Joseph Smith, Ancient Documents and the LDS Plan of Salvation Tuesday, 05 October 2004

NOTE: CAPITALIZATION THROUGHOUT STUDY IS FOR EMPHASIS.

Also note, that all references made to GALBRAITH, are a references to statements made by Joseph Smith. The SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH, was originally Selected and Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, and known as the TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH. The original Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith has been upgraded and updated with Scriptural Annotations and Introduction by Galbraith. So the quotes from that source used in this study are from Joseph Smith.

"What is the PLAN OF SALVATION? The plan of salvation is a plan or SYSTEM by which personal intelligences are enabled to progress rapidly and continuously, and thus to achieve constant happiness. Those who have accepted the plan must strive with all their might to secure personal progression.they must seek knowledge concerning the PLAN. They must also use that knowledge continuously and properly under the requirements of the PLAN. ...Those who live and labor under the Plan must help others progress....The principles that underlie the PLAN for man's good on earth have been in operation throughout the ages, since man began HIS UPWARD CLIMB....The PLAN OF SALVATION is founded in love....God is the Author of the full plan. "(Widtsoe p. 201-202) The Lord has no higher purpose than that enunciated in Moses I:39. The idea here is that those of the intelligences introduced to the plan accepted the plan before being born into the spirit world.

God is the author of the full plan. He was not following a plan, he originated it. "The origin of man is known only in part. It is so with all ultimate questions...Personal intelligences, or intelligent personalities, are among the indestructible units of the universe. The essential part of man has always existed....man's life, from the time of the 'beginning,' may be told in terms of man's active relationship to eternal universal law...From the very beginning the being now known as man possessed a will, and by the operation of his will has reached his present condition."(Widtsoe p.197) "Ye were also in the beginning with the Father;" D&C 93:23 and "Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be" D&C 93:29. "The Church does set up, however, the doctrine that there are found in the universe personal individual intelligences...These intelligences have the power to operate upon other contents of the universe."(Widtsoe p. 191-192) "The foremost intelligence in the universe is God,...whom we address as Father...God, the Highest Intelligence. D&C76:92-93, 88:40, 109:77, ...possesses supreme knowledge and power...his knowledge is the sum of the knowledge possessed by all existing personal intelligences. Abraham 3:19...God is the goal of all other intelligences. ...There are hosts of personal intelligences in the universe....in all stages and rates of progression."(Widtsoe 198-199)

"The First Presidency published an article on page 419 of the April 1907 Improvement Era. This article teaches the "existence of Independent, uncreated, self-existent intelligences, which though they differ, are 'alike in their eternity and their freedom.' (Madsen p. 25) Truman Madsen provides an excellent summary of certain aspects of intelligences. (Madsen, p. 26) "God has taken these intelligences and given to them spirit bodies and given them instructions and training." (Kimball, p. 32) Certain ancient documents, i.e. the Nag Hammadi, confirm some of these unique doctrines:

"It is striking, however, that he [the author of the text being quoted] conceives of the Ecclisia as an eternal hypostasis. 'The Ecclisia [intelligence] of many men which existed before the aeons [eternities] which is rightly named the Aeon of aeons, the nature of the HOLY IMPERISHABLE SPIRITS'. (emphasis in this study is mine). This Theology of the ETERNAL ECLLESIA is most remarkable."(Quispel p. 15) This quote by Quispel is from the Gospel of Truth, one of the many tractates of the Nag Hammadi discovery made in 1945. It is even more remarkable when one realizes that none of the Christian religions believe in a Pre-mortal Spirit world let alone the existence of intellegences before their birth in the Spirit World, indestructible and uncreated. This is a unique confirmation of a most unique Mormon Doctrine.

"The whole story of the universe may be told in the actions of personal intelligences upon matter and energy." (Widstoe, p. 192) "God, the Supreme Intelligence, is a personal intelligence. His influence extends throughout the universe." (Widstoe, p. 93)

"In the Beginning, the rising intelligence progressed by gaining mastery of the surrounding forces...God was there to point out the way of progress and to give direct help when needed....the will of man was left undisturbed. Progress...and the rate of progress...must be and has ever been the operation of the untrammeled will...The time came, no doubt, AS AN EARNED STEP IN PROGRESS, when the intervention of the Lord, personal intelligences became invested with spirit

bodies. Man was born as it were into the spirit world. God became the Father of our spirits. Life in the world of personal intelligences, clothed upon with spirit bodies, is called the First Estate of Man. In that estate we were as sons and daughters of God. The Fatherhood of God is made a reality under this doctrine...our Father perfected a PLAN for the further progress of His spirit children through education in the material universe."(Widtsoe p. 192)

"The Church teaches thatthere is but ONE UNIVERSE, (Widtsoe pp. 202-203) and that all experiences are but manifestations of different order, or different combinations of the contents of the ONE UNIVERSE" (Widtsoe p 188) this being true, then the speculations by those such as Hawking on multi-universes, parallel or otherwise, is merely an exercise in thinking, having no basis in fact. The doctrines of the Gospel are the Celestial Standards by which all subcelestial ideas or knowledge may be judged. (Ehat, p. 24) But there is a GEOGRAPHY of the universe, which includes, Telestial, Terrestrial, Celestial, mortal worlds, and places of outer darkness, a spirit prison, which even has geography, and a Paradise, and even perhaps other contents. But it is all ONE Universe. As intelligences we have the opportunity to change our geography in the universe, particularly if we are following the plan. The plan, once embarked upon, does not permit one to return and start over. It is one way. The ultimate disposition of every individual is permanent and determined by the exercise of his free will. Reincarnation, or rebirth of the soul in successive bodies, as in embraced in most Vedic religions traced back to Ancient Zoroasterianism which did not embrace such doctrines after a split in the religious doctrines before 1200 B.C., and was a corruption introduced anciently into Hinduism and other lines of thought in Ancient India. (Smith p. 760)

On Sunday afternoon, 7 April 1844, near the Nauvoo Temple, speaking to, as some have reported, up to 20,000 persons, Joseph Smith delivered a sermon now known as the KING FOLLETT DISCOURSE. (Ehat 2, p. 340) There were four recorders, their notes were difficult to integrate into a reasonable complete sermon. (Cannon 1, p. 179-192) Elder B.H. Roberts the editor of the multi-volume History of the Church had prepared the discourse with extensive footnotes for publication in the 1912 Edition. Pages 302-317 were left out of the History. The sermon was reinserted into the History of the Church in 1950. (Cannon 2, p. 5) An Amalgamation of the notes of the four recorders was prepared in 1983. (Cannon 2)

In might come as a surprise too many that the Plan of Salvation is not mentioned in the Old Testament. The Plan of Salvation is not mentioned in the New Testament. The idea and doctrine of a Plan of Salvation had been deleted from the official cannon sometime after 400 B.C. because there is evidence that it was in the ancient scriptures before the centuries of changes and deletions began. Recent studies indicate this very conclusion: (Kirk, p. 125, Sugars, p. 62). Kirk enlarges upon the idea that the Dead Sea Scrolls provides a Jewish precursor of a PLAN: "Behind IQS and the Christian forms stands an ancient Jewish oral or written PATTERN. That PATTERN is now recognizable in diverse dress in both Jewish and Christian sources."(Kirk, p. 125) But that PATTERN or PLAN is certainly completely defined in Mormon Doctrine as the PLAN OF SALVATION.

"...Satan, they say, is objecting to this change [by forgiveness of sins] in the community's status [during Zechariah's the Prophet's time before 510 B.C.] Jahweh, wishes to pardon his people; ... Satan [the adversary] is opposed... Satan, therefore, represents the strict observance of legality that precludes pardon; he is the relentless accuser who rigidly interprets retributive justice. He is rebuked for tying to obstruct divine mercy. He is apposed to the PLAN OF SALVATION. He is the justice of Jahweh as contrasted to Jahweh's grace." (Day, p. 117). A future limited study of Satan and Lucifer will make additional use of her book, and another book, Two Powers in Heaven, by Alan F. Segal will also be utilized. (See my Tape on LUCIFER)

Zechariah was the 11th of the 12 Minor Prophets whose works conclude the Old Testament, he wanted to motivate the Jews to rebuild the temple. He was the son of a Prophet, Iddo, and came to Jerusalem when he may have been about 10, called to his youth by the Lord to be a Prophet, he left an extensive record of which we have very little left, only his prophecies of October 520 B.C., and December of 518 B.C. (Editors, RD, p. 431). The messianic theme in his teachings is so powerful that the New Testament writers used excerpts from it to show Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecies. (Editors RD p. 431). From the above quote we can conclude that Jarom of the Book of Mormon knew what he was talking about, and Zechariah was one of those who knew and talked about the PLAN OF SALVATION.

From the Dead Sea Scrolls we get: "Through His knowledge everything comes to pass And everything that is, He secureth through HIS PLAN, and without Him nothing is done." (Ringgren p. 50)

"But what we might call Satan's fundamental purpose and nature was not derived from any of the biblical Satan texts. Without the fundamental notion of a semi-autonomous archfiend who wields the forces of evil against God's will and to the detriment of all humankind, there is no Satan. As many before me have said, this notion seems not to have been an

organic product of home-grown Israelite speculation, but rather was BORROWED FROM ZORASTRIANISM, AND GRAFTED ONTO CERTAIN BRANCHES OF EARLY Judaic thought." (Day p. 63). This would certainly include Christianity. [see my study in this series on LDS DOCTRINES ANCIENT DOCUMENTS, THE MAGI, AND ISHBABH, also see my tape on THE PAHLVI TEXTS AND MORMONISM.]

In Jarom I:2 we find:

"And as these plates [see footnote on this chapter and verse on p. 138 of the Book of Mormon] are small and as these things are written for the intent of the benefit of our brethren the Lamanites, wherefore, it must needs be that I write a little but I shall not write the things of MY PROPHESYING, nor of REVELATIONS. For what could I write more than my fathers have written? For have not they revealed THE PLAN OF SALVATION? I say unto you, Yea; and this sufficeth me."

We learn from this verse that Jarom was a Prophet, prophesied, and had many revelations. And then he states that the FATHERS, [and he may here be referring to more than just his own ancestry since it had been about a century since Lehi and his family had left Jerusalem] had revealed the Plan of Salvation. He had a knowledge of the Brass Plates, he may have been referring to their content. And even if he is referring to his own ancestry for several generations, none of the writers of his immediate family had mentioned the Plan of Salvation in the portions of their writings preserved in our present Book of Mormon. (Ricks, p. 584) There is a reference in 2 Nephi. 9:6 "For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil THE MERCIFUL PLAN OF THE GREAT CREATOR..." an oblique reference to the Plan of Salvation. In 2 Nephi 11:5 there is itemized some of the content of the PLAN in these words: "...my soul delighteth in his GRACE, and his JUSTICE, and POWER, and MERCY in THE GREAT AND ETERNAL PLAN OF DELIVERANCE from death." This quote certainly provides specific references to some of the contents and doctrines embraced in the PLAN OF SALVATION, but refers to the PLAN, by a different designation: The GREAT AND ETERNAL PLAN OF DELIVERANCE. And in verse 13: "O how great THE PLAN OF OUR GOD!" It is generally accepted that these references refer to the Plan of Salvation though with interesting emphasis, most likely more obvious in Hebrew. Jacob, the father of Enos who was the father of Jarom, states at the end of Jacob 6:8 "and make a mock of the GREAT PLAN OF REDEMPTION, which has been laid for you?" If the two main abridgers of the Book of Mormon, Mormon and Moroni knew of other references by the ancestry of Jarom referring to the PLAN as THE PLAN OF SALVATION, they did not incorporate them into the present text as we now have it. And since the Brass Plates are also the records of Jarom's ancestors, the statement by Jarom may be very important, referring by implication that prophets of old DID refer and teach details of THE PLAN OF SALVATION, as we have noted above during the time of Zechariah. All of this is verified in Moses 6:62: "And now, behold, I say unto you (Enoch): This is the PLAN OF SALVATION unto all men, through the blood of mine. Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time."

According to one chronology (Shullman) Enoch was born about 622 years after the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden. Therefore those of the family of Adam would have been very familiar with this term. And note that the conveyance of benefits under the PLAN OF SALVATION comes unto men through the shedding of the blood of Christ, another aspect to be added to those itemized already. It is true that if looked for in depth, ideas parts of the Plan can be found in the various scriptures, but the specific Idea of a Plan and designation of it seems to have been deleted.

In Alma 12:25 we have: "Now, if it had not been for the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, which was laid from the foundation of the world, there could have been no resurrection of the dead; but there was a PLAN OF REDEMPTION laid, which shall bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, of which has been spoken." Here another element is added to the list of internal meanings of the PLAN, that of resurrection. And in Alma 12:26: "And now behold, if it were possible that our first parents could have gone forth and partaken of the tree of life they would have been forever miserable, having no preparatory state; and thus the PLAN OF REDEMPTION would have been frustrated, and the word of God would have been void, taking none effect." The importance in the PLAN OF SALVATIN of this PREPARATORY STATE, where repentance can be effected, is often overlooked. And in Alma 12:30 "And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world, and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works." It is clear from these and other statements that the terms PLAN OF REDEMPTION and PLAN OF SALVATION are not entirely used interchangeably, each variation of the theme of a Plan has some specific aspect to emphasize!

In Alma 12:32-33 we add to this conclusion: 32: "And God gave unto them commandments after having made known unto them the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, that they should not do evil, the penalty thereof being a second death, which was an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness; for on such the PLAN OF REDEMPTION could

have no power, for the works of justice could not be destroyed, according to the supreme goodness of God. V. 33: But God did call on men, in the name of the Son (this being THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION which was laid) saying: If you will repent, and harden not your hearts, then will I have mercy upon you, through mine Only Begotten Son;" A penalty is proscribed here, that of the second death defined as an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness and an enunciation of the demands of Justice which cannot be destroyed. But the PLAN provides a resolution of the problem.

In Alma 17:16 we learn that the sons of Mosiah extended the promises of the Lord to the Lamanites because they had undertaken "the work, that perhaps they might bring them unto repentance; that perhaps they might bring them to know the PLAN OF REDEMPTION." Ammon was expounding the doctrines to Lamoni "for he expounded unto them the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, which was prepared from the foundation of the world; and he also made know unto them concerning the coming of Christ, and all the works of the lord did he make known unto them." (Alma 18:39) And Aaron did expound to the King, "the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the PLAN OF REDEMPTION which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name." (Alma 22:13) A condition is added here, that of belief in Christ. Then in Alma 24:14 we finally get a quote that uses the specific words the PLAN OF SALVATION: "And the Great God has had mercy on us, and made these things known unto us that we might not perish; yea and he has made these things known unto us beforehand because he loveth our souls as well as he loveth our children; therefore in his mercy he doth visit us by his angels, that the PLAN OF SALVATION, might be made known unto us as well as unto future generations." These last several quotes establish that the PLAN was in place before the foundation of the world, and was known before we were born into the Spirit world in order that we might accept and subscribe to the PLAN and was taught and expounded from Adam on down as we have noted above.

Here it might be emphasized again that there is no specific use of the term THE PLAN OF SALVATION in all of the Old Testament. There is also no specific use of THE PLAN OF SALVATION in the New Testament There is also no specific reference to THE PLAN OF SALVATION in the Doctrine and Covenants, but in the Official Declaration 2:9 there is a reference to the ETERNAL PLAN OF GOD. This is another variation on the theme.

In the Book of Alma, in chapter 12 alone there are seven references to the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, four to the PLAN OF MERCY, and one to the PLAN OF HAPPINESS." In Alma 42: 5 we do get:

"For behold, if Adam has put forth his hand immediately, and partaken of the tree of life, he would have lived forever, according to the word of God, having no space for repentance; yea, and also the word of God would have been void, and the GREAT PLAN OF SALVATION would have been frustrated."

This statement in Alma greatly enlarges the concept of the Plan by calling it the GREAT PLAN OF SALVATION, a meaningful superlative. Thus in the entire BOOK OF MORMON there are only two references to the PLAN OF SALVATION, though there are many other references to the synonyms or variations of the theme of the Plan, most of these are all in Alma, and seven of them are in Chapter 12 alone. Mormon must have recognized the significance of these contributions by Alma when he included most what is now the Book of Alma in his abridgement of the accumulated writings.

In Alma 42:8 we have: "Now behold, it was not expedient that man should be reclaimed from this temporal death, for that would destroy the great PLAN OF HAPPINESS." Alma resolves the problem in subsequent verses. "And now remember, my son if it were not for the PLAN OF REDEMPTION (laying it aside) as soon as they were dead their souls were miserable, being cut off from the presence of the Lord." (Alma 42:11)

"Therefore, according to justice, the PLAN OF REDEMPTION could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state, yea this preparatory state; for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice. Now the work of justice could not be destroyed; if so, God would cease to be God." (Alma 42:13)

"And now, the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an atonement should be made; therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the PLAN OF MERCY, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just god, and a merciful God also." (Alma 42:15)

"Now, repentance could not come unto men except there were a punishment, which also was eternal as the life of the soul should be, affixed opposite to the PLAN OF HAPPINESS, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul." (Alma 42:16)

The last reference to the plan is in Alma 42:31: "And now, O my son, ye are called of God to preach the WORD [another word for the full PLAN] unto this people. And now, my son go thy way, declare the WORD with truth and soberness, that thou mayest bring souls unto repentance, that the GREAT PLAN OF MERCY may have claim upon them. And may God grant unto you even according to my words. Amen." There is no further direct reference in the Book of Mormon to the Plan of Salvation or its variations or synonyms. It is extremely remarkable how consistent the details and sub-doctrines of the PLAN are developed in the Book of Mormon.

To illustrate the necessity of the Restoration, we must turn to the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, because as the Great Restorer he was given great insights into the PLAN; profound evidence that he was and is a PROPHET.

JOSEPH SMITH AND THE PLAN OF SALVATION:

There are three main sources of documented material on the Plan of Salvation left by Joseph Smith in his activity as the restoring Prophet of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. One is the History of the Church, (Roberts) the second is the selected materials from his Teachings (Galbraith), and the third is the assembled materials gleaned from his discourses and writings during the last five years of his life. (Ehat 2) Other sources may be journals and recorded writings or sayings not included in these first three main sources, some of which have not been published.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH:

In THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, a very long and profound letter addressed to THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH IN KIRTLAND, TO THEIR BROTHREN ABROAD, Jan 22, 1834, is inserted and from it we take a quote:

"It appears that the great and glorious PLAN OF HIS REDEMPTION was previously provided; [this speaks of a previous event perhaps associated with the origination of the Plan] the sacrifice prepared; the atonement wrought out in the mind and purpose of God, [here it would seem to indicate that there was a MOMENT IN TIME WHEN GOD WROUGHT OUT THE FULL PLAN OF SALVATION IN HIS OWN MIND when it was crystallized as a system of action] even in the person of the Son, through whom man was now to look for acceptance, and through whose merits he was now taught that he alone could find redemption, since the word has been pronounced, unto dust thou shalt return.....It must be shedding the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man; for this was the PLAN OF REDEMPTION, and without the shedding of blood was no remission; and as the sacrifice was instituted for a type, by which man was to discern the great Sacrifice which God has prepared." (H Vol. II, p. 15)

Though no doubt the Prophet Joseph Smith referred to and described the Plan of Salvation, having learned the details of it during the translation work on the Book of Mormon, there is no recorded reference to the Plan in the History of the Church, Vol. 1.

While in Liberty Jail the Prophet write a letter to Mrs. Norman Bull in March 15, 1839, providing details of where he got knowledge of the PLAN Joseph tells how the devil has hampered his work and "I have never had opportunity to give them the PLAN THAT GOD has revealed to me." (H Vol. 111, p. 286) The Prophet here declares he has had a revelation from God about the Plan, and he is no doubt referring here to the PLAN OF SALVATION. He only needs opportunity to give and explain it to his followers.

In what seems to be an anachronistic reference to the Plan of Salvation, the Prophet, in writing about his experiences in the Wentworth Letter, March I, 1842, says: "When about fourteen years of age, I began to reflect upon the importance of being prepared for a future state, and upon inquiring (about) the THE PLAN OF SALVATION, I found that there was a great clash in religious sentiment; if I went to one society they referred me to one plan, [perhaps some where there is a reference that the religious societies at the time of Joseph actually used the term PLAN OF SALVATION, I have not found it as yet]and another to another; each one pointing to his own particular creed as the summum bonum of

perfection." (H Vol. 1V, p. 536) There then follows an account of his First Vision. In that same letter, the prophet states that during his first vision, he "received a promise that the FULLNESS OF THE GOSPEL should at some future time be made known unto me." (H Vol. 1V. p. 536) He refers back to that momentous event of the spring of 1820, probably on April 6th. Accounts of the First Vision (Backman) and other assembled writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. (Jessee) also record no references to the PLAN OF SALVATION. Apparently the Prophet, looking back from 1842, having been imbued with the depths discovered in the Book of Mormon and by revelation, of THE PLAN OF SALVATION likens it to what he had in mind when he went into the sacred grove to inquire of the Lord.

Truman Madsen in his Concordance of Joseph Smith's Doctrinal Teachings makes reference on page 298 to what may have been an inquiry by Joseph Smith into consideration of the Plan of Salvation, included in a letter Joseph sent to Isaac Galland, in September 1839: Joseph Smith says:

"Time and experience will teach us more and more how easily falsehood gains credence with mankind in general, rather than the truth; but especially in taking into consideration THE PLAN OF SALVATION. The plain simple order of the Gospel of Jesus Christ never has been discerned or acknowledged as truth, except by a few..." (H Vol. 4:8)

SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH:

"The GREAT DESIGNS OF GOD, [this could be another synonym of the PLAN OF SALVATION] in relation to the salvation of the human family are very little understood by the professedly wise and intelligent generation in which we live [and it is no different today]. Various and conflicting are the opinions of men concerning the PLAN OF SALVATION, the requisitions of the Almighty, the necessary preparations for heaven, the state and condition of departed spirits." (Galbraith, p. 246) The last part of the final sentence adds to the content of the Plan, "necessary preparations" and the "State and condition of departed spirits." Joseph came to know the full depth and all encompassing doctrines of the PLAN.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION BEFORE THE WORLD WAS

"The Great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the PLAN OF SALVATION, before it rolled into existence, or ever "the morning stars sang together for joy,' the past, the present, and the future were and are with Him, one eternal 'now;' he knew of the fall of Adam." (Galbraith, pp. 248-249) Christ was a Spirit and in the Spirit world, which essentially is the Celestial Kingdom of Father, when he made these contemplations, because the earth on which he would come, [and to which we came,] and effect the Atonement, was only ready for preparation.

At this point we have some questions. We know that "God is the Author of the Full Plan." (Widtsoe, p. 20) When did the Great Jehovah first know about the PLAN? Doestn't it seem necessary that he was the first to know about the PLAN, and that he agreed to the conditions of the PLAN especially the part that required him to accomplish the atonement without which the PLAN was not complete? When was it established as THE PLAN? When did we as individuals first hear of the PLAN? Who was the first to teach us about the PLAN? Where were we when we were taught the PLAN? What were the first steps required by the PLAN? Once we got into the Spirit World by the birthing process we have a general idea of what happened AFTER that, but what about BEFORE? The Prophet Joseph Smith did leave some information to inform us on most of these questions. To quote Joseph Smith:

"I wish to go back to the beginning of creation. There is the starting point in order to know and be fully acquainted with the mind, PURPOSES, decrees, and ordinations of the great Elohim that sits in the heavens." (Cannon p. 17)

"I want to go back, then to the beginning that you may understand and so get you to lift your minds into a more lofty sphere and exalted standing than what the human mind generally understands." (Cannon, 2. p. 19).

"My first object is to go back and find out the character of the ONLY wise and true god and what kind of being He is." (Cannon 2 p. 23)

"First, God himself who sits enthroned in yonder heavens is a man like unto one of yourselves." [details of Gods time on an earth or the duration of his life on an earth, and how he got there are not given anywhere].(Cannon 2 p. 27)

"It is necessary to understand the character and being of God. For I am going to tell you how God came to be God and what sort of being He is. For we have imagined that God was God from the beginning of all eternity. I will refute that idea and take away the veil so you may see....He was once a man like one of us...." (Cannon p. 29) [Whatever and wherever God, our Father, was doing it was evident that Jesus Christ was there with God the Father, certainly at least as an observer]. (Newman pp. 6-9)

"What did Jesus say? As the Father has power in Himself, even so has the Son power in himself. To do what? Why, what the Father did. ...in A MANNER TO LAY DOWN HIS BODY AND TAKE IT UP AGAIN. Jesus, what are you going to do? 'Lay down my life as my Father laid down His body that I may take it up again.'" (Cannon 2 p. 31)

"What did Jesus Christ do? 'Why I do the same things that I SAW my father do when WORLDS [What worlds? What kind of worlds?] came rolling into existence.' Saw the Father do what? 'I SAW THE Father work out His kingdom with fear and trembling and I am doing the same too.'" (Cannon 2 p. 33).

"Chapters I & 2 [of Genesis] deal with events that belong to the very earliest times." (Reyburn, p. 21) The first sentence in Genesis is understood to be an independent sentence: "In the Beginning when God created the universe." (Reyburn, p. 26-27). Is the reference by Joseph to what God was doing and what Christ was SEEING a reference to the time when the first worlds of any kind, spirit, immortal, etc., were first created? Does the Handbook on Genesis for translators require a deeper understanding of that initial activity by the Father, witnessed by Christ? (Newman) Did Father when his knowledge was complete create for himself a spirit body? Moses 3:5 seems to indicate he could or did: "For I, the Lord God, created all things of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth." Did he next create in some manner for himself an immortal body, and then did he, as at some place it indicates, he partake of a substance to become mortal? Then as a self-existent being could he then lay down and then raise his body in an exalted form? As he said he did. "They who are of a celestial spirit shall receive the same body which was a natural body; even ye shall receive your bodies, and your glory shall be that glory by which your bodies are quickened.....Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fullness." (D&C 88:29-29)

Then, as Joseph Smith said: "the GREAT and GLORIOUS PLAN of HIS REDEPMTION...the ATONEMENT WAS WROUGHT OUT in the THE MIND and PURPOSE OF GOD....man was not able to erect a system or plan with power sufficient to free him from a destruction.... God....prepared a sacrifice in the gift of His Own Son....to prepare a waythrough which man might enter into the Lord's presence." (Galbraith, p. 71) Did God, in order to have a son to fill the conditions required by His Plan, conduct Mother in Heaven through the same or similar stages of existence that he had traversed in order to have a companion equally exalted as himself? "There is the Trinity of the Father, Mother and the Son." (Bohlig p. 32) "'Mother'. She is the female complement of the Father. However, we are dealing here with a higher form of existence which is difficult to grasp in terms of human concepts." (Bohlig, p. 40) "Three powers came forththey are the Father, the Mother and the Son." (Bohlig, p. 54). Did God have a short residence on an earth sufficient to lay down and raise up his body to become a glorified Celestial Being also Celestialize that earth? With a glorified Godhead of a Father and Mother, was the next step in the plan to involve Jesus in the Plan by providing him with a spirit body? "Various and conflicting are the opinions of men concerning the PLAN OF SALVATIONpreparations for heaven, the state and condition of departed spirits, and the happiness or misery that is consequent upon the practice of righteousness." (Galbraith, p. 246)

"Jesus, however is the first born among all the sons of God-the first begotten in the spirit, and the only begotten in the flesh. He is our elder brother, and we, like him, are in the image of God." (Clark, p. 244) "The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end....There never was a time when there were not spirits [interpreted as intelligences]...Intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle.....and there is no creation about it." (Galbraith, p. 397) "Man existed in spirit; the mind of man--the intelligent part-is as immortal as, and is coequal with, God Himself." (Galbraith, p. 397) When we were all intelligences, as Christ would also have been, were we watching and seeing in some part some of what God was doing while he worked out His exaltation? "God offered to help some of the WAITING [Waiting? Where?] Intelligent beings secure the knowledge that he had already gained." (Widtsoe 2, p. 27) But Christ was in a more intimate relationship with God, he had been with the Father all of the time, he was there witnessing all that was being done by Father as he worked out His Kingdom and becoming God, gaining conquest over the laws of the Universe.

"In the 'beginning' which transcends our understanding, God undoubtedly exercised his will vigorously, and thus gained experiences of the forces lying about him. As knowledge grew into greater knowledge, persistent efforts of will, his recognition of universal law, became greater until he attained at last a conquest over the universe, which to our finite understanding seems absolutely complete....We may be certain that through self-effort, the inherent and innate powers of God have been developed to a God-like degree. Thus, He has become God." (Widtsoe, p. 25). "All knowledge that is, all that exists, God knows...[He] is the All knowing One, because he knows all that is known." (Roberts, p. 70) "His Godhood, however, is the product of simple obedience to the laws of the universe." (Widtsoe, p. 25)

"God offered to help SOME of the WAITING INTELLIGENT BEINGS secure the knowledge that he had already gained, in such a manner that they need not traverse the road that he had traversed, but might find other and perhaps simpler opportunities of universal existence. He devised PLANS OF PROGRESSION whereby the experiences of one person might be used by an inferior one...A LONE GOD in the universe cannot find great joy in his power." (Widtsoe, p. 27)

Note the content of the first sentence: "SOME of the waiting intelligent beings." Does this permit the conclusion that individual intellegencies, Christ among them, knowing what was going on were waiting for the results? And when, as quoted before, President Spencer W. Kimball speaks of "God has taken these intelligences and given to them spirit bodies and given them instructions and training." Does that include those considered as "SOME?" When the worlds mentioned in Moses I:33, "For behold there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are MANY that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man." Are those THAT HAVE PASSED AWAY considered to be just SOME? Does Moses 7:30 suggest how great a number these might be? "And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths, like this, it would not be a beginning..." Can we number the particles of the earth? Does the formula included in the mathematics for space travel which reduces the earth to the total fundemental particles, the proton, or hydrogen atom, a number which is 10 followed by 52 zeros, for the mass of the earth to be used in Newton's Laws of Gravity precisely for the safety of space travelers, provide that number? A student of mine who had worked in NASA said it was, in fact he said it was he who had calculated the number. And how many millions of earths would we count the particles thereof to get a higher number? Ten million? Is the "Enoch" number arrived at in Moses 7:30 for just worlds created before this one, which would be 10 followed by at least 59 zeros. Does that come anywhere close to the beginning of God's creations? What implications is this for Cosmologists who at the present cannot calculate more than 10 followed by 30 zeros as the TOTAL STARS of the Universe, let along the worlds? In Moses 7:30. Therefore, is this a MINIMAL number, because all these creations "would not be a beginning?" Is this the minimal number of worlds that Moses I:33 refers to as having "passed way," and are these included in the "some" referred earlier? Because I teach geology and astronomy I have to ask these questions! If I can answer these questions the students will become focused and realize the Gospel has depths to it most have not plumbed!

Since there was no resurrection yet at the time the Lord was conversing with Moses, for the Lord was still a spirit, where are the inhabitants of those worlds that passed away? Was there a spirit world prepared for them to wait out the resurrection of Christ? Does Moses 7:31 answer that in part? Is the reference there that the inhabitants of ALL THE WORLDS that passed away [first, or before the time that Christ was resurrected, before which there could be no resurrection,] were all them translated? Caught up to the bosom of the Father to Zion? All of this raises more questions than can be answered in this brief study. An old proverb I learned in China was that "a fool can ask more questions in a few moments than a wise man can answer in a life time," but these are questions that assail the teacher who attempts to deal with Cosmology and Geology and to reconcile religion and science. The Gospel does have great answers! There is more depth in the scriptures than one realizes.

"The foremost intelligence in the universe is God. Him who we address in our prayers as Father." D&C 20:17, 76:92, 93, 88:40, I09:77. (Widtsoe, p. 198). Abraham suggests that God is more intelligent than the sum of all other Intelligences: "I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all." Abr. 3:19. Joseph greatly enlarged on what is found in Abraham: "God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits [interpreted as intellegences] and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw PROPER TO INSTITUTE LAWS [THE PLAN?] whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself." (Abraham 3"19-23 and Galbraith, p. 397). Is what he instituted called the PLAN OF SALVATION? And about that time did Father fill in the details of the PLAN and the role that Christ would play in it and did Christ accept the PLAN and his role? "The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with all of the earths that ever would be created for he would redeem them all" (Lundwall, p. 158) ...He comprehended the fall of man, and his redemption. He knew the PLAN OF SALVATION and pointed it out." (Galbraith 249)

THE ANCIENT PLAN:

We learn from Joseph that "Abel...was instructed more fully in the PLAN, than what the bible speaks of....it is evident in

our minds that he was instructed more fully in the PLAN....how could he offer sacrifices in faith....without having been previously instructed in that Plan?" (Galbraith p. 7) "The Gospel was preached to Abraham....If in any other name was it the Gospel? And if it was the gospel, and that preached in the name of Christ, had it any ordinances?... And if it had ordinances what were they?" (Galbraith p. 73) "Abraham rejoiced ...looked forward to the time of the coming of the Savior, and rejoiced in His redemption...and... when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the Gospel [certainly the PLAN] preached to them...and ...though with different dispensations,they were to rely upon God alone as the author of their salvation, as contained in HIS LAW," (Galbraith p. 74) another variation on the PLAN.

"Great blessings await us at this time, and will be poured out upon us, if we are faithful...for we are entitled to greater spiritual blessing than they [at the time of Christ] were, because they had Christ in person with them, to instruct them in the great PLAN OF SALVATION." (Galbraith p. 107) From this we learn that Joseph Smith understood that every dispensation to the present had the PLAN OF SALVATION taught to them just as indicated by Jarom. But the details were deliberately deleted. "The plans of Jehovah are not so unjust, the statements of holy writ so visionary, nor the PLAN OF SALVATION for the human family so incompatible with common sense." (Galbraith p. 598) And all will hear it, here, or in the spirit world, (D&C 138).

There are three ancient texts that were originally in Greek, then translated into Egyptian Sahidic Coptic after 120 A.D. Two are part of the great Nag Hammadi discovery. English translations of these are now available. (Parrott) More detailed studies are also available and in progress, but our purpose here is merely to indicate that during the first few centuries after Christ there were documents being utilized in Christian or Quasi Christian groups that talk of the PLAN.

"The Sophia of Jesus Christ. After he rose from the dead, his twelve disciples and seven women....went to Galilee onto the mountain.... When they had gathered together and were perplexed about the underlying reality of the universe and THE PLAN and the holy providence and the power of the authorities and about everything the Savior is doing with them in the secret of the HOLY PLAN, the Savior appeared.....his likeness resembles a great angel of light.....No mortal flesh could endure it and perfect like that which he taught us about on the mountain...And he said: 'Peace be to you My peace I give to you!' They all marveled and were afraid.... "What are you thinking about? Why are you perplexed? What are you searching for?" Philip said: "for the underlying reality of the universe and THE PLAN.? The Savior said to them 'I want you to know that all men born on earth from the foundation of the world [see Alma 13:3-13] until now, being dust, while they have inquired about God, who he is and what he is like, have not found him....Now the wisest among them have speculated from the ordering of the world and its movement. But their speculation has not reached the truth." (Parrott p. 41-43) "But I came from the Infinite Light, I am here, for I know HIM (light) that I might speak to you about the precise nature of the truth." (Parrott p. 47). "But to you it is given to know, and to those who are worthy to know. It will be given to." (Parrott p. 49)

"'Mathew said to him: 'Lord, no one can find the truth except through you. Therefore teach us the truth.' ...He who is ineffable....For since no divinity is over him he is eternal. Being eternal, he does not experience birth. And being unbegotten he is without likeness....I am the Great Savior. ...he is immortal and eternal, having no birth...He is unbegotten, having no beginning....no one rules over him." (Parrott pp.49-53) "He is called Father of the Universe" (Parrott pp. 56-57)

Additional doctrines that follow and are contained in these and similar documents will be the subject of a future study. These writings are not included in the accepted cannon of the Christian Church but by their absence they do confirm the need of a restoration, and now the restoration presents most of the doctrines with clarity, without perverse or distorted doctrine so the Restoration of the Fullness of Times now reinstates all the beautiful truths of the ancient doctrines contained in the PLAN OF SALVATION.

Lucifer concocted a plan contrary to the PLAN OF SALVATION, "and laid his Plans before the grand council, who gave their vote in favor of Jesus Christ. So the devil rose in rebellion against God, and was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him." (Galbraith p. 401) And on earth "All sins shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost...He has got to say that the sun does not shine while he sees it, he has got to deny Jesus Christ when the heavens have been opened unto him, and to deny the PLAN OF SALVATION with his eyes open to the truth of it." (Galbraith p. 402)

Who has "duly considered the condescension of the Father of our spirits, in providing a sacrifice for His creatures, a PLAN OF REDEMPTION, a POWER OF ATONEMENT, a SCHEME OF SALVATION, having as its great objects, the bringing of men back into the presence of the King of heaven, crowning them in the celestial glory, and making them heirs with the Son?" (Galbraith p. 60)

During the last five years of the life of Joseph Smith he provided many precise and mature thoughts on the PLAN OF SALVATION. He spoke of the two Priesthoods and the power and authority they comprehend "in all ages of the world to the latest posterity on the earth and is the channel through which all knowledge, doctrine, the PLAN OF SALVATION and every important matter is revealed from heaven." (Ehat 2, p. 38)

The Great Prophet Joseph Smith said: "The GREAT PLAN OF SALVATION is a theme which ought to occupy our strict attention, and be regarded as one of heaven's best gifts to mankind." (Galbraith p. 82)

"The Ancient of Days'....the first and oldest of all [on earth] ...is Michael because he was the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but was the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the PLAN OF ORDINANCES for the Salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom Christ was first revealed....the ordinances to be the same for Ever and ever and set Adam to watch over them to reveal them from heaven to man or to send Angels to reveal them....These angels are under the direction of Michael, or Adam who acts under the direction of Christ." (Galbraith p. 39)

In the Pistis Sophia (Macdermot) many of these ordinances, similar to Temple rituals and practices, are assembled. These will be the subject of a future study.

An important word was changed in the 1981 edition of the Standard Works in Abraham 1:3 which identifies Adam as the FIRSTBORN on this earth: "even from the beginning or before the foundation of the world, down to the present time, even the right of the FIRSTBORN, OR THE FIRST MAN [ON EARTH], WHO IS ADAM, OR FIRST FATHER, through the fathers unto me." Father and Mother in Heaven prepared the immortal body for Adam in the garden by a birthing process so that Adam became the "FIRSTBORN," the FIRST MAN, born on or for this earth. By partaking of the forbidden fruit he became the FIRST MORTAL man on this earth, and brought mortality to all his generations. From the standpoint of Anthropology this is a singular doctrine that needs to be examined in some detail. It seems to mean that all hominids, or human like forms, called Pre-Adamic Men are not of the same family as Adam. Adam and all of his generations had a prior existence in the Spirit world where we were born into that world and nurtured until the time came to be born into this world. All the Hominids, or Pre-Adamic "men" did not have that history. Would all Pre-Adamic men therefore be classified as animals and in the same category of all other creatures that inhabit the earth? When it came time to introduce MAN into the scheme of things pertaining to this world it was necessary to engage in a birthing process so Adam would become the FIRSTBORN in the flesh in this world. Christ was the FIRSTBORN in the Spirit world, and was then the ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER in the Flesh in the Meridian of Time. And to Adam, the FIRSTBORN, was given all the doctrines of the PLAN OF SALVATION and the PLAN OF ORDINANCES. (Galbraith p. 39)

"There is no other God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones." (John 5:26) "As the father hath life in himself, even so hath he given the son to have life in himself. ... The first step in the salvation of men is the laws of eternal and self-existent principles. Spirits [Intelligences] are eternal. At the FIRST ORGANIZATION IN HEAVEN WE WERE PRESENT and SAW THE SAVIOR CHOSEN and APPOINTED, and THE PLAN OF SALVATION MADE and WE SANCTIONED IT." (Galbraith p. 60) While it is generally interpreted that this refers to the 'Council in Heaven' [it is evident n the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith that there were many Councils,] we are so familiar with, it may also refer to a much earlier organizational meeting and a presentation of the PLAN to waiting intellegencies. The PLAN OF SALVATION was presented for the FIRST TIME, at some time and somewhere, and wouldn't we have had to have heard about it before embarking on the demanding PLAN and getting born into the Spirit World? Certainly Christ would have accepted the role he was to play and we sanctioned that choice made the Father as well as the FATHER'S PLAN in order to start our activity, to earn a right to be born into the Spirit world as described above. Joseph Smith made a change in the John 1:1 which seems to support this explanation: "In the Beginning was the GOSPEL [PLAN OF SALVATION] preached THROUGH the son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, AND THE SON WAS OF GOD." (John I:I) Does the last sentence "And the Son was OF God" indicate that by the use of the word "OF" Christ was then acting in the Capacity of the FIRST BORN in the Spirit, since he was OF God? Would he not have accepted the appointment as the SAVIOUR prior to his birth in the spirit world as the FIRST SPIRIT MAN, and our Elder Brother, and become an integral part of the PLAN, as well as its chief proponent? All of us who are now on earth [and any other world for that matter] must have accepted the PLAN as presented and knew the Savior and what he would accomplish, and thus knowing the PLAN we knowingly and by use of our Free Agency, sanctioned and accepted the PLAN and embarked on the long road to EXALTATION. The first step after having earned the right was to be born into the Spirit World.

In the Translator's Handbook of John the information provided directly reflects LDS understanding along the lines we

have outlined from the teachings of Joseph Smith presented above: In Chap. 1.1:

"Before the world was created, the Word already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God....John wants his readers to understand that as whatever point the creation began, the Word already existed.....The Word is close to being recognized as a personal being.....the one who was called the Word...or the one known as the Word.....The 'Word' is to be understood as a designation for A PERSON....God and the Word were TOGETHER...the Word WAS there WHERE GOD WAS....or...IN COMPANY WITH GOD....the Word possessed a DIVINE NATURE.....John is not saying that 'the Word' was God the Father, but he is affirming that the same divine predication can be made of the 'Word' as can be made of God the Father... 'God' completely characterizes 'the Word', and all that is true of God is true of the Word....Just what God was that is what the Word also was.....He has been with God, and he has been the same as God...or He was and still is with God, and he is the same as God. 1.2: The Word was with God; here he [John] is careful to affirm that the TWO EXISTED SIMULATENOUSLY, THAT IS, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THE WORD WAS WITH GOD." (Newman, pp. 6-9). An LDS Scholar could not have said or translated it better. The Translator's Handbook puts all Christian religions on notice of where they should have been if the translations had only been correct.

Joseph gave a discourse the 3 of October 1841 on the doctrine "Baptism for the Dead."

"This doctrine appears glorious, in as much as it exhibits the greatness of divine compassion and benevolence in the extent of the PLAN OF HUMAN SALVATION." (Ehat, p. 77)

Other articles in this series and some of my tapes treat the subject of Baptism for the Dead in some detail (See the Tape on The Mandeans)

On August 29th of 1842, Joseph the Prophet gave a talk, which includes this:

"I have the whole PLAN OF THE KINGDOM, before me, and no other person has." (Ehat p. 129) During the next two years he tried to pass as much of what he knew to those who would receive as he could. Some of the twelve were not around during many of the discourses in 1944, and did not know much of what the Prophet said until his works and talks were gathered together and assembled in 1856 into what would then become the History of the Church. (Cannon p. 5). Brigham Young first learned of many of these doctrines and corrected some of the teachings he had made during the early 1850's, and later incorporated into the D&C revision of 1877-78 many of the Prophet's teachings. (Woodford, a copy given to me by the Author).

The Prophet Joseph Smith concluded: "The GREAT PLAN OF SALVATION is a theme which ought to occupy our strict attention and be regarded as one of heaven's best gifts to mankind" (Galbraith p. 82)

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