

“ALL THINGS UNTO ME ARE SPIRITUAL”: WORSHIP THROUGH CORPOREALITY IN HASIDISM AND MORMONISM

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In his 2005 commencement speech, the late novelist David Foster Wallace provided an unexpectedly frank description of American adulthood for the recent graduates of Kenyon College. Listing painfully familiar annoyances associated with what he calls the “day in day out” of middle-class America—including a hilarious retelling of the common supermarket experience—Wallace urges his audience to fight against their “natural, hard-wired default setting” that tells them they are “the absolute center of the universe; the realest, most vivid and important person in existence.”¹ Instead, he encourages them to see “a crowded, hot, slow, consumer-hell type situation as not only meaningful, but sacred, on fire with the same force that made the stars: love, fellowship, the mystical oneness of all things deep down.”² He reminds the graduates that “in the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships.”³ Wallace’s address invokes a kind of postmodern immanence and even sows the

1. David Foster Wallace, “This Is Water,” commencement address delivered at Kenyon College, May 21, 2005, 8, transcript available at <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/DFWKenyonAddress2005.pdf>.

2. *Ibid.*, 8.

3. *Ibid.*

seeds for a compelling secular model of what some Latter-day Saints may recognize as consecration: the repurposing of the mundane (e.g., time, talents, possessions) for the building of the kingdom of God.⁴

Wallace's writings have been influential on recent thinking in Mormon theology, particularly the work of philosopher Adam Miller.⁵ Yet drawing on outside sources for inspiration and theological innovation is nothing new in Mormon thought and can be traced back to the prophet Joseph Smith. In July 1843, Smith taught, "One of the grand fundamental principles of Mormonism is to receive truth let it come from where it may."⁶ Later that same month, he taught, "Have the Presbyterians any truth? Embrace that. Have the Baptists, Methodists, and so forth? Embrace that. Get all the good in the world, and you will come out a pure Mormon."⁷ According to Terryl Givens, Smith was "insatiably eclectic in his borrowings and adaptations."⁸ Smith's "task would involve

4. For an insightful analysis of the law of consecration, see Joseph M. Spencer, *For Zion: A Mormon Theology of Hope* (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2014).

5. See Adam S. Miller, *Future Mormon: Essays in Mormon Theology* (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2016) and Adam S. Miller, *The Gospel According to David Foster Wallace: Boredom and Addiction in an Age of Distraction* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

6. Joseph Smith, "9 July 1843 (Sunday Morning). Temple Stand," in *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, edited and compiled by Lyndon W. Cook and Andrew F. Ehat (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), available at <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/words-joseph-smith-contemporary-accounts-nauvoo-discourses-prophet-joseph/1843/9-july-1843>. Authors have standardized the spelling.

7. Reconstruction by Don Bradley in "'The Grand Fundamental Principles of Mormonism': Joseph Smith's Unfinished Reformation," *Sunstone* (April 2006): 36. Original reads: "Presbyterians any truth. Embrace that. Baptist. Methodist &c. get all the good in the world. Come out a pure Mormon." Sermon of Joseph Smith, 23 July 1843 (Sunday Afternoon), in Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, available at <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/words-joseph-smith-contemporary-accounts-nauvoo-discourses-prophet-joseph/1843/23-july-1843>.

8. Terryl L. Givens, *Wrestling the Angel: The Foundations of Mormon Thought: Cosmos, God, Humanity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 39.

neither simple innovation nor *ex nihilo* oracular pronouncements upon lost doctrines alone, but also the salvaging, collecting, and assimilating of much that was mislaid, obscured, or neglected."⁹ Other religions and philosophies can provide new angles, new language, and new lenses by which to explore Mormon doctrine.¹⁰ One of the current authors has built on what Givens calls "Joseph Smith's cosmological monism"¹¹ to propose a Mormon theology of work that focuses on the sacralization of daily labor and employment.¹² Continuing along the same trajectory, we seek to draw useful parallels between Hasidic Judaism and Mormonism by presenting the former's concept of "worship through corporeality" as a theologically rich source for understanding and describing Mormonism's materialist merging of heaven and earth, sacred and mundane. If, as one scholar has stated, "an examination of other revival movements and their characteristics will also provide a new background against that which is distinctive in Hasidism will stand out in clear relief,"¹³ the same holds true for the study of early Mormonism.¹⁴ In this paper, we will outline Hasidism's concept of "worship through corporeality" and its roots in Enochian folklore. We will also briefly touch on the Mussar movement's connection to these Enoch stories and how it shaped their ethics and worldview. Finally, we will explore multiple sources throughout early

9. *Ibid.*, 38.

10. Hence the scriptural exhortation to "seek ye out the best books words of wisdom; seek learning even by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118; 109:7).

11. Givens, *Wrestling the Angel*, 256.

12. Walker A. Wright, "'To Dress It and to Keep It': Toward a Mormon Theology of Work," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2016): 161–77.

13. Arthur Green, "Early Hasidism: Some Old/New Questions," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, edited by Ada Rapoport-Albert (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1997), 443.

14. For another example of this kind of comparison between Hasidism and Mormonism, see Allen Hansen, "Visions of Light: Itzhak Eyzik and Joseph Smith," *Worlds Without End: A Mormon Studies Roundtable* (blog), May 3, 2013, <http://www.withoutend.org/visions-of-light-itzhak-eyzik-joseph-smith/>.

Mormonism that similarly demonstrate an overlap of the spiritual and temporal in the minds of many Saints, leading them to view their labors as sacred tasks in the building of Zion.

“Worship Through Corporeality” in Hasidism

Hasidism began as a Jewish revivalist movement in eighteenth-century Poland revolving around Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (the Besht, 1699–1760 CE). “The Hebrew for Hasidism, *hasidut*, denotes piety or saintliness, an extraordinary devotion to the spiritual aspects of Jewish life.”¹⁵ The name meshes well with one of Hasidism’s central teachings: “worship through corporeality” (*avodah be-gashmiyut*).¹⁶ According to this concept, mundane acts can be sanctified and transformed, allowing the worshiper to maintain *devekut* (“cleaving”) with God while transforming the world around her. God in Kabbalistic thought is represented by a series of emanations known as the ten *sefirot*. Each individual *sefirot* has its own unique names, attributes, and configurations, which correspond to its physical counterparts in the material realm. This relationship between form and matter means that a worshiper’s actions have the potential to affect how the divine is configured. Furthermore, by mirroring the divine, the worshiper can determine what blessings flow into the world. While these ideas were emphasized in Kabbalah as underlying the true meaning behind proper ritual and liturgical observance, the sixteenth-century Kabbalist R. Moses Cordovero highlighted their ethical implications in his popular treatise *The Palm Tree of Deborah*: “If you resemble the divine in body but not in action, you distort the

15. Louis Jacobs, ed., *The Jewish Religion: A Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 218.

16. The following description draws heavily on Norman Lamm, “Worship Through Corporeality,” in *The Religious Thought of Hasidism: Text and Commentary* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1999), 323–36.

form. . . . What good is it if your anatomy corresponds to the supernal form, while your actions do not resemble God's?"¹⁷

The Hasidic masters were highly influenced by this mystic-ethical approach and continued to broaden its application. A verse commonly quoted to explain worship through corporeality was Proverbs 3:6: "In all thy ways know him." This indicated to the masters that everything one does could become an act of worship. It was said of one Hasidic master that "he did not travel to the Maggid of Mezherych's [disciple and successor to the Besht] house to hear him expound Torah, but to see how he took off his shoes and how he tied his shoelaces." This same Hasidic master also decried mere preaching. The goal, rather, is to "*be* Torah."¹⁸ Each and every action should be in such harmony with the sacred revelations of God that the act itself embodies them. "Worship through corporeality," writes Norman Lamm, "brought into the domain of religious significance the entire range of human activity."¹⁹

Despite the popularity of Cordovero's sixteenth-century manuscript, he was not the only or even the earliest source for this doctrine. The Enoch lore circulating in the medieval era played a major role in the development of worship through corporeality. The influential Kabbalist Rabbi Isaac of Acre (1250–1340 CE) was troubled by the Bible's laconic description of Enoch and his heavenly ascent (see Genesis 5:24). While the reasons for Elijah's ascension were fairly clear from the biblical text, the Enoch passages were entirely cryptic. In order to solve this mystery, R. Isaac turned to his teacher for assistance:

17. Quoted in Lawrence Fine, "New Approaches to the Study of Kabbalistic Life in 16th-Century Safed," in *Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah: New Insights and Scholarship*, edited by Frederick E. Greenspahn (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 102. Translation by Allen Hansen.

18. Meshullam Phoebus ha-Levi Heller, *Sefer Seder ha-Dorot mi-Talmidei ha-Besht* (Lvov, 1880), [Hebrew] 46. Emphasis added.

19. Lamm, *The Religious Thought of Hasidism*, 323.

He said that he received a tradition that Enoch was an *ushkaf*, that is, he sewed together shoes, and with every stitch he made using the stitching awl he blessed God with a whole heart and perfect intent, extending the blessing to the emanated Metatron. Never did he forget during even so much as a single incision to bless, but would always do so, until because of so much love he was not, for God took him and he merited being called Metatron and his virtue is very great indeed.²⁰

According to this tradition, the pre-Mosaic Enoch demonstrated his love for God by focusing his love and intents on the divine even during the mundane and menial act of sewing together shoes. His act of blessing caused power and vitality to flow downward to the lowest *sefirah* and unite the lower and upper worlds. Enoch's great display of love for God led to his eventual exaltation and bestowal of the angelic title Metatron.²¹ This story was frequently utilized by the sixteenth-century kabbalists of Safed in their theoretical discussions of Kabbalah, though its pietism began to recede into the background. Nonetheless, the tradition continued to exert influence on the monistic idea that profane, mundane, and menial acts carried within them the potential for holiness: "The redemption of the world occurs not through heroic acts by superhuman saints but through the daily activities of a lowly tradesman."²² The underlying notion was that abstract emotion without appropriate action does not suffice to cause real change in the world. Similarly, acts without

20. Quoted in Moshe Idel, *The Angelic World: Apotheosis and Theophany* (Tel-Aviv: Miskal, 2008), [Hebrew] 107. Translation by Allen Hansen.

21. The emanated Metatron was considered to be *Malchut*, the tenth and lowest *sefirah*. This Metatron is distinct from Enoch the created Metatron, who is merely given that title. For an overview of these traditions, see Andrei A. Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005); Daniel Abrams, "The Boundaries of Divine Ontology: The Inclusion and Exclusion of Metatron in the Godhead," *Harvard Theological Review* 87, no. 3 (1994): 291–321; and Daniel Boyarin, "Beyond Judaism: Metatron and the Divine Polymorphy of Ancient Judaism," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 41 (2010): 323–65.

22. S. Daniel Breslauer, *Creating a Judaism Without Religion: A Postmodern Jewish Possibility* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2001), 98–99.

proper devotion and emotional attachment are often sterile and fail to reach their full potential. This principle was retroactively applied to the seemingly non-religious activities of the patriarchs such as well-digging (see Genesis 26). R. Isaac Luria wrote that the patriarchs' intentions behind the wells "corresponded to those for donning phylacteries."²³ The Hasidic hagiography entitled *Praises of the Besht* includes the story of how the Besht trembled when he saw a hose-maker on his way to prayers. Inviting him over, the Besht questioned the hose-maker about his daily activities. During the course of the interview, the man is shown to be simple, hardworking, honest, full of integrity, and devout. In both trade and devotion, the hose-maker was a contemporary counterpart to Enoch the shoemaker:

The Besht said to him, "What do you do very early in the morning?" He said: "I make stockings at that time as well." He asked him: "How do you recite the Psalms?" He said to him: "I repeat what I can say by heart." The Besht said about him that he is the foundation of the synagogue until the coming of the Messiah.²⁴

In her monograph on worship through corporeality, Tsippi Kauffman of Bar-Ilan University observes that the majority of the hose-maker's activities took place outside of the synagogue.²⁵ It is precisely this paradoxical situation that earns him the greatest praise. Raising the realm of

23. Moshe Idel, *The Angelic World*, 118–19. The quote is found only in a work by the Sabbatean prophet Nathan of Gaza. Yet, as Idel has argued, it is likely authentic due to there being nothing particularly Sabbatean about it.

24. Dan Ben-Amos and Jerome R. Mintz, eds. and trans., *In Praise of the Baal Shem Tov (Shivhei Ha-Besht): The Earliest Collection of Legends About the Founder of Hasidism* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1976), 110–12.

25. Tsippi Kauffman, *In All Your Ways Know Him: The Concept of God and Avodah Be-Gashmiyut in the Early Stages of Hasidism* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2009), [Hebrew] 275–76. Translation by Allen Hansen.

the profane to that of the sacred reveals the true essence of worship and hints at the monism that will prevail with the advent of the Messiah.²⁶

Reflecting on the centrality of this Enoch tradition to Hasidism, Martin Buber remarked that “man exerts influence on the eternal, and . . . this is not done by any special works, but by the intention with which he does all his works. It is the teaching of the hallowing of the everyday.”²⁷ By using the shoemaker Enoch as its blueprint, Hasidism spread not only among the poor, illiterate masses, but among wealthy merchants as well. Indeed, they were among its staunchest supporters: “By invoking the Hasidic concept of worship through corporeality . . . the Seer [of Lublin] reassured busy merchants in his audience that they could transform business trips into paths to holiness.”²⁸ As the Seer himself put it, “When a merchant travels on business, he should say to himself: ‘I am traveling for business so that I will have money to serve God by paying for my sons’ tuition, so that my sons will be Talmudic scholars, engaging in Torah and *mizvot* for the sake of Heaven; and so that I can marry my daughters to Talmudic scholars, and sanctify the Sabbath, and give charity.’ . . . And in this way, he connects his business to God.”²⁹

The Mussar Movement

Enoch the shoemaker served as a model not only for Hasidism, but for the Mussar movement as well. The Lithuanian R. Israel Salanter

26. “Rabbi Hanokh said: “The other nations too believe that there are two worlds. They too say: ‘In the other world.’ There difference is this: They think that the two are separate and severed, but Israel professes that the two worlds are essentially one and shall in fact become one”” (Martin Buber, *The Way of Man: According to the Teaching of Hasidism* [Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1960], 39–40).

27. Martin Buber, *Hasidism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), 71.

28. Glenn Dynner, *Men of Silk: The Hasidic Conquest of Polish Jewish Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 115.

29. Quoted in Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 115.

(1810–1883 CE) sought to transform the Jewish world around him, which he felt had become entirely immersed in ritual and outward trappings at the expense of true devotion to God. The vehicle for his projected revival was exacting—a psychological application of ethics (*mussar*) to all spheres of life:

The Mussar movement fought against a broken and fragmentary Judaism, against a narrow-minded and limited Judaism. It demanded a consistent Judaism, a Judaism that is wide in scope and broad in vision. Half-measures do not suffice in observing the Torah. Keeping well-known commandments and warnings alone will not do. The entire framework must be perfected and expanded to encompass the Torah in all of its commandments and warnings, be they those between God and man, between man and man, between man and himself, and between man and the entire world around him.³⁰

For example, according to the Mussar movement, impatience and severity in judging others is on the same legal and moral footing as theft.³¹ R. Israel saw in the pursuit of ethical perfection a communal effort and, as an initial step, sought to establish groups among the Jewish upper and middle classes for the study and application of *mussar*. This segment of society was well-educated, affluent, and thoroughly involved in community affairs. In R. Israel's analysis of the Enoch tale above, the theurgical and theosophical elements are entirely discarded in favor of ethics:

This does not mean that when Enoch sewed together shoes he was cleaving to supernal thoughts. The law forbids it, for how can he be occupied with something else when he is employed on behalf of other people? Rather, the essence of his unifications was the concern that each and every stitch would be good and strong in order for people to

30. Dov Katz, *Tnuat ha-Musar: Toldoteihah, Isheihah, ve-Shitoteihah*, vol. 1 (Tel-Aviv: Hotzaat Bitan ha-Sefer, 1945), [Hebrew] 62. Translation by Allen Hansen.

31. "One that bears a grudge against his neighbor . . . is also culpable of theft" (quoted in Immanuel Etkes, "Rabbi Israel Salanter and His Psychology of Mussar," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Sixteenth-Century Revival to the Present*, edited by Arthur Green [New York: Crossroad, 1987], 235).

benefit from the shoes. Thus he cleaved to the attribute of his maker who bestows his beneficence on all, and this is how he performed unifications, desiring nothing other than to cleave to the attributes of his maker.³²

As told by R. Israel's modern biographer, "When there was a conflict between God-centered piety or kindness toward one's fellowman, R. Israel preferred the latter, even when it meant sacrificing the former."³³ Enoch's ascension came as the result of his intense devotion to benefiting and bettering humanity. This was the true essence of God's own character. Performing even a menial task to the utmost of one's ability in order to help others was, in R. Israel's mind, the highest form of *imitatio Dei*. Doing one's job well takes precedence over studying lofty theological matters.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935 CE), the preeminent Jewish mystic and thinker of the twentieth century, combined elements from Hasidism and Mussar into his own thought and provided perhaps the clearest expression of Jewish monism:

For Rabbi Kook, the essence of Judaism, which flows from Jewish monotheism, is the passion to overcome separatism, the severance of man from God, of man from man, of man from nature. It is the passion to perfect the world through man's awareness of his links to all else in existence. It is the rejection of the alleged antagonism between the material and the spiritual. . . . It is the rejection of every parochialism that seeks to build man's spiritual home and his structure of values by taking to itself a fragment of life and ignoring the rest. "The Jewish outlook," said Rabbi Kook, "is the vision of the holiness of all existence."³⁴

32. Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, *Michtav me-Eliyahu*, vol. 1 (Bnei Brak: Talmidey Yeshivat Ponevezh, 1955), [Hebrew] 34. Translation by Allen Hansen.

33. Etkes, "Rabbi Israel Salanter," 219.

34. Ben Zion Bokser, trans., *Abraham Isaac Kook: The Lights of Penitence, the Moral Principles, Lights of Holiness, Essays, Letters, and Poems* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 26.

Mormonism's Collapse of Sacred Distance

Before transitioning to Mormon sources, it is worth briefly exploring the metaphysical differences between Hasidism and Mormonism. While the overlap of particular concepts is intriguing, the two movements have vastly different metaphysical foundations. Hasidism has its roots in Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism, which largely share the same Neoplatonic (and sometimes Aristotelian) framework as classical theism. In summing up the classical view of God, Eastern Orthodox philosopher David Bentley Hart writes,

To speak of "God" properly . . . is to speak of the one infinite source of all that is: eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, uncreated, uncaused, perfectly transcendent of all things and for that very reason absolutely immanent to all things. God so understood is not something posed over against the universe, in addition to it, nor is he the universe itself. He is not a "being," at least not in the way that a tree, a shoemaker, or a god is a being; he is not one more object in the inventory of things that are, or any sort of discrete object at all. Rather, all things that exist receive their being continuously from him, who is the infinite wellspring of all that is, *in whom* . . . all things live and move and have their being. In one sense he is "beyond being," if by "being" one means the totality of discrete, finite things. In another sense he is "being itself," in that he is the inexhaustible source of all reality, the absolute upon which the contingent is always utterly dependent, the unity and simplicity that underlies and sustains the diversity of finite and composite things.³⁵

Though the application of Platonic elements varies, Hasidism still embraces a Creator/creature divide,³⁶ viewing God ("Ein-Sof") as "the

35. David Bentley Hart, *The Experience of God: Being, Consciousness, Bliss* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2013), 30.

36. See Gerhard May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo: The Doctrine of 'Creation out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought*, translated by A. S. Worrall (London: T&T Clark, 1994); James Noel Hubler, "Creatio ex Nihilo: Matter, Creation, and the Body in Classical and Christian Philosophy through Aquinas" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1995); Keith E. Norman, "Ex Nihilo: The Development of the

First Cause and the Cause of all causes such that there is none higher than Him up above and none lower down below, and likewise on every side.”³⁷ From a metaphysical standpoint, the Ein-Sof is absolute, ineffable, and unknowable. Despite the transcendent nature of the classical God and Ein-Sof, Hasidism places a greater emphasis on divine immanence: “the closeness of God to man, or, more accurately, the “withinness” of God in the world. God’s inherence in the cosmos ensures that he is close enough to be related to, to be experienced, to be loved and feared, to assume the aspects of personality.”³⁸ This “greater role played by immanence and the nearness of the Creator went hand in hand with the emotional trajectory of the young Hasidic movement. Because God was so close, it became possible to make greater demands upon the hasid’s consciousness of God at all times.”³⁹ It is this strong belief in immanence from which “worship through corporeality” developed.

The Hasidic emphasis on divine immanence is where similarities with Mormon metaphysics begin to emerge. The “collapse of sacred distance” is, according to Terryl Givens, “one of the hallmarks of Mormonism, and of Joseph Smith in particular. . . . Joseph insistently refused to recognize the distinctness of those categories that were typical in traditional Christianity, the sense that there is an earthly and a heavenly, a bodily and a spiritual. . . . Every time that we think we have found an example of what we think is a dichotomy, Joseph collapses it into one.”⁴⁰ We are told by Joseph that God the Father is embodied with

Doctrines of God and Creation in Early Christianity,” *BYU Studies* 17, no. 3 (1977): 291–318; Blake T. Ostler, “Out of Nothing: A History of Creation *ex Nihilo* in Early Christian Thought,” *FARMS Review* 17, no. 2 (2005): 253–320.

37. Lamm, *The Religious Thought of Hasidism*, 16.

38. *Ibid.*, 2.

39. *Ibid.*, 3.

40. “Interview: Terryl Givens,” *The Mormons*, PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/mormons/interviews/givens.html>.

"flesh and bones as tangible as man's"⁴¹ because he "is a Man like unto one of yourselves—that is the great secret!"⁴² The joined spirit and body becomes "the soul of man" in Joseph's hands.⁴³ *Spirit* itself is no longer seen as an immaterial substance, but a "more fine or pure" matter that "can only be discerned by purer eyes."⁴⁴ The Lord made clear in an 1830 revelation that the supposed divide between temporal and spiritual laws had in fact never existed: "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created."⁴⁵ The gathering of latter-day Israel was literal, as was the establishment of Zion, its model being the translated city of Enoch. Richard Bushman explains:

Though modeled after Enoch's Zion, Joseph's New Jerusalem was not to follow Enoch's "City of Holiness" into heaven. Quite the reverse. In Enoch's vision [in Moses 7], latter-day people gather from all over the earth into a holy city, "called ZION, a New Jerusalem." Rather than rising, this city stays put, and Enoch's city descends from heaven to meet the people of the New Jerusalem on earth. . . . The millennium begins in a happy union of two holy peoples on a cleansed earth.⁴⁶

41. "History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843]," *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 1511, available at <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/154>.

42. Stan Larson, "The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 7.

43. "Revelation, 27–28 December 1832 [D&C 88:1–126]," *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 35, available at <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-27-28-december-1832-dc-881-126/3>.

44. "History, 1838–1856," 1552, available at <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/195>.

45. "Revelation, September 1830—A [D&C 29]," *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 36, available at <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-september-1830-a-dc-29/1>.

46. Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Knopf, 2005), 141. See also Mark Ashurst-McGee, "Zion Rising: Joseph Smith's

Zion was the labor that would bring about the convergence of heaven and earth, slightly echoing the Enochian tales underlying Hasidism. An excellent example of the prophet's blurring of past and present, heavenly and earthly is what historian Christopher Smith calls the "inspired fictionalization" of the United Firm revelations. The 1835 edition of these revelations substituted the names of the firm's officers and operational details with various pseudonyms and replacement words that read as if within an Adamic context. Smith explains that "the fictionalization of these texts is . . . a fascinating historical case study in Joseph Smith's tendency to blend practical and mystical concerns. The changes to the revelations were a way of keeping an important secret from outsiders, but they also represented a sort of mystical fusion of the modern Mormon community with the ancient city of Enoch."⁴⁷ Beyond the ancient pseudonyms given to those mentioned in the texts (e.g., Enoch for Joseph Smith), "modern terminology not appropriate to an Adamic context was generally replaced with more neutral or ancient vocabulary. Thus, for example, the 'firm' became the 'order.' . . . In one instance the word 'business' was replaced with 'purpose,' and in another 'printing' became 'proclaiming.' One reference to 'the literary and Mercantile concerns' was supplanted by 'the affairs of the poor.'"⁴⁸ Through these revelations, Joseph Smith repurposed the seemingly secular practice of business for the building up of the kingdom of God and did so—like the Hasidic forefathers—by drawing inspiration from and expanding upon Enoch's ascension to God. In short, "the prophecy of Enoch provided a personal role model to inspire him and a blueprint to direct him."⁴⁹

Early Social and Political Thought" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2008, chapters 5–7).

47. Christopher C. Smith, "The Inspired Fictionalization of the 1835 United Firm Revelations," *Claremont Journal of Mormon Studies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 17.

48. *Ibid.*, 24–25.

49. Terry L. Givens, "The Prophecy of Enoch as Restoration Blueprint" (lecture given at the 18th Annual Arrington Lecture Series, Logan, Utah, Sept. 20, 2012), 4, available at http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/arrington_lecture/19/.

In his enlightening exploration of Mormon metaphysics, the late Catholic philosopher Stephen H. Webb explains that:

[B]oth Mormons and Catholics believe in transubstantiation. They just locate [it] in different theological places. . . . For Catholics, transubstantiation is dramatized in a quite literal way in the Eucharist, where the bread and wine become the first fruits of the eschatological economy of Christ's abundantly capacious body. That drama for Mormons is not localized in such a specific way. . . . [T]he Saints actually locate transubstantiation in the potential for every event, no matter how mundane, to convey the physically uplifting power of God's grace. . . . For the Saints, everything we do should rise to the occasion of the Lord's Supper.⁵⁰

The toil and sweat of Zion-building was pregnant with covenantal and eschatological meaning for the early Saints. The need to find the divine in the mundane surely increased as the Mormons headed West and established an isolated, theocratic government. As historian Matthew Bowman has noted, Brigham Young "bound even more closely than had Joseph Smith the Mormons' sense of themselves as a covenanted people, specially chosen by God, to the practical work of building a community on earth. The distance between the sacred and secular on the trail was vanishingly small. The captains of the companies routinely celebrated the Lord's Supper as they prepared decisions about when to move and what trail to take."⁵¹ President Young saw the "work of building up Zion" as "a practical work" and "not a mere theory."⁵² The Saints were "not going to wait for angels, or for Enoch and his company to come and build up Zion, but we are going to build it."⁵³ Young often spoke of "present salvation" brought on by the constant presence of the Spirit:

50. Stephen H. Webb, *Mormon Christianity: What Other Christians Can Learn from the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 74–75.

51. Matthew Bowman, *The Mormon People: The Making of an American Faith* (New York: Random House, 2012), 102.

52. Brigham Young, Feb. 23, 1862, *Journal of Discourses*, 9:284.

53. Ibid.

It is present salvation and the present influence of the Holy Ghost that we need every day to keep us on saving ground. . . . I preach, comparatively, but little about the eternities and Gods, and their wonderful works in eternity; and do not tell who first made them, nor how they were made; for I know nothing about that. Life is for us, and it is for us to receive it today, and not wait for the millennium.⁵⁴

If the divine as an abstraction was on its deathbed with the teachings of Joseph Smith, it met its ultimate demise under the leadership of Brigham Young. “In the mind of God,” said Young, “there is no such a thing as dividing spiritual from temporal, or temporal from spiritual; for they are one in the Lord.”⁵⁵ Only to “those who understand the principles of life and salvation, the Priesthood, the oracles of truth and the gifts and callings of God to the children of men” is “there no difference in spiritual and temporal labors—all are one.”⁵⁶ These spiritual labors could range from “preaching, praying, laboring with my hands for an honorable support; whether I am in the field, mechanic’s shop, or following mercantile business, or wherever duty calls, I am serving God as much in one place as another; and so it is with all, each in his place, turn and time.”⁵⁷

With this outlook, Young declared that his mission was “to teach [the Saints] with regard to their every-day lives. . . . My desire is to teach the people what they should do now, and let the millennium take care of itself.”⁵⁸ For Young, focusing the gospel on “the present time, circumstances and condition of the people”⁵⁹ was the way in which God’s people should live it. The “law of God,” in his view, was the system “best to live by, and the best to die by; it is the best for doing business; it is the best for making farms, for building cities and temples” and would

54. Brigham Young, Jul. 15, 1860, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:124.

55. Brigham Young, Dec. 11, 1864, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:18.

56. Brigham Young, Oct. 6, 1870, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:260.

57. *Ibid.*

58. Brigham Young, May 17, 1868, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:228.

59. Brigham Young, Sept. 28, 1862, *Journal of Discourses*, 10:1.

bring "present security and peace."⁶⁰ Recalling a conversation with a "gentleman" who didn't think the Mormons seemed "very religious," Young explained,

That is a mistake, we are the most religious people on the face of the earth. We do not allow ourselves to go into a field to plough without taking our religion with us; we do not go into an office, behind the counter to deal out goods, into a counting house with the books, or anywhere to attend to or transact any business without taking our religion with us. If we are railroading or on a pleasure trip our God and our religion must be with us.⁶¹

The Mormon religion "incorporates every act and word of man," preached Young. "No man should go to merchandising unless he does it in God; no man should go to farming or any other business unless he does it in the Lord. . . . Our work, our every-day labor, our whole lives are within the scope of our religion. This is what we believe and what we try to practice."⁶²

This Mormon version of "worship of corporeality" can be seen in a number of other nineteenth-century Mormon writings and publications. As historian and educator Gustive Larson illustrates, "Mormon exiles heavily charged with a sense of mission located in the Great Basin in July, 1847. Theirs was a task of building an earthly 'Kingdom of God.' The blood of Israel was to be gathered out of Babylon and brought to Zion to labor collectively in creating a self-sustaining commonwealth preparatory to Christ's millennial reign."⁶³ The developing industry within the basin increased the demand of iron, leading Brigham Young and the First Presidency in 1850 to issue a call for volunteer colonists

60. Brigham Young, Feb. 20, 1870, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:241.

61. Brigham Young, May 14, 1871, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:117–18.

62. Brigham Young, Jul. 18, 1869, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:60. This apparently did not apply to lawyers: "We do not want them, we have no use for them."

63. Gustive O. Larson, ed., "Journal of the Iron County Mission, John D. Lee, Clerk, December 10, 1850–March 1, 1851," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 20 (1952): 109.

to establish an iron foundry at Little Salt Lake. George A. Smith was appointed to lead the Iron Mission and was accompanied by over one hundred additional volunteers. In 1851, Smith was reported to have said that “idleness was no part of Mormonism. . . . Said that if we did not have work enough to do that he would plan some more as Joseph said there was more honor in building up cities than there was in living in them after they were built.”⁶⁴ The colony, “in spite of serious handicaps and much hardship, succeeded in manufacturing the first iron west of the Mississippi. During the 1850s it produced considerable iron for local use and in the seventies and eighties private enterprise in ‘Old Iron Town’ partially supplied the iron needs of surrounding mining camps.”⁶⁵ The minutes of the 1853 general conference capture the spiritual edification felt by the Utah Mormons in the midst of industriousness and economic achievement: “Elder George A. Smith was called upon to preach “an Iron Sermon,” who rose, took in the stand one of the fire-irons [from the Utah foundries], holding the same over his head, cried out, ‘Stereotype edition,’ and descended, amid the cheers of the Saints.”⁶⁶ For these Utah saints, Smith’s stereotype fire-iron was evidence of their productivity and achievement in the Great Basin. As one non-Mormon commenter noted, “This kind of religious service would satisfy the aspirations of [Thomas] Carlyle himself, whose rather lengthy sermons on the text *laborare est orare* [to work is to pray] are thus condensed into pantomime by ‘Elder George Smith.’”⁶⁷

The October 1897 *Millennial Star* talked of a Mormon Indian colony on the Malad River in Box Elder County, where the local Native Americans

64. *Ibid.*, 378.

65. *Ibid.*, 114.

66. “Minutes of the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* 15, no. 30 (Jul. 23, 1853): 492.

67. “Article I,” *The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal* 99, no. 202 (Apr. 1854): 370. In fact, Carlyle had positive things to say about the Utah church due to their leader and work ethic. See Paul E. Kerry, “Thomas Carlyle’s Draft Essay on the Mormons,” *Literature & Belief* 25, no. 1–2 (2005): 261–88.

were being urged to dig an irrigation ditch. With the Elder's upcoming absence in a meeting, one of the locals was asked to conduct. When the Elder asked what the subject would be, the native replied (in one of the best examples of Mormonism's own "worship through corporeality"), "O, me preach 'em heap water ditch, water ditch!":

The Lamanite had partaken of the spirit and genius of Mormonism. "Water ditch" and water baptism are both vital principles of that religion. The redemption of the soul, the body and the home of man is its purpose. . . . The redemption of the earth, and its restoration to a paradisiacal state, will be brought about in part by the blessing and power of God, and in part by the labors and sacrifices of its inhabitants, under the light of the Gospel and the direction of the authorized servants of God. The Lamanite who had grasped the need of a water ditch by means of which to redeem a portion of the earth's surface that was a desert had grasped a vital principle of the Gospel of Christ.⁶⁸

Here, the digging of an irrigation ditch is in a sense raised to the same level as baptism, a salvific ordinance. Redemption could be found both in sacred rituals and one's consecrated labor. An 1878 issue of *Millennial Star* chastised missionaries who "pass through the world as in a dream, beholding strange things as in a panoramic vision, and coming back from their tour through continents, forget what their eyes have gazed upon and the sounds that have only just entered their ears." It encourages them to visit "manufactories and other places of interest . . . not for mere curiosity and pastime, but for the purpose of learning something that can be utilized and made valuable at home. . . . They should mark well every useful object, scheme or invention; learn the *modus operandi* of every important industry or enterprise; garner up every principle and thought learned or conceived by contact with the world; and in all their ramblings and sojournings, investigations and sight-seeings, remember Zion and its interests. Every truth is of God."⁶⁹ By becoming an "inventive

68. "A Practical Religion," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 43, no. 59 (Oct. 28, 1897): 679.

69. "Practical Religion and Useful Knowledge," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 13, no. 40 (Apr. 1, 1878): 199.

people” who “adopt anything which is elevating and progressive that can be learned from others,” the Mormons will be able to reach “into the field of thought and the eternal storehouse of intelligence for ideas original to the world, which, embodied in practice, will tend to lead earth to heaven and make this planet similar to the higher spheres.”⁷⁰ Furthermore, the *Millennial Star* reported, “The Religion of the Latter-day Saints touches every act of their lives. Or at least it should influence them in all that they do. . . . ‘Mormonism’ enters into the whole being, nature, thoughts, sayings and acts of its adherents.”⁷¹

This conflation of the temporal and spiritual was also recognized by non-Mormon visitors to Utah. “The Gospel which they proclaim,” reported one 1854 article, “consists of directions for emigration, instructions for the setting up of machinery, the management of iron-works, the manufacture of nails, the spinning of cotton-yarn, and the breeding of stock. The same undevotional aspect is exhibited by their public worship, at least in Utah.”⁷² Some were critical of this overlap, declaring it as evidence of “the grossly secular and sensuous character of Mormon worship.”⁷³ In an 1868 review of William Hepworth Dixon’s *New America*, there is a large section devoted to the portion about Mormonism. The “Mormon life is not a life of ease and pleasure;” notes the review, “on the contrary, it is essentially a life of labour and toil; nay, we may say that hand-labour is the essence of every-day religion; with them is far more realised the old saying, *laborare est orare* [to work is to pray], then anywhere else. . . . Labour, in fact, is their religion; they have a creed, it is true, and they have their peculiar doctrines; but the cultivating the land, building of houses, and making the land profitable and their

70. Ibid.

71. “Religion and Business,” *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* 14, no. 40 (Apr. 8, 1878): 214.

72. “Article I,” *The Edinburgh Review*, 370.

73. *The Leisure Hour: A Family Journal of Instruction and Recreation* 126 (May 25, 1854): 334.

homes comfortable, is the real religion of the Mormons. Without such a religion . . . life would be impossible in the Salt Lake Valley."⁷⁴

Conclusion

Drawing upon older Enoch lore, Hasidism and other Jewish movements sought to imbue mundane acts with cosmic significance. Worship through corporeality held that each action—be it making shoes or going on a business trip—could be consecrated in a fashion that opened the channels for divine transformation. If every action was religiously significant, then attaining a high level of holiness was not the sole domain of scholars or priests. Simply doing one's job conscientiously became a path to holiness and, ultimately, redemption. Similarly, the literal work of cultivating the land, manufacturing goods, and fabricating ironworks became a way in which Mormons not only sanctified themselves, but married the earthly and heavenly realms. Industriousness itself was a kind of holiness, endowing daily labors with an invigorating richness and sacred status. It was, in every sense of the phrase, worship through corporeality. Today's Latter-day Saints can find inspiration among their Hasidic brothers and sisters, the legends of Enoch, and their own Mormon history as they seek to transform and consecrate their daily undertakings for the building of the kingdom of God here on earth.

74. *The Union Review: A Magazine of Catholic Literature and Art* 6 (Jan.–Dec. 1868): 297.