Eve couldn’t have been exalted at the time Christ was born because, Joseph F. Smith saw Adam and Eve in the spirit world, waiting for their redemption. This account is now accepted as scripture by the church and appears in the D&C as Section 138.

36. Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of spirits, **instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the prophets who had testified of him in the flesh.**

37. That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their rebellion and transgression, that they through the ministrations of his servants might also hear his words.

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

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

40. Abel, the first martyr, was there, **and his brother Seth, one of the mighty ones, who was in the express image of his father, Adam.**

[Heber C. Kimball: You will never leave this earth until you become qualified](#)

This passage contradicts the teachings of Brigham Young.

When we escape from this earth, we suppose we are going to heaven? Do you suppose you are going to the earth that **Adam** came from, that **Eloheim** came from, where **Jehovah** the Lord came from? No. When you have learned to become obedient to the Father that dwells upon this earth, to the Father and God of this earth, and obedient to the messengers He sends -- when you have done all that, remember you are not going to leave this earth. You will never leave it until you become qualified, and capable, and capacitated to become a father of an earth yourselves. (JD 1:356)

If this is true for us, why would it not also be true for the fallen Adam and Eve? Who does Heber consider to be "the Father and God of this earth"?

[Were we already gods before this mortal life?](#)

This is from my personal journal, **8 April 2022 05:32:19.**

I have been working on a commentary and analysis to Adam-God. I have gathered all the information and quotations I need and am trying to arrange them in some kind of logical order, and at the same time, thinking about what commentary I might add.

This morning, my head is full of ideas. I am trying to get them all down. Let's think out loud together. Think about the word "redeem". It means to bring something or someone back into the state which they were in originally. Now, think about the teachings of the Gospel about how we will be in our future state when we are fully redeemed. This is difficult because the purpose of the Gospel is to enable us to become as God is, and we don't fully comprehend exactly what God is, but we know that if and when we see Him, we will be like Him. And perhaps, even then, we likely won't fully understand who and what we are, and we will spend the rest of eternity trying to understand ourselves more perfectly.

Now, we have to back off a bit and think out of the little box of organized religion. I suppose this still threatens people. They think God is going to punish them for even imagining something beyond their narrow orthodoxy. I'm not bound by that any more, but there are some times that when I try to think of something, I run into somewhat of a barrier, and I sense a little fear that I should not proceed any further. It's like climbing a tree and exploring every branch, but before you go out on that branch, you

test it to see if it will hold your weight. So, in a case like that, you back off. Maybe, you'll explore that branch another time.

This morning, I don't feel any such fear. I want to explore. I have explored, and I want to capture that on a written page.

I have two thoughts before continuing.

(1) We are free to do this. God is not going to punish you for speculating in your own mind. You might even come up with something He wants you to discover. So, have faith in God and have faith in yourself that you can go out exploring, have an adventure in your mind, and return home safely. Perhaps, you will also return home with new knowledge that will change you. If you are dedicated to God and the pursuit of truth, you need have no fear. If you are, instead, dedicated to a fixed belief, this will seem threatening to you.

(2) While you are doing this, don't get distracted by materialism or things of the flesh. Stay off Facebook. Don't get entangled in petty arguments. Don't get distracted by things that stimulate your physical lust. Forget the nonsense that they are inherently evil and God hates them. The fact is that all they do is take your focus away from God, higher thought, and higher spirituality. God is still there, waiting for you to return your attention to Him. He hasn't taken His attention off you, just because you have taken your attention off of Him.

He's not petty. The Lord is not sitting there waiting for you to mess up so He can punish you. Separation from Him is punishment in its own right – punishment you inflict on you own self., If this is your image of God, then consider the possibility that you have God and the adversary confused.

What I am suggesting is that you strike a balance between (1) freedom of thought and (2) discipline of thought. You can do it.

There are still physical needs that we have to meet. They also take your attention off the Lord, but they are necessary for your mortal life to continue. You have to eat, sleep, and go to the bathroom. These are necessary distractions. They are part of life and we have to live with them.

Back to the word "redeemed". We have asked ourself what kind of being is God? We should also ask ourself what kind of being were we before we were born? Think beyond the usual church narrative. Set that aside for a minute.

Brigham Young taught a doctrine that Adam and Eve were gods before they came to earth. Brigham Young taught a very narrow definition of what God is and was, and you had better believe exactly what he taught, or you would be out of the church. He also taught that he was revealing only part of what he knew. He revealed just enough to confuse and frustrate a lot of people. Did he actually know more? I don't think so, and I think he was even stretching what he thought he knew. Perhaps, he said too much. Perhaps what he said wasn't completely 100% true. In any event, his teachings were misunderstood and an embarrassment to the church, which quietly and gradually backed away from them over several decades.

When a man who really knows more than he says, speaks to you and tells you what the Lord allows him to say, his words have a certain echo to them that hints that he knows more than he is saying.

He also has more of a tolerance for those seeking to understand more, because he understands more.

He knows that the truth we are able to understand in this veiled mortality is tentative, and there is always more truth to be learned, which could expand, modify, qualify, or possibly even contradict truth which he now knows.

He also knows that we must reconcile our lives to the truths which we currently know before we can receive new truths.

He also knows that each person progresses individually, and that each person possesses differing amounts of truth, and that it is unproductive to one person to believe the same amount of truth as another. So, what does he do in that case? Persuade and demonstrate that there is more truth to be had, and invite and encourage all people to seek more truth than they currently have.

If he really knows, he also knows and understands the growth process to acquire new truth, because he has gone through and is going through the same process himself.

If he really knows much of anything, he also knows that there will be others who know more than he, and that church or Priesthood callings do not, in themselves, automatically make him or anyone else privy to greater truth or insight.

If you are interested in knowing more truth, you should associate with people who know more than you do, and/or who encourage you to acquire more truth than you currently have.

God is the ultimate source of all truth.

But I am learned, and know more than all the world put together. The Holy Ghost does, anyhow; and he is within me, and comprehends more than all the world; and I will associate myself with him.
- Joseph Smith (King Follett)

Now, back to Brigham Young's statement that Adam and Eve were gods before they came to this earth. He also said (and this is taught in the temple) that Adam and Eve are prototypes for all of us, in our fallen condition, seeking our way back to God for redemption. If Adam and Eve were gods previously, and condescended to come back into mortality, then, why not also, the rest of us? Or some of us? Consider these statements from Joseph Smith in "King Follett":

- ✓ If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves.
- ✓ The mind or the intelligence which man possesses is coequal with God himself.
- ✓ The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end.

Can you at least see the possibility that we could have been more than mere spiritual babies or children prior to this life? And, yet, according to Brigham Young's theory of the redemption of Adam and Eve, since they were gods, had no need of a savior or redemption, but retain all of their power of godhood within themselves. And, is this true for Adam and Eve, then why would we have need of a savior or

redemption? Do you see how the Adam-God theory, as taught by Brigham Young, undermines the plan offered by the Savior.

And, yet the LDS temple endowment, handed down from the time of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and while modified over the years still teaches vital truths about who we are and our need for a Savior. (I am not revealing any portion of the endowment which we have covenanted not to reveal.) This is the conversation between "Elohim", "Jehovah", and "Michael", the three "creation gods" after the earth was created.

ELOHIM: Jehovah, Michael, is man found upon the earth?

JEHOVAH : Man is not found on the earth, Elohim.

ELOHIM: Jehovah, Michael, let us go down and **form man in our own likeness and in our own image, male and female, and put into them their spirits**, and let us give them dominion over all things on the face of the earth. We will plant for them a garden, eastward in Eden, and place them in it to tend and cultivate it, that they may be happy, and have joy therein. **We will command them to multiply and replenish the earth, that they may have joy in their posterity.** We will place before them the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and **we will allow Lucifer, our common enemy, whom we have thrust out to tempt them, and to try them**, that they may know by their own experience the good from the evil.

If they yield to temptation we will give unto them The Law of Sacrifice, and we will provide a savior for them, as we counseled in the beginning, that they may be brought forth by the power of the redemption and the resurrection, and come again into our presence, and with us partake of Eternal Life and exaltation. We will call this the sixth day, and we will rest from our labors for a season. Come, let us go down.

Ultimately, Michael is placed in the garden as Adam (meaning "man"), and from his side is taken Eve (meaning "life or living"). **The remainder of the endowment is a portrayal of the transgression and fall of Adam and Eve, their need for a savior, and the laws and covenants which they must obey in order to be redeemed. They then proceed through the ceremony. The men and women in attendance are told to follow Adam and Eve, as they consider themselves, respectively as "Adam" and "Eve" and vicariously participate along with them.** This ceremony is designed to teach the universal need for a Redeemer, regardless of our station or glory before this life. We may or may not have possessed godlike powers. We may have participated in the creation of this earth, but in our current state of mortality, we are like Adam:

Brethren and sisters, this is Michael, who helped form the earth. When he awakens from the sleep which Elohim and Jehovah have caused to come upon him, he will be known as Adam, and having forgotten all, will have become a little child.

At this point, Adam is not a god, but is kneeling at the altar, together with his wife, before God, pleading with his God to hear his words. Since we are to follow Adam and Eve, we are to kneel before the same God that Adam worshipped, and seek the same redemption that Adam sought.

Now, let's return to the idea of who and what we were in the beginning and who and what we will become. Follow this line of thought. It helps to think of God as not one single being, but one family of

beings who are One in Heart, Mind, and Purpose. Think about what we are told about Zion: pure in heart, one heart, one mind, no poor among them, perfect equality. Think about the Lord's Prayer where we pray that the Lord's will may be done on earth as it is [in the same manner in which it is carried out] in heaven. Then, think about Zion being a step along the path to fully realizing this goal, after the earth is celestialized, and the will of God will truly be done on earth as it is in heaven. The goal of God: bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of men, will be realized, on a celestialized planet where everyone sees as they are seen, knows as they are known, is equal in power, dominion, and might, is One with God, and is God. This is eternal life. More than just knowing about God. Eternal life is knowing God by experiencing God, and ultimately being God.

Now, think about this passage in a new way:

For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy. (D&C 93:33-34)

We think about this as an inseparable connection between spirit and element, within one individual, but what if it **also** refers to an inseparable connection **between** individuals? "If ye are not One, ye are not Mine?" If we are separated from God, can we ever experience a fulness of joy?

When that connection is reestablished, the god that is in us is connected to the rest of God. We are then part of God in this world. We can do the works of God in this world. And if Adam or anybody else wants to be God in this world, this is how to do it.

Whosoever believeth [has faith] that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and **this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.** Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because **as he is, so are we in this world.** (1 Jn 5:1,4, 4:17)

Now, consider for a minute the idea that in order to grow, or to maintain this state of godliness, it is necessary to again reenter and reexperience mortality: as members of God, or the Order of God, as Alma put it, condescending to go experience mortality, to help less-evolved intelligences to profit and grow from their mortal experience to a greater extent than they otherwise would. (Alma 13:6, Moroni 7:31-32) Adam and Eve condescended to fall and make it possible for all of the rest of us to fall, and receive mortal tabernacles. But they didn't fall low enough to lift us back up. Jesus had to be a sinless man, yet voluntarily fall even lower than Adam and Eve, and be able to endure it, in order to gain the leverage to lift us all up. But, as Hebrews says, and as the hymn goes: "When he had purged our sins, he took his seat on high." Adam and Eve, the designated rulers or the true "gods" of this world, again, on behalf of all of us, subordinated and subjected themselves to Christ, so that the Lord could complete the task of leading us back to the God we worship.

[This is how I would modify what Brigham Young taught:](#)

- Since Adam-Michael was one of the "creation Gods", his spirit was of the celestial glory
- He was told to "multiply and replenish the earth" before he was placed in the garden, and before Eve was taken from his side
- When his body was created out of the elements (the dust of **this** earth), his body was quickened by the celestial glory of his spirit.

- Adam was celestial before he was divided, but when he was divided, he condescended to terrestrial glory, he and Eve together.
- It is said that God “married” Adam and Eve, when Adam was divided. (By the way, if you consider all of creation from the beginning to this point, everything was organized (not created) through the process of division.
- But here is a question to consider. Jesus taught that in heaven there is no marrying (male), or giving in marriage (female). The garden was terrestrial in glory, which is a glory of heaven on earth, therefore, how could this division be considered a “marriage”? How can you marry a couple which is already one flesh, but then divided asunder? Whoever said “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be **[to be, to become, to remain]** one flesh.” is simply acknowledging an established fact.
- Eve was Adam’s only wife. No polygamy. There was no polygamy, and there was no need to engage in polygamy in order to “replenish the earth”. Polygamy was only introduced among Cain’s descendants.
- Adam and Eve died a natural death at an unnaturally (for us) old age, went to the spirit world to continue their probation, but may have condescended to return to mortality before the coming of Christ in order to perform other missions.
- Mary conceived by Adam's Heavenly Father, a glorified and resurrected being, whom we also worship as our Heavenly Father, not Adam, a fallen man waiting in the spirit world to be resurrected.
- The god worshipped by Adam and Eve, “the only God with whom we have to do”, is Adam’s Heavenly Father, not Adam.
- Adam subordinated himself to Christ. The first shall be last and the last shall be first,
- Adam is a Man of Holiness, as was his father and grandfather. Christ is the Son of Man.
- Adam is Michael in mortality. The same person, but on different levels.
- Adam is a god, but he is not God, and not our Heavenly Father
- The church has:
 - Denied polygamy during mortality, but still upholds polygamy in heaven.
 - Publicly denounced belief in Adam-God, but church beliefs and practices still tacitly affirm it.
 - Followed Brigham Young’s lead by denying the power of Christ and the atonement, while placing faith in dead works, while paying lip-service to Christ by mentioning His name more frequently, so as to placate people who complain about it.
 - “Strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken [the Lord’s] everlasting covenant” (D&C 1:15, by substituting the “New and Everlasting Covenant” of plural marriage for the “Everlasting Covenant” of faith, repentance, and baptism.

Brigham Young's doctrine places all the emphasis on Priesthood authority and ordinances and does not take into account the work and mission of Christ. All my young life in the church, there was no emphasis on Christ, and I thought it was weird that the Protestants put so much emphasis on Christ. Until I adjusted my spirituality to focus on Christ as the way to the Father, my spiritual life did not grow or develop.

Conclusion

Some cannot accept that Adam is our Heavenly Father because Jesus would have been Adam's Savior. They say it would run contrary to the entire plan of salvation. But remember, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Adam and Eve are prototypes for us.

Many people assume that Adam's need for a Savior is demeaning. Could a son save a father and redeem Him? This author will ask only one question: what better example could be set for us than for our Father to descend below His exaltation and fall, thus showing us the way?

We do not know whether our Father had need of a Savior after he left this estate. But even if He did, it would not take away from the truthfulness and splendor of the doctrine of Adam-God.
Craig L Tholson

I agree with the first two paragraphs, but not the third. Tholson seems to just like the theory/doctrine for its own sake – probably for the same reason that he likes polygamy.

Jesus set the ultimate example for us all to follow, not because **he** needed to be baptized, but because **we** needed to be baptized. Then why shouldn't our Father and Mother come here as the "first man" and "first woman" to set the ultimate example for us to follow? This brings consistency to the entire plan of salvation. Truly,

... the first shall be last, and that the last shall be first in all things whatsoever I have created.
(D&C 29:30)

He that is ordained of God and sent forth, the same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least and the servant of all. (D&C 50:26)

Adam condescended many times so he could help all of mankind ascend with him. Without incurring risk, there is no reward. When you descend, you lose the divine connection, submit to Satan's power, and must reestablish that connection with God, while in mortality, before you can assist others to gain their own connection with God. What if you fail? What if you don't reestablish that connection? There is no guarantee that anybody, no matter how advanced, is automatically going to make it. For all of these reasons, Adam and Eve needed redemption the same as everybody else, and had to abide by the same eternal laws: faith, repentance, baptism, both comforters. It was easier for them, but it was still done by their free choice.

The Book of Mormon makes constant reference to "the work of the Father". This work is the gathering of Israel and the Gentiles in the last days. Before Adam and Eve were first placed on the earth, the Lord observed: "This is not a man to till the soil." (Abr. 5:5) The Hebrew translation of this is: "There is not a man to serve the land." Adam and Eve were sent here to serve the planet, and to serve and gather their posterity. One could imagine good and faithful parents, concerned over the eternal welfare of their children, and guiding them along to the path to eternal life.

"This is why Adam blessed his posterity; he wanted to bring them into the Presence of God. They looked for a city etc., whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10). Moses sought to bring the children of Israel into the presence of God, through the power of the Priesthood, but he could not. In the first ages of the world they tried to establish the same thing; and there were Eliases raised up who tried to restore these very glories but did not obtain them, but they prophesied of a day when this glory would be revealed. Paul spoke of the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God would gather together all things in one, etc.; and those men to whom these keys have been given, will have to be there; and they without us cannot be made perfect.

“These men are in heaven, but their children are on the, earth. Their bowels yearn over us. God sends down men for this reason. And the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that give offense and them that do iniquity. (Matthew 13:41). **All these authoritative characters will come down and join hand in hand in bringing about this work.**” (From TPJS p. 159, JS Address to the Twelve July 2,1839)

The Lord is giving me many opportunities to learn new mysteries, and they apply to my salvation and to the salvation of the world.

A mystery is just the answer to a question that you haven't asked the Lord yet. Fear to learn mysteries is a sign of apostasy.

What do you suppose Adam would say if he could look down from the heavens, or condescended to return to the earth to assist in the winding-up scene before the return of the Lord and saw this glorification of him?

I will not allow you to make an anti-Christ (substitute for Christ) out of me. I subordinate myself to the power and authority of the Son of Man. I fell, and I remain in that fallen state until I am redeemed. In the meantime, I remain on this earth to serve Christ and aid in the redemption of my children, and I will remain here and serve until Christ returns in glory.

Adam is a god, but we don't worship the man. We worship the god-like potential of each man, and the aggregate family/community of men and women who have ascended to godhood. Adam still has not yet ascended to this fullness of that potential. We worship Christ because he approaches that potential, and salvation consists in becoming exactly as He is. In other words, we worship Christ, because Adam worships Christ.

Appendix

What Brigham Young actually taught about Adam-God

My next sermon will be to both Saint and sinner. One thing has remained a mystery in this kingdom up to this day. It is in regard to the character of the well-beloved Son of God, upon which subject the Elders of Israel have conflicting views.

Our God and Father in Heaven, is a being of tabernacle, or, in other words, He has a body, with parts the same as you and I have; and is capable of showing forth His works to organized beings, as, for instance, in the world in which we live, it is the result of the knowledge and infinite wisdom that dwell in His organized body. His son Jesus Christ has become a personage of tabernacle, and has a body like his father. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Lord, and issues forth from Himself, and may properly be called God's minister to execute His will in immensity; being called to govern by His influence and power; but He is not a person of tabernacle as we are, and as our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ are. **[This conflicts with Joseph's teachings in the Lectures on Faith, but appears to agree with the King Follett address, where Joseph said that if the Father could make himself visible and appear before you, he would appear as a man. Yes, but what is He like when he is NOT visible and not appearing before us?]**

The question has been, and is often, asked, who it was that begat the Son of the Virgin Mary. The infidel world have [sic] concluded that if what the Apostles wrote about his father and mother be true, and the present marriage discipline acknowledged by Christendom be correct, then Christians must believe that God is the father of an illegitimate son, in the person of Jesus Christ! The infidel fraternity teach that to their disciples. I will tell you how it is. Our Father in Heaven begat all the spirits that ever were, or ever will be, upon this earth; and they were born spirits in the eternal world. Then the Lord by His power and wisdom organized the mortal tabernacle of man. We were made first spiritual, and afterwards temporal.

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. [This is one of the oft-quoted controversial statements of Brigham Young that led to the rejection of his doctrine.] Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or nonprofessing, 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? [Orson Pratt explains (earlier in this document) why Jesus was not begotten by the Holy Ghost, but had to be overshadowed and transfigured by the Holy Ghost in order to endure the presence of God.] 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 overrighteous of mankind. [This is another oft-quoted Brigham Young quote. He expounds just enough to cause chaos and confusion, but not enough to fully explain the "doctrine". He should have explained more, or not explained anything at all. Actually, I don't think he ever received any further light on the subject.] 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.

It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organizing element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. **[This comes directly out of the temple endowment, but needs some explanation, and was explained in detail earlier in this document. Brigham Young is not saying that these three "characters" are the Father, Son, and the**

Holy Ghost as we know them, but these are titles, offices, or roles. He doesn't explain this nuance, but others understood it at the time, and it is the key to understanding the works of God in general, and the endowment in particular.]

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. **[This is true if you consider that the god that Adam worshipped also walked and talked with him and Eve in the garden.]** 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.

I have given you a few leading items upon this subject, but a great deal more remains to be told. Now, remember from this time forth, and for ever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon this subject, when I replied, to this idea -- "if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be very dangerous to baptize and confirm females, and give the Holy Ghost to them, lest he should beget children, to be palmed upon the Elders by the people, bringing the Elders into great difficulties.

Treasure up these things in your hearts. In the Bible, you have read the things I have told you tonight; but you have not known what you did read. I have told you no more than you are conversant with; but what do the people in Christendom, with the Bible in their hands, know about this subject? Comparatively nothing. (JD 1:50-51)

[This discourse was presented in the Priesthood Session of General Conference in April of 1852, the same year that the church publicly announced polygamy. Later church sources tried to walk this back, claiming that Brigham was misquoted, but the Tholson book goes to great lengths showing the accuracy in transcribing this and all conference talks, and also provides other contemporary accounts to prove that Brigham Young actually said this, and provides quotes from other general authorities reinforcing this doctrine, right up until about 1890, when they started gradually backing down. Brigham Young had plenty of time to correct and clarify the doctrine, but he only drilled down on it. The church has nearly 50 years of history, which they now have to skillfully deny.]

The bodies of Adam and Eve were pure and after the Celestial order until they partook of the forbidden fruit when their bodies were changed with the things of this world. (Brigham Young, Minutes of Meetings Held in Provo City, Sunday a.m. 8/25/1867)

[W]hen this work was made - our God who is Adam ... He by eating the mortal fruits of the Earth, it caused & produced mortal children or commenced the increase of men on the Earth which is the bodies for the Spirits to live in. (Brigham Young, John Pulsipher Papers, 37, Sunday 10/8/1854)

Adam and Eve were made of the dust of the Earth from which they came, they brought their bodies with them. They had lived, died and been resurrected before they came here and they came with immortal bodies, and had to partake of the fruits of this Earth in order to bring forth mortal bodies, or natural bodies, that their seed might be of the dust of this Earth as they were of the dust of the earth from which they came. (Brigham Young, Journal of Samuel W. Richards 2:215, 3/25/1855)

When father Adam and mother Eve became mortal by eating of the fruits of this earth, they were then prepared to organize the mortal tabernacle and they were prepared to organize and form living spirits long before that. Now they are prepared to form mortal bodies for their spiritual children to dwell in. His former words and experiences Adam had forgotten a great deal of, but he once knew it all beforehand. (Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young, 8/25/1867)

What, is it possible that the Father of Heights, the Father of our spirits, could reduce himself and come forth like a man? Yes, he was once a man like you and I are and was once on an earth like this, passed through the ordeal you and I pass through. He had his father and his mother and he has been exalted through his faithfulness, and he is become Lord of all. He is the God pertaining to this earth. He is our Father. He begot our spirits in the spirit world. They have come forth and our earthly parents have organized tabernacles for our spirits and here we are today. That is the way we came. (Brigham Young, The Essential Brigham Young, 138, 7/14/1861) **[I have already pointed out what a great oversimplification this is. But Brigham Young oversimplified the plan of salvation in order to promote and justify polygamy.]**

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. They yet grovel in darkness - and will. It is one of the most glorious revelations [concerning] the economy of heaven, yet the world hold it [in] derision. (Brigham Young Papers, 10/8/1861)

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 - I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it. (Brigham Young, Deseret News, 22:308, 6/18/1873)

Who was it that spoke from the heavens and said? This is my beloved son hear ye him? Was it God the Father? It was. ... Who did beget [Jesus]? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he? He is Father Adam; Michael; the Ancient of Days. (Brigham Young, Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young, 2/19/1854)

Jesus Christ is the actual spirit and mortal son of Michael Adam God; that Michael Adam is the supreme god and father of the spirits of our mortal world. (Brigham Young, Millennial Star 17:195-96, 3/31/1855)

Michael came down with his wife, & began to people it. Michael had his body from the dust of the planet he was begotten on, he obeyed his Lord, was faithful and obedient, died and was resurrected, he did not resurrect himself [from that earth where he lived]. ... Adam's descent was to organize people & redeem a world, by his wife he peopled it by his first born he redeems (Brigham Young, Journal of the Southern Indian Mission, 87- 89, Friday 10/6/1854)

Brigham Young's Lecture at the Veil

In January 1877, shortly after the lower portion of the St. George Temple was dedicated, President Brigham Young in following up in the Endowments, became convinced that it was necessary to have the formula of the Endowments written, and he gave direction to have the same put in writing.

Shortly afterwards he explained what the Lecture at the Veil should portray, and for this purpose appointed a day when he would personally deliver the Lecture at the Veil. Elders J. D. D. T. McAllister and L. John Nuttall prepared writing material, and as the President spoke they took down his words. Elder Nuttall put the same into form and the writing was submitted to President Young on the same evening at his office in residence at St. George. He there made such changes as he deemed proper, and when he finally passed upon it said: This is the Lecture at the Veil to be observed in the Temple.

A copy of the lecture is kept at the St. George Temple, in which President Young refers to Adam in his creation and etc. (L. John Nuttall Papers, Letter Press Book No. 4, p. 290).

Wilford Woodruff assisted as well:

with Bro W. Woodruff engaged in writing the lecture for the Endowments to be read to Prest Young. spent the eving [sic] at Prest Young's house (Journal of L. John Nuttall, 2/10/1877)

Let's quote portions of this carefully prepared lecture that was taught towards the end of the temple endowment:

We have heard a great deal about Adam and Eve. how they were formed &c some think he was made like an adobe and the Lord breathed into him the breath of life. for we read "from dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" Well he was made of the dust of the earth but not of this earth. he was made just the same way you and I are made but on another earth. Adam was an immortal being when he came. On this earth he had lived on an earth similar to ours he had received the Priesthood and the Keys thereof. and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection and his exaltation and was crowned with glory immortality and eternal lives and was numbered with the Gods for such he became through his faithfulness. and had begotten all the spirit that was to come to this earth. and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world.

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

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

... Father Adam's oldest son (Jesus the Savior) who is the heir of the family is Father Adams first begotten in the spirit World. who according to the flesh is the only begotten as it is written. (In his divinity he having gone back into the spirit World. and come in the spirit [glory] to Mary and she conceived for when Adam and Eve got through with their Work in this earth. they did not lay their bodies down in the dust, but returned to the spirit World from whence they came. (The Lecture at the Veil, Journal of L. John Nuttall, Tuesday 2/7/1877)

When father Adam and mother Eve became mortal by eating of the fruits of this earth, they were then prepared to organize the mortal tabernacle and they were prepared to organize and form living spirits long before that. Now they are prepared to form mortal bodies for their spiritual children to dwell in. His former words and experiences Adam had forgotten a great deal of, but he once knew it all beforehand. (Brigham Young, Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young, 8/25/1867)

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. (Brigham Young, JD 6:274-75, 8/28/1852)

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 the Earth, and then they could beget bodies for their spiritual children. If the spirit does not enter into the embryo man that is forming in the womb of the woman, the result will be false conception; a living, intelligent being cannot be produced. Adam and Eve beget the first mortal bodies on this Earth, and from that commencement every spirit that was begotten in eternity for this Earth will enter bodies thus prepared for them here, until the winding up scene, and that will not be until the last of these spirits enters an earthly tabernacle. (Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young, Sunday 10/8/1854)

Brigham Young qualifies his statements

There is a point that Brigham Young eventually made, which if he made this point in the beginning, there would have been less of a controversy about his teachings. In these two statements, made 5 years later, he backs down from insisting that Adam is our Heavenly Father, but it could have been one of the other "creation gods". However, nobody else picked up on these statements, but continued to support or denounce "Adam-God".

Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. **I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species - of one family - and Jesus Christ is also of our species.** (Brigham Young, JD 4:217-19, 2/8/1857)

Thus you may continue and trace the human family back to Adam and Eve, and ask, "are we of the same species with Adam and Eve?" Yes, every person acknowledges this; this comes within the scope of our understanding. But when we arrive at that point, a veil is dropt, and our knowledge is cut off. Were it not so, **you could trace back your history to the Father of our spirits in the eternal world. He is a being of the same species as ourselves; He lives as we do, except the difference that we are earthly, and He is heavenly.** He has been earthly, and is of precisely the same species of being that we are. **Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species of one family -- and Jesus Christ is also of our species.** (JD 4:215-219)

When the time came that His first-born, the Savior, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the Father came Himself and favored that spirit with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it. The Savior was begotten by the Father of His spirit, by the same being who is the Father of our spirits and that is all the organic difference between Jesus Christ and you and me. **And a difference there is between our Father and us consists in that He has gained His exaltation**, and has obtained eternal lives. The principle of eternal lives is an eternal existence, eternal duration, eternal exaltation. Endless are His kingdoms, endless His thrones and His dominions, and endless are His posterity; they never will cease to multiply from this time henceforth and forever. (JD 4:215-219)

Wilford Woodruff

"Now this is the tiniest of portion of quotes. There are hundreds more. And Brigham wasn't the only one to teach this. Other Church Presidents, other Apostles, a few of Joseph's plural wives, and many others. As I said: believe what you want. But don't lie about what Brigham taught and really meant. It's crystal clear what he taught. Orson knew it and rejected it. Say you side with Orson, that Brigham taught false doctrine. But don't lie and say Brigham taught something different than what he clearly taught." Craig L. Tholson

President Young said that He came from another world & made this. Brought Eve with him, partook of the fruits of the earth, begat children & they were earthly & had mortal bodies & if we were faithful, we should become Gods as He was. (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 9/17/1854)

Now comes the morning of the new week in which mortality must begin, and your spiritual children must be introduced into mortality. Two must go before them and prepare the way for them. Whom will you send? Would you not say to [your] wife, "Come, Mother, let you and I lay aside our Celestial glory for a little season and eat of the elements of this new earth. that we may again become of the earth earthy, and thereby our offspring will be mortal, and thus we will begin the begetting of mortal bodies for these, our spiritual children; and when they have grown to maturity in their mortal estate, we will command them to multiply and replenish the earth. We have passed through earth life, death and the resurrection. We have power to lay aside this Celestial Glory and we have power to take it up again."

To which she, a faithful Mother, will reply: "Yes, we will partake of the elements of this new earth. We will make this sacrifice for our spiritual children that they also may continue on in the law of everlasting progression and become like unto us, for as the Gods are, some may become." (Brigham Young, Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 1/27/1860)

He [Brigham Young] said that our God was Father Adam. He was the Father of the Savior Jesus Christ - Our God was no more or less than Adam, Michael the Archangel. (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 2/19/1854)

Joseph Lee Robinson

Joseph Lee Robinson is also a witness to what Brigham taught and what Orson rejected:

Attended conference, a very interesting conference, for at this meeting President Brigham Young said thus: That Adam and Eve were the names of the first man and woman of every earth that was ever

organized and that Adam and Eve were the natural Father and Mother of every spirit that comes to this planet, or that receives tabernacles on this planet, consequently we are brothers and sisters, and that Adam was God, our Eternal Father. This as Brother Heber remarked, was letting the cat out of the bag, and it came to pass, I believed every word, for I remembered saying to the Brethren at a meeting of High Priests in Nauvoo, while I was speaking to them under the influence of the spirit, I remarked thus, that our Father Adam had many wives, and that Eve was only one of them, and that she was our mother, and that she was the mother of the inhabitants of this earth, and I believe that also, but behold yea there were some that did not believe these sayings of the Prophet Brigham, even our beloved Brother Orson Pratt told me he did not believe it. He said he could prove by the scriptures it was not correct. I felt very sorry to hear Professor Orson Pratt say that. I feared lest he should apostatize, but I prayed for him that he might endure to the end, for I knew verily that it was possible that great men might fall. (Joseph Lee Robinson Diary, Oct. 8, 1854)

Heber Bennion

It seems strange that people will believe that "as man now is, God once was, and that as God now is, man may be"; that "God is an exalted man" and still repudiate the doctrine of Adam-God. These incredulous people believe that Elohim, Jehovah and Michael (Adam) the "Father of all living," created the world and yet cannot believe that He is the God of this world. It seems presumptuous indeed for them to ever aspire to be the God of anything, if Adam cannot be the God of the world he created and peopled. **If a man is not to become the God of his own posterity what will he be the God of?** Evidently, if God the Father of Jesus Christ was once a man like ourselves, he had a father as we have, a God to pray to, and that God in turn, was once a man also, and so on ad infinitum, without beginning or end. As Brigham Young says, "there never was a time when men were not passing through this ordeal and preparation to become Gods." Joseph Smith says, "Wherever was there a father without first being a son?" Jehovah means son, and is used interchangeably as the Son and a son. In the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple the Prophet Joseph repeatedly applies the name of Jehovah to the Father whom he is addressing, as anyone may see by careful perusal of the prayer as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 109. **Elohim may signify the Father or Grandfather, or GreatGrandfather -- God or the Council of the Gods, and Jehovah may be applied to any of them in the capacity or relationship of a son, as they all are, for "where was there ever a father without first being a son?"** (Joseph Smith in Church History, Vol. 6, p. 476.) Adam is in line with his progenitors, the Gods, and by the genealogical record cannot be deposed from his position as the God of this world under the council and direction of the Gods above him, "intelligences one above another without end." (D.& C. 78.) The whole superstructure for a plurality of the Gods is based upon this doctrine of Adam-God, and must stand or fall together. (Heber Bennion, Supplement to Gospel Problems, pp. 8,9)

Justifying Polygamy and Adam-God using D&C 124, and apostles receiving keys from Joseph Smith

Page 166 of Tholson's book contains quotes of church leaders quoting D&C 124:39-40 saying that the Lord will reveal new knowledge and ordinances, and these are the new knowledge or ordinances. They forget that these blessings were conditioned upon the saints building a house unto the Lord's name, and in 1841, there was no place on earth where they could be revealed. However, Joseph Smith allegedly revealed temple ordinances in the red brick store, thus going against this revelation. The Nauvoo Temple was never completed or fully dedicated, and there were never any recorded instances of divine manifestations in the temple.

Page 166 of Tholson's book also quotes Brigham Young's apostles saying that Joseph Smith gave them keys. Besides the sketchy documentation of this alleged event, this very idea contradicts Section 124, where the Lord told Joseph Smith to teach Hyrum how to ask and receive keys for himself, from Christ himself, the same as Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery did, and as Oliver Cowdery taught the original twelve.

Joseph Smith III opposed Adam-God

By what authority did Brigham Young teach the Saints that Adam is our Father and our God, etc.? Let the Saints then judge Brigham Young's strange doctrines and practices. Ponder it well. Are not those who teach and those who endorse Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine guilty of damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them?... Joseph Smith III (Advocate, The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, July 1, 1881)

Joseph Smith III hit the nail on the head. This doctrine denies Christ and his atonement.

Orson Pratt opposed Adam-God

On page 199 of Tholson's book, Orson Pratt perfectly sums up the problems with Adam-God, and gives the church's response to him.

The next day, April 5, 1860, during a meeting of the Council of Twelve, Orson Pratt once again voiced his opposition to the Prophet:

In regard to Adam being our Father and God... I frankly say, I have no confidence in it, although advanced by Brother Kimball in the stand, and afterwards approved by Brigham... I have heard Brigham say that Adam is the Father of our spirits and he came here with a resurrected body, to fall for his own children, and I said to him it leads to an **endless number of falls** which leads to sorrow and death; **that is revolting to my feelings**, even if it were sustained by revelation. **[Orson Pratt didn't understand the principle of condescension. He was wrong on this point. He is mistaking feelings for revelation from the Spirit.]**

One [revelation] says that Adam was formed out of the earth, and the Lord put in his spirit, and another that he came with his body, flesh and bones, **there are two contradictory revelations**. In the garden it is said that a voice said to Adam, in the meridian of time, I will send my only begotten son Jesus Christ, **then how can that man and Adam both be the Father of Jesus Christ?... It was the Father of Jesus Christ that was talking to Adam in the garden**. Young says that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ both of his spirit and body in his teaching from the stand. (Orson Pratt, April 5, 1860, Miscellaneous Papers, Brigham Young Collection, Church Archives)

Orson Pratt was right on this point. These are two sets of contradictory revelations. And contradictions are all over the place, as I have previously pointed out.

In 1865 we find that Orson Pratt had not conformed to the counsel of the Prophet, for he was again on the receiving end of the President's criticism:

We have persons in this Church who have preached and published doctrines on the subject of Deity which are not true. Elder Orson Pratt has written extensively on the doctrines of this Church, and upon this particular doctrine. When he writes and speaks upon subjects with which he is acquainted and understands, he is a very sound reasoner; but when he has written upon matters of which he knows nothing -- his own philosophy, which I call vain philosophy -- he is wild, uncertain and contradictory. In all my public ministrations as a minister of truth, I have never yet been under the necessity of preaching, believing or practicing doctrines that are not fully and clearly set forth in the Old and New Testaments, Book of Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon. **[Speaking of contradictory, if this is Brigham Young speaking, he has also said that this Adam-God doctrine that he promoted was NOT to be found in the scriptures.]** (Deseret News, August 23, 1865, p. 370)

Some of his [Orson Pratt's] doctrines as contained in the Seer were being discussed. Brother Pratt also thought that Adam was made of the dust of the earth. Could not believe that Adam was our God or the Father of Jesus Christ. [notice the back-and-forth conversation here] President Young said that He came from another world & made this. Brought Eve with him, partook of the fruits of the earth, begat children & they were earthly & had mortal bodies & if we were faithful, we should become Gods as He was. He told Brother Pratt to lay aside his Philosophical reasoning and get revelation from God to govern him and enlighten his mind more and it would be a great blessing to him to lay aside his books and go into the canyons as some of the rest of us was doing and it would be better for him. He said his philosophy injured him in a measure. (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 9/17/1854)

What couldn't Orson believe? He couldn't believe that Adam was the father of Christ. Now, if Brigham really meant and taught that Adam was just a job title and the Father of Jesus was a DIFFERENT BEING than the Adam who fell, then why would Orson reject this? And then why didn't Brigham set him straight and tell him he misinterpreted? But it goes further. Orson also didn't believe what Brigham taught, which was this: Adam (the father of Jesus Christ and our spirits) brought Eve with him, ate of mortal fruits, then BEGAT EARTHLY children. Is that clear enough? That same being who fathered our spirits, came to this earth, ate of fruits, fell and begat mortal children.

In regard to Adam being our Father and our God, I have not published it, although I frankly say, I have no confidence in it, although advanced by bro. Kimball in the stand, and afterwards approved by bro. Brigham. (Orson Pratt, Minutes of Meeting at Historian's Office, 4/4/1860)

Devolution of Adam-God

Starting on page 324, Tholson's book describes the year-by-year devolution of this doctrine. This is an accurate portrayal, year by year, of the devolution of a doctrine, to a "mystery", to speculation, to myth, to false doctrine. Unless you remember all these speeches, or have access to them in one place, you don't realize the gaslighting that is going on.

Adam and Eve, are indeed prototypes for the rest of us, but when you introduce polygamy and replace the gospel of faith and repentance with the gospel of performances and ordinances, you have to come up with the classical Adam-God, and then in order to support this doctrine, you have to make up a lot of false doctrine in order to explain it.

In 1902, Anthon H. Lund summed it all up correctly:

Men had ridiculed the elders for believing that Adam was a God. We are not ashamed of this doctrine. Jesus said in speaking to the Jews in relation to Abraham, that they were Gods unto whom the word of God comes. **But though we look upon Adam as a God, we worship the same God that Adam worshiped in the Garden of Eden.** (Anthon H. Lund, Millennial Star 64:742)

Joseph F. Smith

You can read in the Tholson book about the "revolt" against Adam-God in the Bunkerville, NV ward. but here is an exchange between Edward Bunker, Jr. and president Joseph F. Smith, showing the stance of the church under Pres. Joseph F. Smith. Adam-God was now a "mystery", not to be discussed.

Ten years after his first attempt to convince the brethren that they were teaching false doctrine in the temple (see chapter 10), we find Edward Bunker, Jr. back at it again. His first attempt was with President Wilford Woodruff. Now it would be with President Joseph F. Smith. In February 1902 Edward Bunker, Jr. wrote a letter to President Smith:

President Joseph F. Smith

Dear Bro. One of our recently returned missionary from the North Western States is advocating the Doctorn [sic] that Adam is the very eternal Father in the Godhead and the Father of Jesus Christ and that Pres Kelch so taught the Elders in that mission. I say the Doctorn is Faulse and while every Person enjoying the spirit of the Lord may know of a Doctorn whether it is true or faulse; but that they have no right (Except the President of the Church) to advance any Doctorn not clearly set forth and defined in the written Law, and in doing so they stand on dangerous ground, and until we are able to live up to the revealed Law in the spirit thereof, can we hope to enjoy suficient of the spirit of the Lord to understand fully the plan of life and salvation. As a Bp my position cared if not where in am I in error. Your answer through the medium of the Juvenil instructor [Juvenile Instructor] or other wise will be greatly apreasiated by your Brother in the Gospel.

Edw Bunker Jr

President Joseph F. Smith's reply to Edward Bunker, Jr.:

Bishop Edward Bunker
Bunkerville, Lincoln Co., Nevada

Dear Brother--

Your letter of the 9th inst. reached me on the 14th, and in reply to the question therein contained, I have this to say:

It is certainly unwise for the elders or any other member of the Church to advocate doctrines that are not clearly set forth in the revealed word of God, and concerning which, in consequence, difference of opinion exist. No good can come from it, but on the contrary, much evil may result. Had the Lord desired or designed that such doctrines should be promulgated, He

would have clearly and fully defined them, as he has those beautiful and simple laws and ordinances known as "the first principles of the Gospel." While it is far from my purpose to stifle thought and free speech among the brethren, or to brand as "false doctrine" any and every mystery of the kingdom, it is nevertheless my wish and my advice, in which Presidents Winder and Lund, my counselors, heartily join, that the Elders should not make a practice of preaching upon these abstruse themes, these partly revealed principles, respecting which there are such wide differences of belief.

What is called the Adam-God doctrine may properly be classed among the mysteries. The full truth concerning it has not been revealed to us; and until it is revealed all wild speculations, sweeping assertions and dogmatic declarations relative thereto, are out of place and improper. We disapprove of them and especially the public expression of such views. In the absence of Elder K_____, and without any oral or written statement by him as to his belief regarding this doctrine, we do not feel called upon, nor would it be right to pass judgement in his case; but we will simply say that the accepted doctrine concerning our father Adam, the great sire of the human race, is as follows:

He is Michael, the Ancient of Days, the future God of this earth, when it shall become celestialized and shine like unto a sea of glass mingled with fire, the glorified home of celestial beings for ever. Hence Adam stands at the head of the human family, presides over them spiritually and temporally, and will come in due time as the Ancient of Days to call his children together, according to the scriptures, both ancient and modern. He will preside over them for ever, and be their God eternally; this, of course, after the Millennial reign of Christ. Christ is not Adam, nor is Adam Christ, but both are eternal Gods, and it may even be said Fathers, since they are the parents of eternal or spiritual children. As to the personality and position of each God, and as to which of all is the greater, these are matters immaterial at the present time, and are best but an unprofitable speculation. Let us be content with what is plainly revealed on this subject, namely: That though there be Lords many and Gods many, as the Apostle Paul declares, yet to us there is but one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With kind regards, I am your brother, and friend,

Jos. F. Smith

(Joseph F. Smith Personal Letterbook, pp. 26-27)

[Bruce R. McConkie](#)

In 1958, Bruce R. McConkie, in his book *Mormon Doctrine*, popularized the notion that it is "apostates" or "cultists" and "enemies" who believe and promote the Adam-God doctrine:

Cultists and other enemies of the restored truth, for their own peculiar purposes, sometimes try to make it appear that Latter-day Saints worship Adam as their Father in heaven. In support of their false assumptions, they quote such statements as that of President Brigham Young to the effect that Adam is our father and our god and the only god with whom we have to do. This statement and others of a similar nature, is perfectly consistent and rational, when viewed in full gospel perspective and understood in the light of the revelations relative to the patriarchal chain binding exalted beings together...

There is no mystery about this doctrine except that which persons ignorant of the great principles of exaltation and unfriendly to the cause of righteousness have attempted to make. (Mormon Doctrine, pp. 18-19)

Bruce R. McConkie has left no doubt about his belief with regard to Adam-God. On June 1, 1980, at a Fourteen Stake Fireside Address at Brigham Young University, he delivered "The Seven Deadly Heresies." He said heresy number six is:

There are those who believe, or say they believe that Adam is our Father and our God, that he is the father of our spirits and our bodies and that he is the one we worship. The devil keeps this heresy alive as a means of obtaining converts to cultism. It is contrary to the whole plan of salvation set forth in the scriptures. Anyone who has read the Book of Moses, and anyone who has received the temple endowment, and who yet believes the Adam-God theory does not deserve to be saved (laughter from audience). Those ensnared by it reject the living prophet, and close their ears to the Apostles of their day. "We will follow those who went before," they say. And having so determined, they soon are ready to enter polygamous relationships which destroy their souls. (Bruce R. McConkie, The Seven Deadly Heresies, BYU cassette tape; underline added for emphasis) <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/bruce-r-mcconkie/seven-deadly-heresies/>

Interestingly, Elder McConkie's printed version is not so harsh. It was changed so that the underlined part read instead:

... anyone who has received the temple endowment, has no excuse whatever for being led astray by it. (BYU Devotional Speeches of the Year, 1980, p. 78)

McConkie also stated:

This so-called Adam-God theory is false and contrary to all the body of revealed truth. It negates the essential features of the whole plan of salvation; belittles God, and makes mockery of the atonement of his Son, and postulates the utterly absurd notion that Christ, his Son, had to work out an atoning sacrifice which would bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of God the Father... (Bruce R. McConkie, Criticism Of Factions)

Joseph Fielding Smith

President Brigham Young did not believe and did not teach, that Jesus Christ was begotten by Adam. (Joseph Fielding Smith, 1972-73 Melchizedek Priesthood Manual, pp. 20-22)

Answers To Gospel Questions, by Joseph Fielding Smith, contains the following question and answer:

"In the Journal of Discourses Brigham Young is quoted as saying, "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." I am unable to harmonize this with your statement that Adam is not "the father of Jesus Christ..." Will you please clarify this discrepancy of opinion?"

... Surely we must give President Brigham Young credit for at least ordinary intelligence, and in stating this I placed it mildly. If he meant to convey the thought that the character who was in the Garden of Eden, and "who is our Father in Heaven," was Adam, then it would mean that this expression was in conflict with all else that he taught concerning God the Father, and I am bold to say that President Brigham Young was not inconsistent in his teaching of this doctrine. (Answers to Gospel Questions 5:121)

Gaslighting at its finest.

Spencer W. Kimball

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

Mark E. Petersen

In the Fall 1980 General Conference of the Church, Elder Mark E. Petersen spoke on the doctrine of Adam-God, wherein he said:

Adam was not our God...Adam was the Savior's progenitor only in the same sense in which he is the ancestor of us all ... Then was Adam our God, or did God become Adam? Ridiculous! Adam was neither God, nor the Only Begotten Son of God. He was a child of God in the spirit as we all are. (November 1980 Ensign, pp. 16-18)

Background of Craig L. Tholson

Bro. Tholson is a member of the church. He wrote this book in the 90's. "Craig Tholson has been a student of truth ever since joining the Mormon Church in 1981. Born in Wyoming in 1956, Craig has lived numerous places west of the Missouri. Craig now resides in Aurora, Colorado, a suburb of Denver. Craig has eleven kids, a BS in physics, and loves to read everything from East to West."

<https://discussmormonism.com/viewtopic.php?t=109891> You can read additional details, including a biography about him, on this website.

Although I am not familiar with his current views, in the book Bro. Tholson is thoroughly in agreement with Brigham Young's teachings about Adam-God, although he does hedge a bit toward the end of the book.

Craig Tholson – Standing strong, then backing down

Tholson presents the teachings of the leaders of the church. He claims to heartily support the teachings of Joseph and Brigham, but not those of the later prophets. First, he presents his strongest case and his own explanation for Adam-God, then he too backs away slightly from a literal belief in this teaching.

In order to promote Adam-God as taught by Brigham Young, you must come up with a backstory, which is non-doctrinal, unnecessarily complex, not taught even by Brigham Young, and certainly not taught in the scriptures.

This is a 410-page book, available for download at <https://john144restoration.files.wordpress.com/2022/04/adamgodtholson.pdf>.

Tholson devoted an entire chapter, describing his "Doctrine of Deity".

1. A race of Beings called the Gods have always existed. There never was a time when this race did not exist.
2. The Gods are continually progressing and there is no end to their progression. They progress in knowledge, power, and glory, although they possess all knowledge, all power, and all glory in their respective dominions.
3. The social organization of the Gods is what may be termed a patriarchy, a familial system in which the Father is the head of the family. "Familial system" should be understood quite literally here. Our God is literally our Father, and His FATHER is also involved in our salvation and exaltation as well as our Father's GrandFATHER, and so on. The plan of salvation is truly a family affair, wherein the duty and love of family abounds.
4. One way in which the Gods progress is by procreating "after their own kind."
 - A. Procreation by the Gods is limited to those who have progressed to that level of maturity required by eternal law.
 - B. Procreation is one of the most sacred privileges attained by Gods.
 - C. There are two estates of procreation among the Gods, spirit birth and mortal birth.
 - i. A Father and Mother God procreate spirit children in their heavenly home. **[This was never taught by Joseph Smith.]**
 - ii. After those spirit children are born and reared to maturity in the heavens above, it becomes necessary for them to enter mortality in order to continue their progression. This is accomplished by a man and a woman who must come to an earth and commence the creating of mortal bodies for their spirit children to inhabit. Their mortal children, once housed in a body, grow to maturity and marry and continue to "multiply and replenish the earth."
5. Adam and Eve were not created from dust, mud, water, or any other substance, nor was Eve created from Adam's rib. These symbolisms are not to be understood literally. Adam and Eve were born to parents in another creation long ago and in the same way you and I were born. There is an eternal law which governs the birth of all life: new life comes through its own kind and in the same way its progenitors came, through physical generation of the species. There is no other way in which the generation of life comes. **[But Brigham taught that Adam was created out of the dust of the earth, just not this earth. Our bodies are indeed formed out of**

the elements of the planet on which we reside, this is called “birth”. And Eve was not born in this fashion, but was taken from Adam’s side.]

6. Every creation which has ever been, has had an Adam and an Eve, **[These are offices, callings, or titles, not proper names. The title “Adam” is Hebrew for “man”. Eve means “life” or “living”.]** whose privilege it was to come down to an earth, which they helped create, in order to create bodies for their spirit children. Adam and Eve are properly understood to be offices or callings of Gods who come to the earth they created in order to "fall," thus becoming mortal themselves that they may become the grand progenitors of their children in mortality.

7. "The Fall" of a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother is the process whereby these immortal Beings become mortal, enabling them to procreate mortal bodies for their spirit children to inhabit. Moses said this befell Adam and Eve in consequence of their partaking "of the forbidden fruit." At least part of the reason for Adam and Eve becoming mortal is a result of their eating the fruits of the mortal earth, thus causing a degeneration of their bodies from immortal to mortal. **[This is a doctrine known as “condescension”. When properly understood, it is a beautiful doctrine. Beings, more spiritually advanced, return to mortality in order to assist others to progress. They come here not to be served, but to serve. Examples of beings who condescended are Jesus, Mary, his mother. Adam and Eve, most of the prophets of the Old Testament, and members of the Holy Order of God, as discussed in Alma 13.]**

8. Freedom of choice is the underlying law of the society of the Gods. **[Freedom of choice is the first law of heaven. Without it, there is no opposition, and without opposition, there is no existence. Obedience is not the first law of heaven, because without freedom of choice, obedience is not possible.]** This same privilege applies to spirit children as well; they are free to choose what they will and some will choose not to accept the eternal plan of salvation and exaltation which has always and forever exalted their progenitors.

A. The spirit children who rebel against their parents' plan will, by their own choosing, be damned (literally stopped) from further progression.

B. Those spirit children who accept the reality of obedience and agree to abide by the eternal laws of progression will be born again, this time into mortality, to earthly parents, and progress in this mortal estate.

9. Mortality is a probationary state where the children of Gods are tested and gain experience. This testing and experience is made different by virtue of the spirit now being housed in a tangible body which can interact with matter, whereas prior to mortality the spirit had no interaction with the grosser matter of this estate.

10. The testing and experience of our earthly estate do not end upon the death of the body. After death, the spirit goes to the spirit world where the same society continues to exist, only the spirit is without the body. Free agency prevails there as it does here, and the individual continues to gain experience through choices and consequences as a result of those choices.

11. Upon completion of the probationary period of mortality and post-mortality, and at some future date, the offspring of God will go through a metamorphosis called resurrection whereby the physical body will in some manner be rejoined with the spirit. All of God's children who

came to earth will receive a resurrection. **[Actually, they receive a new, physical body, glorified commensurate with the glory of that person's spirit. See D&C 88.]**

12. By eternal laws the children of God are judged according to their adherence and faithfulness to the laws **[which they have received and understand]** which govern the mortal estate. If they are faithful and true to the requirements of eternal law, these children will not only be saved and resurrected, but they will be exalted **[This is pure Section 132. Joseph never used the word "exalted" in this context.]** to the station of a God, where they will enjoy all the rights and privileges which their eternal parents enjoy. The great circle of life will then continue as those children, now exalted, set out to create worlds of their own and procreate children in the society of the Gods. **[Interesting, how he follows Brigham's lead in neglecting to mention the roles of the adversary and the Savior.]**

13. Adam and Eve are only the names of Gods while they are fulfilling the calling of peopling Their earth. In reality, They are the only Gods with whom we have to do. **[This is false doctrine, which I explain elsewhere in this paper.]** They are the only Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother we have anything to do with. It is this God and Father of whom Joseph and Brigham have said: "He is our God and Father, and the only God with whom we have to do." He is that Being to whom we owe reverence and worship, and in fact our very existence.

14. Adam and Eve, once their mission is completed on earth, take their bodies back up again. This is correctly understood to mean that because Adam and Eve have already successfully lived out their mortal probation on an earth and been resurrected and exalted, They possess the power over mortal death to raise Themselves up again. In other words, They possess the keys which have power over death, and death is thereby powerless to hold them. **[If this is true, then why would they need a Savior? I explain this elsewhere in this document.]**

15. In the pre-mortal estate the first born son to our parents has the privilege of being ordained to be the Savior of the family. **[If spirit children are not created the same way mortal children are created physically, this makes no sense.]** It is his responsibility, honor, and privilege to fill this exalted and holy office. At an appointed time he will be born into mortality and through obedience to the will of the Father, he will accomplish the redemption of the family, thus enabling them all to return back to their home. This is correctly understood to be salvation. But the degree of exaltation to which each child is raised is determined by their obedience to the will of the Father who presides over them.

A. To accomplish his mission, the Savior's body is fathered by the Father of our spirits, while his mother is mortal. The Savior is the only human who will have a God for his earthly parent. This accounts for the Savior's being "the only begotten of the Father." **[Weren't the watchers in heaven, in the Old Testament mating with mortal women, creating giants? Wasn't this condemned by God, bringing about the flood?]**

B. Adam's children in mortality (Abel, Seth, etc.) differed from Jesus Christ in their parentage in that Adam had become a mortal being to father bodies for these spirits, whereas He had Fathered the Savior as an immortal Being, possessing the seeds of immortality.

16. The society of heaven is polygynous **[Polygamy and Adam-God go hand in hand.]**, the Parentage is composed of one male and more than one female who enjoy a perfect unity of will, purpose and love.

A. Adam and Eve represent the male and one of His wives, which wife is the Mother of all the children born to Her in heaven and who will inhabit the earth through Her loins.

B. Presumably, Adam **[Speaking of the title, not a specific man.]** will "fall" repeatedly, a sufficient number of times to allow each of His companions the opportunity to come to an earth and commence the begetting of Her children. **[If Eve is also a title, this is not necessary. However, this does not preclude a specific "Adam" and a specific "Eve" from repeatedly returning to their mortal world in order to fulfill other missions. Isn't that a beautiful thought to consider that Adam and Eve have returned to this earth many times in order to guide and watch over their posterity?]**

C. The "falling" which the Gods do is a selfless act of honor and love which provides for Their children the opportunity to become as They are, even Gods. **[I agree with this, in principle.]**
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Then he backs off.

Joseph asked: Jesus, what are you going to do? To lay down my life as my Father did, and take it up again. (King Follett)

Some have also speculated that it is entirely possible that Jesus was here informing us that his Father (and hence, our Father) was once a Savior on the earth upon which He entered mortality for the first time. This author has no problem with either explanation of Jesus' remarks, but we will only point out that we know that Adam fell, thus becoming mortal, and laid down His life so that His spirit children might enter mortality. And upon departing this earth, took His body up again, thus fulfilling Jesus' words. The second possibility may or may not be true. **[Our Father was the savior of a prior earth, but there is no reason why he has to be Adam.]** Page 262

Backing off still further:

Proving who these Gods are is not important to the subject of Adam-God. But what is important is that we vindicate Joseph and Brigham as prophets capable of advancing and teaching doctrine. **The Book of Moses makes one thing very clear: many Gods are involved in the creation, peopling, saving, and exalting of this world and its inhabitants.**

In the creation account **Elohim** (possibly representative of more than one God), **Jehovah**, and **Michael** are revealed to have initiated the **creation, peopling, saving, and exalting of this world. Michael helped to create this world with his Father, Jehovah, under the direction of Elohim.** Nothing that Joseph or Brigham have revealed goes contrary to this, but only as our narrow interpretations pervert that which has been revealed. **[But, Brigham said it was definitely Adam, not anybody else. Otherwise, why call it the Adam-God theory or doctrine. However, at one point, even Brigham said he didn't care which of the three was our God.]**
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