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## Gethsemene and Golgotha: Why and What the Savior Suffered

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Bruce Satterfield

*The Atonement is the greatest event in history because it enables us, as fallen humans, to return to our Father in Heaven. Most of Christianity bases its knowledge of the Atonement on the teachings found in the New Testament. But these teachings are incomplete and often insufficient, because the New Testament does not contain the fullness of doctrine. Thus the Lord brought forth the Book of Mormon to clarify the important doctrine of the Atonement.*

The four Gospels were written to testify that Jesus is the Christ, whose sacred mission was to make an atonement for all of God's children. With this in mind, the climax of each Gospel is a narration of the historical events associated with the atoning sacrifice in Gethsemane and Golgotha. It was not the intent of the Gospels, however, to present a complete theological treatise on the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Consequently, the Gospels do not provide a clear explanation as to the need for the Atonement, nor do they present a total picture of what the Savior actually suffered. Speaking of this, William Wolf wrote, "There is no single New Testament doctrine of the Atonement — there is simply a collection of images and metaphors with some preliminary analysis and reflection from which subsequent tradition built its systematic doctrines and theories."<sup>1</sup> The theories developed by Christian theologians regarding the Atonement have generally confused

the doctrine.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, to the Christian world the Atonement has remained "an expression of the mystery of God."<sup>3</sup>

One purpose of the Book of Mormon is to provide a second witness that Jesus is the Christ. As part of that witness the reality of the Atonement is confirmed within the Book of Mormon's sacred pages. The Book of Mormon does more than that, however. President Ezra Taft Benson taught that it "provides the most complete explanation of the doctrine of the Atonement."<sup>4</sup> The Book of Mormon reveals the *need* for the Atonement. Further, it clarifies *what* Christ suffered for humankind.

Understanding why there is a need for the Atonement of Christ is critical to accepting him. President Benson observed, "Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ."<sup>5</sup> Why there is a need for the Atonement will first be considered from the perspective of the four Gospels. Following this will be the testimony and additional information found in the Book of Mormon.

The Gospels divulge little as to the need for the Atonement. Nonetheless, several statements reveal a world in trouble with Jesus Christ providing the only way of escape. The Savior himself said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17). He then said that he who believes on him would not be condemned, while he "that believeth not is condemned already" (John 3:18). Why? "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:19-20).

The Gospels teach that man's salvation will come at the expense of the Savior's own life, for he will give "his life" for the world (John 10:10-18). This sacrifice will be "a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). The Savior's life will be sacrificed by the shedding of his blood (Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20). His sacrifice will bring a remission of sins (Matt. 26:28). This offering will be voluntary (John 10:18) but will be the will of the Father (John 3:16-17; 6:38-40). After laying down his life, the Savior will have "power

to take it again" (John 10:17, 18) through the power of the Resurrection (John 11:25). The death and Resurrection of the Savior will give life to the world (John 6:51; 10:10).

To these statements, the Book of Mormon adds not only a confirming voice but also a wealth of information that greatly clarifies the need for the Atonement. In so doing, the Book of Mormon answers such questions as these: How did men arrive at a state of condemnation in which they love darkness rather than light? Why has God allowed this to happen? Why must there be a sacrifice for sin? Cannot God simply dismiss one's evil acts when one repents? Why must God's son be a sacrifice for our sins? What did the Savior suffer? The answers to these questions are indispensable in understanding the need for the Atonement.

### The Divine Plan

Elder Neal A. Maxwell stated, "Fundamental to a man's understanding about his identity and purpose upon this planet is to know that God has a plan of salvation. . . . Yet there are no references to 'a plan' of salvation as such in the Old or the New Testament."<sup>6</sup> Surely, biblical prophets understood the plan of salvation, for they refer to elements of the plan. Yet in its present form, the Bible does not refer to an overall plan that God has for humankind. The Book of Mormon, however, speaks of a divine plan that is variously called the plan of deliverance (2 Ne. 11:5), the plan of redemption (Jacob 6:8; Alma 12:25-33), the plan of salvation (Jarom 1:2; Alma 24:14; 42:5), the plan of restoration (Alma 41:2), the plan of happiness (Alma 42:8, 16), and the plan of mercy (Alma 42:15, 31).

The Book of Mormon shows that the Atonement is part of this divine plan. God did not develop and enact this plan after some unforeseen trouble into which we had brought ourselves. Instead, the Book of Mormon teaches that this plan was "prepared from the foundation of the world" (1 Ne. 10:18; Mosiah 15:19; Alma 12:25, 30; 22:13; Ether 3:14). In view of this preparation, Elder Orson F. Whitney taught, "Bear in mind that the Gospel of Christ is not a mere life boat or fire escape—a way out of a perilous situation. It is all this and more. It is the path to endless glory and exaltation, the plan of eternal progression, designed by the wisdom of the Gods before the foundation of the world."<sup>7</sup>

The Book of Mormon reveals that three important events work together to bring about God's plan: the creation of the earth, the Fall of Adam, and the Atonement of Christ. Moroni taught that God "created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. Behold he created Adam, and by Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, even the Father and the Son; and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man. And because of the redemption of man, which came by Jesus Christ, they are brought back into the presence of the Lord" (Morm. 9:11-13).

A knowledge of the relationship between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement is essential to understanding man's true relationship with God. This is seen in the account of Aaron teaching the king of the Lamanites. Before Aaron arrived, the king knew little of God and his dealings with his children (Alma 22:7-11). After Aaron had taught the king some initial principles about God and saw that the king believed his teachings, Aaron

began from the creation of Adam, reading the scriptures unto the king – how God created man after his own image, and that God gave him commandments, and that because of transgression, man had fallen.

And Aaron did expound unto him 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.

And since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself; but the sufferings and death of Christ atone for their sins, through faith and repentance, and so forth; and that he breaketh the bands of death, that the grave shall have no victory, and that the sting of death should be swallowed up in the hopes of glory; and Aaron did expound all these things unto the king (Alma 22:12-14).

After he discovered his true relationship with God, the king's greatest desire was to rectify his fallen condition and gain eternal life (Alma 22:15-18). Ammon, Aaron's brother, taught King Lamoni in the same manner with similar results (see Alma 18:24-42). It is fundamental to the theology of the Book of Mormon that before one can fully appreciate the need for the Atonement, a correct understanding of the purpose of the creation of the earth and the Fall of Adam is essential.

What role do the Creation and the Fall play in the plan of salvation and the need for the Atonement? Lehi taught that God “created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are,” including “our first parents” (2 Ne. 2:14–15). In their initial creation, Adam and Eve were “in a state of innocence,” where they knew “no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin” (2 Nephi 2:23). Lehi stated that “to bring about his eternal purposes,” God placed in the garden of Eden two opposing trees — the tree of life opposite the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2 Ne. 2:15). This opposition was indispensable to the “eternal purposes” of God’s plan. Lehi explained, “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Ne. 2:11). Opposition is essential in order to have genuine and accurate knowledge.<sup>8</sup> The Lord stated that “if [men] never should have bitter they could not know the sweet” (D&C 29:39). Only by experiencing opposites can we comprehend, for opposition gives definition. Elder Orson Pratt explained: “The tree of knowledge of good and evil was placed there that man might gain certain information he never could have gained otherwise; by partaking of the forbidden fruit he experienced misery, then he knew that he was once happy, previously he could not comprehend what happiness meant, what good was; but now he knows it by contrast, now he is filled with sorrow and wretchedness, now he sees the difference between his former and present condition.”<sup>9</sup>

The purpose of the creation of this earth was to provide a place where opposites not only exist but are experienced. Brigham Young observed, “Facts are made apparent to the human mind by their opposites. We find ourselves surrounded in this mortality by an almost endless combination of opposites, through which we must pass to gain experience and information to fit us for an eternal progression.”<sup>10</sup> Lehi concluded that if opposites did not exist, the earth would “have been created for a thing of naught; wherefore there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation” (2 Ne. 2:12). With no opposites there could be “no joy,” for there would be “no misery” (2 Ne. 2:23). The earth was created, therefore, that man “might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25), and joy can only come by experiencing misery.

## The Fall and Its Effects

Though forbidden by God,<sup>11</sup> eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was necessary for Adam and Eve. Eating the fruit brought about the Fall. Though the Fall was a necessary part of God's plan, from a human perspective the Fall brought both positive and negative results. Understanding these effects is essential, for as President Ezra Taft Benson taught, "No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind."<sup>12</sup>

The Book of Mormon describes the positive results of eating the fruit as twofold. First, Adam and Eve could have children. As a result, God's children could continue their progression by coming from premortality to mortality (2 Ne. 2:20-25). Second, because of the mortal experience, Adam, Eve, and their posterity could "be as God, knowing good and evil" (2 Ne. 2:18). These positive results are confirmed in the book of Moses, where Eve declared, "Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil" (Moses 5:11).

Acquiring a knowledge of good and evil is vital for God's children. Without it they could not become as he is. Elder James E. Talmage wrote, "A knowledge of good and evil is essential to the advancement that God has made possible for His children to achieve; and this knowledge can be best gained by *actual experience*, with the contrasts of good and its opposite plainly discernible."<sup>13</sup> Mortality is necessary to the acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil. Elder Talmage later said, "A knowledge of good and evil is essential to progress, and the school of experience in mortality has been provided for the acquirement of such knowledge."<sup>14</sup> President George Q. Cannon explained this principle further: "It is for this purpose that we are here. God has given unto us this probation for the express purpose of obtaining a knowledge of good and evil—of understanding evil and being able to overcome the evil—and by overcoming it receive the exaltation and glory that He has in store for us."<sup>15</sup> In light of this concept of understanding evil, at the beginning of World War I, the First Presidency gave the following instruction to the Church: "God, doubtless, could avert war, prevent crime, destroy poverty, chase

away darkness, overcome error, and make all things bright, beautiful and joyful. But this would involve the destruction of a vital and fundamental attribute in man—the right of agency. It is for the benefit of His sons and daughters that they become acquainted with evil as well as good, with darkness as well as light, with error as well as truth, and with the results of the infraction of eternal laws. Therefore he has permitted the evils which have been brought about by the acts of His creatures, but will control their ultimate results for His own glory and the progress and exaltation of His sons and daughters, when they have learned obedience by the things they suffer. The contrasts experienced in this world of mingled sorrow and joy are educational in their nature, and will be the means of raising humanity to a full appreciation of all that is right and true and good.”<sup>16</sup>

The negative side of all this is that the Fall brings dire consequences both in mortality and in eternity. An understanding of these consequences will explain why the Savior said men love “darkness rather than light” (John 3:19). It will also become clear why God simply cannot dismiss sin upon repentance without an atonement made for man.

The Book of Mormon reveals that the Fall of Adam brought upon Adam, Eve, and “all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal, that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord” (Alma 42:9; see also 2 Ne. 2:21; 9:6; Mosiah 16:3; Alma 12:22; Hel. 14:16). Together the death of the body and man’s separation from God comprise what the Book of Mormon calls the “first death” (Hel. 14:16). Mormon also called it “the curse of Adam” (Moro. 8:8).

With the Fall the physical nature of Adam and Eve changed. In the garden, Adam and Eve were in a deathless, immortal state. Because of the Fall, their bodies became mortal, subject to all of the ills and imperfections of mortality. This mortal condition continued with their children. Because of this, little children are born into a fallen condition. King Benjamin explained that although little children do not commit sin, nevertheless, because of “Adam, or by nature, they fall” (Mosiah 3:16). Elder Orson Pratt explained further: “Spirits, though pure and innocent, before they entered the body, would become contaminated by entering a fallen tabernacle; not contaminated by their own sins, but by their connection with a body brought into the world by the fall, earthly,

fallen, imperfect, and corrupt in its nature. A spirit, having entered such a tabernacle, though it may commit no personal sins, is unfit to return again into the presence of a holy Being.”<sup>17</sup> This teaching is not to be confused with the theory of original sin espoused by many Christian theologians, wherein the total depravity of man is inborn.<sup>18</sup>

In this fallen state, man transgressed the laws of God, causing the natural man to “become carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature” (Alma 42:10; see also D&C 20:20; Moses 5:13).<sup>19</sup> Associated with the natural man are appetites and desires that, if left unchecked, are “contrary to the nature of God” (Alma 41:11), for the natural man craves the lusts of the world. Knowing this, Lehi admonished his sons not to give in to “the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate” (2 Ne. 2:29). It is because of the carnality of the natural man that the Savior said men “loved darkness rather than light” (John 3:19).

Abinadi explained that the condition man inherited by the Fall is the very means by which he comes to the knowledge of good and evil. He taught that Satan “did beguile our first parents, which was the cause of their fall; which was the cause of all mankind becoming carnal, sensual, devilish, knowing evil from good, subjecting themselves to the devil” (Mosiah 16:3). Of this Elder James E. Talmage wrote, “From Father Adam we have inherited all the ills to which flesh is heir; but such are necessarily incident to a knowledge of good and evil, by the proper use of which knowledge man may become even as the Gods.”<sup>20</sup>

Because of this condition, man’s relationship with God changed. The brother of Jared described this relationship while pleading with the Lord for a blessing: “We know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before thee; because of the fall our natures [i.e., physical bodies] have become evil continually” (Ether 3:2). Further, King Benjamin stated that “the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been since the fall of Adam” (Mosiah 3:19).

Beyond the mortal consequences, the Book of Mormon teaches that the Fall of Adam brought upon humankind eternal consequences. Jacob declared that because of the Fall, if there were no Atonement “our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the

devil, to rise no more. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself" (2 Ne. 9:8-9). Elder Orson Pratt explained why this is so: "By one man came death – the death of the body. What becomes of the spirit when the body dies? Will it be perfectly happy? Would old father Adam's spirit have gone back into the presence of God, and dwelt there eternally, enjoying all the felicities and glories of heaven, after his body had died? No; for the penalty of that transgression was not limited to the body alone." He then explained: "When he sinned, it was with both the body and the spirit that he sinned: it was not only the body that ate of the fruit, but the spirit gave the will to eat; the spirit sinned therefore as well as the body; they were agreed in partaking of that fruit. Was not the spirit to suffer then as well as the body? Yes. How long? To all ages of eternity, without any end; while the body was to return back to its mother earth, and there slumber to all eternity." He then taught that without the Atonement of Christ, the Fall would have brought "an eternal dissolution of the body and spirit – the one to lie mingling with its mother earth, to all ages of eternity, and the other to be subject, throughout all future duration, to the power that deceived him, and led them astray; to be completely miserable."<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the eternal effects of the "curse of Adam," each person's own transgression of the laws of God also results in eternal consequences. Alma taught his son that each law of God has "a punishment affixed" (Alma 42:22). When a law is broken, justice demands that the penalty must be paid, for "justice claimeth the creature and executeth the law, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God" (Alma 42:22). The penalty of a broken law is as "eternal as the life of the soul should be" (Alma 42:16). Elder Dallin H. Oaks stated, "According to eternal law, the consequences that follow from the justice of God are severe and permanent. When a commandment is broken, a commensurate penalty is imposed. This happens automatically."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, Lehi taught that since all men violate the laws of God through sinful acts, "by the law no flesh is justified; or, by the law men are cut off. Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become

miserable forever" (2 Ne. 2:5). "And thus we see," said Alma, "that all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of God, which consigned them forever to be cut off from his presence" (Alma 42:14).

Because of the negative consequences of the Fall, mankind is in trouble. According to the plan, men live and experience the knowledge of good and evil for themselves. To acquire that knowledge, they must suffer the effects of their fallen condition. They have become "carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature" (Alma 42:10), unworthy before God, and thus are shut out of his presence. This situation, if left unchecked, will bring upon humankind an unending misery, being eternally cast off from the presence of God.

### The Atonement

The Book of Mormon teaches, "Since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself" (Alma 22:14). In essence, "man [has] fallen into a pit, and [is] unable to scale the sides thereof [to] emerge upon the plane above."<sup>23</sup> That is to say, man cannot deliver himself from his fallen condition and is in desperate need of help. That help comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Amulek taught, "According to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish" (Alma 34:9). Again, Jacob said, "If there should be no atonement made all mankind must be lost" (Jacob 7:12). The Atonement of Jesus Christ will rectify each effect of man's fallen condition. Therefore, Lehi exclaimed, "How great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah" (2 Ne. 2:8).

The Book of Mormon reveals that the Atonement of Christ redeems humankind from both "the curse of Adam" and from each man's personal fall. Redemption from the curse of Adam required a general atonement for all people. As already noted, humankind suffers a physical and spiritual death as a result of the Fall of Adam. This condition is the responsibility of Adam. Man is not liable. Therefore, the justice of God demands that an atonement be made for Adam's transgression to redeem humanity from

the curse of Adam.<sup>24</sup> Because of the Atonement for the Fall of Adam, man will be freed from both the physical death and the spiritual separation from God brought about because of the Fall.

Men are redeemed from the curse of Adam through the Resurrection of Christ. Moroni explained how: "And because of the redemption of man, which came by Jesus Christ, they are brought back into the presence of the Lord; yea, this is wherein all men are redeemed, because the death of Christ bringeth to pass the resurrection, which bringeth to pass a redemption from an endless sleep, from which sleep all men shall be awakened by the power of God when the trump shall sound; and they shall come forth, both small and great, and all shall stand before his bar, being redeemed and loosed from this eternal band of death, which death is a temporal death" (Morm. 9:13).<sup>25</sup> This verse reveals that the Resurrection redeems man not only from physical death but also from spiritual death, the state of being cut off from the presence of God. This is commonly misunderstood. Samuel the Lamanite taught: "For behold, [Christ] surely must die that salvation may come; yea, it behooveth him and becometh expedient that he dieth, to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, that thereby men may be brought into the presence of the Lord. Yea, behold, this death bringeth to pass the resurrection, and redeemeth all mankind from the first death—that spiritual death; for all mankind, by the fall of Adam being cut off from the presence of the Lord, are considered as dead, both as to things temporal and to things spiritual. But behold, the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord" (Hel. 14:15–17).

Recall that Jacob taught that if there was no resurrection from the dead, men would become eternally enslaved to Satan. In this condition, they would remain forever in a state of misery (2 Ne. 9:8–9). However, because of the Atonement of Christ, all human-kind, "both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, both the wicked and the righteous" (Alma 11:44), will be resurrected and brought back into the presence of God. Thus they will escape the eternal misery associated with death.

Further, the sicknesses, diseases, and pains that have plagued lives since the Fall of Adam will cease to exist. Amulek explained that because of the Resurrection, "the spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be

restored to its proper frame" (Alma 11:43). Also, the Resurrection opens the way for the salvation of little children who die before the age of accountability. Christ stated, "Little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them" (Moro. 8:8).

The universal redemption of humankind from the curse of Adam is free and unconditional. This is because man is not responsible for the mortal and eternal consequences that have come about as part of the Fall. Elder Orson Pratt wrote:

We believe, that through the sufferings, death, and atonement of Jesus Christ, all mankind, without one exception, are to be completely, and fully redeemed, both body and spirit, from the endless banishment and curse, to which they were consigned, by Adam's transgression; and that this universal salvation and redemption of the whole human family from the endless penalty of the original sin, is effected, without any conditions whatsoever on their part; that is, that they are not required to believe, or repent, or be baptized, or do any thing else, in order to be redeemed from that penalty; for whether they believe or disbelieve, whether they repent or remain impenitent, whether they are baptized or unbaptized, whether they keep the commandments or break them, whether they are righteous or unrighteous, it will make no difference in relation to their redemption, both soul and body, from the penalty of Adam's transgression.<sup>26</sup>

While the Atonement for the Fall of Adam redeems people from spiritual death in that they are brought back into the presence of God, where they are to be judged, men will be accountable for their own actions while in mortality.<sup>27</sup> Orson Pratt taught that the "universal redemption from the effects of original sin, has nothing to do with redemption from our personal sins; for the original sin of Adam, and the personal sins of his children, are two different things."<sup>28</sup> Amulek declared that God's judgment of humankind will be at a personal level (Alma 11:44). The Atonement for the Fall of Adam will not save each man from his personal sins. An individual atonement is required. Thus, a modern revelation states that the mission of Christ was to redeem "mankind from the fall, and from individual sins" (D&C 138:19).

Though man suffers a spiritual death as part of Adam's Fall, he also suffers a spiritual death when he misuses the knowledge

of good and evil through sin. The Lord told Adam that humans are “conceived in sin” (Moses 6:55). That is, they are born into a world where sin prevails.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the capacity to sin is passed on to their children through the natural body. Of this, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “The natural birth creates a natural man, and the natural man is an enemy to God. In his fallen state he is carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature. Appetites and passions govern his life and he is alive – acutely so – to all that is evil and wicked in the world.”<sup>30</sup> Consequently, when children are born and “begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good” (Moses 6:55). Men are accountable for the sin that “conceiveth in their hearts,” for according to Lehi, “men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil” (2 Nephi 2:5). Mormon explained that it is through the “Spirit of Christ” that is “given to every man” that they can judge “good from evil” (Moro. 7:16). In view of this, Elder Neal A. Maxwell stated, “The Spirit of the Lord, through conscience, instructs between good and bad all those who will heed it, thereby giving us an accountability which, though we may not appreciate it, is nevertheless there.”<sup>31</sup> Thus, when a man arrives at an age when he is “accountable and capable of committing sin” (Moro. 8:10), he experiences a personal fall upon transgressing the laws of God.

The atonement for individual sins satisfies the demands of justice and establishes a “plan of mercy” that makes possible the salvation of each man from his individual fallen condition. Alma explained, “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).

Unlike the unconditional Atonement for the Fall of Adam, the redemption of man from his personal fall is conditional. The four Gospels affirm the conditional aspect of the personal atonement. The Savior declared, “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). What is included in believing that Jesus is the Christ? Ultimately, we must believe and follow what he taught. The Savior said that unless a man believes in Christ, repents of his sins, is baptized, and endures to the end, he cannot be saved in the kingdom of God (e.g., Matt. 24:13; Mark 16:16;

Luke 13:3, 5). These same conditions are stated in the Book of Mormon as well. Jacob declared that if men "will not repent and believe in [Christ], and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it" (2 Ne. 9:24).

The Book of Mormon emphasizes the necessity of repentance to appease the demands of justice. Because Christ suffered the eternal consequences of our sins, repentance will release man from the grips of justice. Alma explained, "According to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men . . . for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice" (Alma 42:13). "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah," said Lehi. "Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered" (2 Ne. 2:6-7). Because of his sacrifice, Christ stands "betwixt them and justice," having "satisfied the demands of justice" (Mosiah 15:9). Those who reject the mercy of Christ, however, will feel the full blow of justice's sword. Amulek spoke of this in these terms: "Behold, I say unto you, that I do know that Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world. . . . And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption" (Alma 34:8,15-16).

Lehi explained that as part of the plan of salvation, it became necessary that "the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh; wherefore, their state became a state of probation, and their time was lengthened" (2 Ne. 2:21; see also Alma 12:24). This is affirmed by the Lord himself in latter-day revelation: "But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and

unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son. And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the day of his probation – that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe; and they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not; for they love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey” (D&C 29:42–45).

Those who do not accept Christ and repent of their sins will suffer a “second death.” Since all humankind will be redeemed from the “first death” and brought back into the presence of God to be judged, those who have not accepted Christ and repented of their sins will be “hewn down and cast into the fire; and there cometh upon them *again* a spiritual death, yea, a second death, for they are cut off again as to things pertaining to righteousness” (Hel. 14:18, emphasis added). Alma explained, “Wherefore, [God] gave commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandments as to things which were temporal, and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil, placing themselves in a state to act, or being placed in a state to act according to their wills and pleasures, whether to do evil or to do good – therefore 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” (Alma 12:31–32).

As noted earlier, the Gospels testify that God “gave his only begotten Son, that . . . the world through him might be saved” (John 3:16–17). To this, the Book of Mormon adds a resounding testimony (e.g., 1 Ne. 11:32–33; Mosiah 3:8–11; Alma 5:48; Morm. 7:5–7). In addition, the Book of Mormon explains why it must be the Son of God who atones for the sins of the world. Amulek taught, “Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood which will atone for the sins of another” (Alma 34:11). In other words, an imperfect, finite man cannot save another man from the

infinite consequences of his fallen condition. It takes an infinite being to atone for infinite consequences. "Therefore," Amulek declared, "it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice. . . . And that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God," who is "infinite and eternal" (Alma 34:13-14). Christ's sacrifice was not a human sacrifice but an infinite sacrifice. Jacob taught: "The fall came by reason of transgression; and because man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord. Wherefore, it must needs be an infinite atonement – save it should be an infinite atonement this corruption could not put on incorruption. Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man must needs have remained to an endless duration" (2 Ne. 9:6-7). That is, without an infinite atonement man would have become "lost forever" (Alma 42:6) in an endless state of spiritual and physical death.

The phrase "infinite atonement" describes at least three other aspects of the infinite nature of the Atonement. First, the Atonement covers every physical and spiritual aspect of the Fall of Adam and man's personal fall. Second, the Atonement encompasses all of God's children—past, present, and future, in this world and in every world created by Jesus Christ.<sup>32</sup> Finally, the power of Christ's Atonement will last forever because Christ himself is infinite, eternal, and omnipotent. The infinite nature of the Atonement required Christ to be born of both mortal and divine parents (see Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35). From his mother, Christ inherited mortality, including the power to die. From his Father, he inherited the power of immortality or infiniteness, including the power to live again after death. "It was because of this doctrinal reality, this intermixture of the divine and the mortal in one person, that our Lord was able to work out the infinite and eternal atonement."<sup>33</sup>

### The Suffering of Christ

We are indebted to the writers of the four Gospels for our historical understanding of the atoning sacrifice. The combined Gospels tell us that after eating the Passover dinner with the apostles, the Savior went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32). Upon entering the garden, he "began to be sorrowful and very heavy . . . even unto death" (Matt.

26:37–38). He cried out, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39; see also Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42). He then began to suffer miserably. “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44). During this time of great agony, “there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him” (Luke 22:43). Curiously, as intense as this suffering was, the Gospel writers are silent as to what caused the Savior’s misery in Gethsemane. Consequently, Christian theologians have been left to invent explanations that, as we shall see, fall short of the truth.<sup>34</sup>

After the agony of Gethsemane, the Savior was taken captive and endured trials before the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Roman governor, Pilate (Matt. 26:57–27:25; Mark 14:46–15:14; Luke 22:54–23:24; John 18:12–19:16). He was then taken to Golgotha, where he was crucified (Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33; John 19:17–18). The Gospels detail the incidents that occurred during the six hours the Savior hung on the cross until at the end he “yielded up the ghost” (Matt. 27:39–50; Mark 15:29–37; Luke 23:34–46; John 19:25–30). Finally, each Gospel relates the sacred events surrounding the Savior’s resurrection three days after his crucifixion (Matt. 28:1–8; Mark 16:1–14; Luke 24:1–48; John 20:1–21:24).

The Gospels record essentially these facts, though in greater detail, about what the Savior suffered during his atoning sacrifice. In an age when the historicity and divinity of Jesus Christ are questioned, the Book of Mormon adds a powerful second witness of the reality of these sacred events. The testimony of the Book of Mormon also gives additional insight into what the Savior actually suffered for humankind.

The Book of Mormon confirms the Savior’s atoning sacrifice through prophecy and the Savior’s own personal testimony. In the early pages of the Book of Mormon, Nephi saw in vision the life of Christ. He said, “And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the Son of the everlasting God was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record. And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world” (1 Ne. 11:32–33). He added to his witness the testimony of several prophets whose writings were found on the brass plates (1 Ne. 19:10–13).

Later in the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin prophesied concerning the Savior's atoning sacrifice, saying, "He shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people" (Mosiah 3:7). It appears from this statement that King Benjamin is referring to the Savior's suffering in Gethsemane, for it was there that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). Hence, the agony experienced in Gethsemane was part of the atoning sacrifice. King Benjamin reveals that during those hours of anguish, the Savior's suffering was for "the wickedness and the abominations of his people." This is verified in modern revelation when the Lord said, "Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; but if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink" (D&C 19:15–18). Being finite and mortal, we will never fully comprehend all the Savior suffered in the atoning process. Nonetheless, we are told that he suffered all things spiritual and physical relative to man's fall. Included in this is the shocking reality that he bore not only the eternal consequences of our sins but also the very sins themselves (Mosiah 15:12; 26:23; Alma 7:13; 3 Ne. 11:11). It is no wonder that suffering such extreme agonies caused him "to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18).

King Benjamin prophesied that after Christ would suffer the agony of man's "wickedness and abominations," his people "shall scourge him, and shall crucify him." But "he shall rise the third day from the dead" (Mosiah 3:9–10). Abinadi also prophesied of the Savior's sacrifice, in these words: "The Son . . . suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation, but suffereth himself to be mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people. And after all this . . . he shall be led, crucified, and slain. . . .

And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death" (Mosiah 15:5-8). Other prophets prophesied of the Savior's suffering and crucifixion as well (see 2 Ne. 10:5; Alma 7:11-13; Alma 33:22).

Added to the prophecies found within the Book of Mormon of the Savior's atoning sacrifice is his own testimony of his suffering. To Alma the Elder, he stated, "For it is I that taketh upon me the sins of the world" (Mosiah 26:23). To those who survived the horrendous destructions that covered the land before the Savior's appearance to the Nephites, he said: "Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved" (3 Ne. 9:21-22). Later, when he appeared to the Nephites at the temple in Bountiful, the Savior declared, "I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world" (3 Ne. 11:11). He then requested that the people come to him and "thrust their hands into his side" and "feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet" that they might know that he had "been slain for the sins of the world" (3 Ne. 11:14-15).

A modern revelation declares that the Savior "descended below all things" (D&C 88:6). He who in premortality was the omniscient and omnipotent Jehovah gave up his premortal glory and came to mortality, where he descended below all the degradation mortality, could produce. He suffered all things man has suffered. Thus, he comprehends "all things" about man's physical and spiritual suffering (D&C 88:6). The Book of Mormon teaches that because Christ descended below all things, he came to "know according to the flesh how to succor his people" (Alma 7:12). This gave him the power to be a Savior to all men.

Alma, who was gifted with a great understanding of the Atonement, delivered a discourse wherein he taught that Jesus' suffering made possible the healing of man in four ways. Two of these are commonly spoken of: (1) he took "upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions," and (2) he took "upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people" (Alma 7:12-13). These have already been ad-

dressed. Yet Alma spoke of two additional areas that are important but rarely considered.

First, “he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people” (Alma 7:11; cf. Matt. 8:17). Though he would have become acquainted with these things during his mortal life, it appears that he suffered “the pains and the sicknesses of his people” as part of the atoning process as well. Elder Maxwell stated: “Jesus’ daily mortal experiences and His ministry, to be sure, acquainted Him by observation with a sample of human sicknesses, grief, pains, sorrows, and infirmities which are ‘common to man’ (1 Cor. 10:13). But the agonies of the Atonement were infinite and first-hand! Since not all human sorrow and pain is connected to sin, the full intensiveness of the Atonement involved bearing our pains, infirmities, and sicknesses, as well as our sins.”<sup>35</sup> Again, he said that Christ “knew beforehand, *intellectually*, that His acceptance of the atoning role entailed awesome responsibilities, responsibilities that would eventually lead to His knowing *experientially* in Gethsemane and on Calvary as the weight of the yoke of our sins, sicknesses, pains, and infirmities fell upon him.”<sup>36</sup> Alma does not mention why Christ must “take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.” Yet, for the most part these afflictions have come upon humankind as a result of the Fall of Adam and therefore they must be infinitely removed through the infinite Atonement. That is, though sicknesses and pains are part of the mortal experience, they will not be part of our immortal experience.

Second, Christ “will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12). Infirmities are weaknesses of every kind – physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. They are more than the physical illnesses that vex man. Indeed, they are why we commit sin in the first place. It was not enough that the Savior paid the penalty of our sins – it was also necessary that he heal the infirmities that generate sin. To accomplish this, he took upon himself our infirmities. As a result, “his bowels [were] filled with mercy, according to the flesh.” In other words, experiencing our infirmities gave him compassion and mercy for us as we

struggle in the war between the spirit and the natural man. He understands our continual nagging feelings of unworthiness and inadequacy. This compassion was vividly demonstrated when he visited the Nephites. Toward the end of the first day, the Savior looked upon the people and said, "Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you" (3 Ne. 17:6). Then, displaying his power to heal both body and spirit, he asked them to bring the sick and afflicted, saying, "Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy" (3 Ne. 17:7).

By experiencing our infirmities, he also comprehends perfectly each of our weaknesses and how to heal and strengthen them. Elder Maxwell observed: "Being sinless Himself, Jesus could not have suffered for personal sin nor known what such agony is—*unless* He took upon Him our sins, not only to redeem us and to save us, but also in order that He might know how 'according to the flesh . . . to succor his people according to their infirmities.' A stunning insight!"<sup>37</sup> This makes him the perfect Savior because not only does he pay the penalty of sin but he also heals the sinner. It is the same as if a man, who did not know how to swim, fell into deep water and began to drown. Then a lifeguard dove into the water and saved the drowning man. Not leaving it at that, he stayed with the man and helped him learn to swim. So it is with the Savior; he jumps into the deep waters of our agony and lifts our souls to safety. Then he helps us to overcome the very infirmities that caused our troubles in the first place. The bearing of our infirmities gave the Savior the knowledge and power to perfect each man who comes unto him and accepts his divine help. Moroni exhorted his latter-day reader to "come unto Christ, and be perfected in him" (Moro. 10:32). However, our becoming perfect is not a passive experience. We must do our part. The man being taught by the lifeguard to swim must do what the lifeguard tells him. He must move his arms and kick his feet or he will never overcome his infirmity. Therefore, Moroni declared, "if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ" (Moro. 10:32).

Knowing that the Savior experienced our infirmities gives us better understanding into the agony he suffered while on the cross. The Gospels inform us that three hours after Jesus was

crucified, darkness covered all the land for another three hours (Matt. 27:45–46; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). Elder James E. Talmage believed that during this time, “the agony of Gethsemane had recurred, intensified beyond human power to endure.”<sup>38</sup> Elder Bruce R. McConkie expressed this same view.<sup>39</sup> Toward the end of the three hours of darkness, the Savior cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). Unlike at Gethsemane, where he received some divine help, in the Savior’s suffering on the cross he was destitute of his Father’s comforting influence. Suffering the eternal consequences of our sins, he experienced the misery of banishment from God’s presence. At this point the Savior uttered painfully, “I thirst” (John 19:28). He to whom all must go to receive the “living water” that they may “never thirst” again (John 4:10, 14) now thirsted! Bearing our infirmities, fears, guilt, and remorse, he had become like “the poor and needy” who “seek water, and there is none” (Isa. 41:17). He had become like us, lost and alone. When finally he had suffered the full extreme of man’s suffering, the lesson of compassion was learned. With the eternal consequences paid, satisfying justice, the Savior sighed, “It is finished.” He then “bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (John 19:30). “Thus,” Elder Maxwell wrote, “the compassion of the divine Jesus for us is not the abstract compassion of a sinless individual who would never so suffer; rather, it is the compassion and empathy of One who has suffered exquisitely, though innocent, for all our sins, which were compounded in some way we do not understand. Though He was sinless, yet He suffered more than all of us. We cannot tell Him anything about suffering. This is one of the inner marvels of the atonement of Jesus Christ!”<sup>40</sup> “Can we, even in the depths of disease, tell Him anything at all about suffering? In ways we cannot comprehend, our sicknesses and infirmities were borne by Him even before they were borne by us. The very weight of our combined sins caused Him to descend below all. We have never been, nor will we be, in depths such as He has known. Thus His atonement made perfect His empathy and His mercy and His capacity to succor us, for which we can be everlastingly grateful as He tutors us in our trials.”<sup>41</sup>

## The Perfecting Power

The Book of Mormon gives great insight into the need for the Atonement of Jesus Christ and what he suffered as part of the atoning process. The Atonement is part of a grand plan to exalt man, a plan that included man's Fall. The Fall would give man certain experiences that were necessary for his progression, part of which was being able to distinguish the difference between good and evil through personal experience. Elder B. H. Roberts appropriately summarizes:

Unbelievers delight to represent God, the great Law Giver, as unspeakably cruel in permitting such a Fall of man and demanding such an Atonement as Christ made for the salvation of men from the effects of that Fall. I have already indicated that the purpose of man's existence in the earth was to obtain a body and acquire that experience in this probation which will enable him to appreciate God's greatest gift to man, *viz.*, the gift of eternal life; and to learn by actual contact with evil in this life, and by becoming acquainted with its effects – to flee from it and to love that which is good and pure and virtuous. These lessons involved the necessity of death, the existence of evil and sin. Otherwise man could not acquire the lessons it was intended he should learn in this probation; and without those lessons he could not attain to that exaltation and eternal weight of glory that God has designed for his offspring – man. And though the experience of man in this life's probation may be and often is severe, still it is but as a moment of time as compared with eternity – nay, not so much – not a moment; and the results in eternity will vindicate the wisdom of giving to man his earth life – his probation in earthly mortality.<sup>42</sup>

Through the Atonement man can escape the negative consequences of misuse of the knowledge of good and evil and return to the presence of God. Those who decide to choose good over evil will progress forward in God's kingdom. They will receive the perfecting power of the Atonement. Through it, their infirmities will become strengths (Ether 12:27) and they will become even as God. The Book of Mormon's plea to man is, "Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him" (Moro. 10:32), for without Christ, man is endlessly lost.

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## Notes

1. William J. Wolf, "The Atonement," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 1:496.
2. For a review of Wolf's theories, see Eliade, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1:496–98.
3. *Ibid.*, 1:498.
4. Ezra Taft Benson, "Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," *Ensign*, November 1986, 5; see also *Conference Report*, October 1986, 4.
5. Benson, *A Witness and a Warning* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 33.
6. Neal A. Maxwell, *But For a Small Moment* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986), 62.
7. Orson F. Whitney, *Conference Report*, October 1925, 101.
8. See Kay P. Edwards, "Opposition," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1031.
9. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 1:285–86.
10. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:42.
11. It seems the reason the fruit was forbidden is a matter of responsibility. If God would have commanded Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit, then God would have been responsible for their fall. The consequences of the Fall had to come by man's agency rather than by God imposing fallen conditions upon his children.
12. Benson, *A Witness and a Warning*, 33.
13. James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith*, 12th ed., rev. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1978), 54; emphasis added.
14. Talmage, *The Vitality of Mormonism* (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1919), 46.
15. George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26:191.
16. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–75), 4:325–26.

17. Pratt, "The Pre-existence of Man," *The Seer* 1, no. 7 (July 1853), in *Prominent Works in Mormon History* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book, 1994), 98.

18. For an explanation of original sin, see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 550; and Byron R. Merrill, "Original Sin," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1052–53.

19. Elder Maxwell wrote: "There are those who, reading certain scriptural descriptions about the nature of man (such as that man is 'carnal, sensual, and devilish,' Alma 42:10) brush by these scriptures hurriedly, even nervously, because they feel so uncomfortable upon reading them. Such readers may feel, wrongly, that these scriptures sound much like a Calvinistic denigration of man. Such offended readers may even say those adjectives do not sound like most of the people they know. The same brush-by occurs regarding the numerous scriptures concerning 'darkness' and 'light.'

"There is a danger, however, in ignoring these scriptures and the profound message they contain. Calvinism focused *unnaturally* on the *natural* man and lacked the lifting dimension contained in the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, with its exalting perspectives and sweeping promises. Though these scriptural insights concerning the natural man may seem to put us sternly in our place, when they are combined with the fullness of the gospel, we are shown our immense possibilities and what we have the power to become. Are we not wiser to understand our fallen nature and then, with equal attention, to be taught about how we can be lifted up? Indeed, for one to ask 'Where do we go from here?' he must know where 'here' is!" *Notwithstanding My Weakness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 70.

20. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith*, 64.

21. Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:284.

22. Dallin H. Oaks, "Sins, Crimes, and Atonement" (presented to CES educators, 7 February 1992), 1.

23. Whitney, *Conference Report*, April 1908, 86.

24. The idea of a general atonement is confirmed in the Book of Moses: "The Lord said unto Adam: Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the Garden of Eden. Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world" (Moses 6:53–54).

25. Joseph Fielding Smith taught: "No person who has lived and died on this earth will be denied the resurrection. Reason teaches this, and it is a simple matter of justice. Adam alone was responsible for death, and therefore the

Lord does not lay this to the charge of any other person. Justice demands that no person who was not responsible for death shall be held responsible for it, and therefore, as Paul declared, 'As in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive.'" *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56), 2:274; see also, 2:273–74 and 2:223–24.

26. Pratt, *Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions, and of the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840), 25.

27. This is the meaning of the second Article of Faith: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression." See Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:49.

28. Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 1:329.

29. Elder George Q. Morris taught, "This being 'conceived in sin,' as I understand it, is only that they are in the midst of sin. They come into the world where sin is prevalent, and it will enter into their hearts, but it will lead them 'to taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.'" *Conference Report*, April 1958, 38.

30. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 282.

31. Maxwell, *A Wonderful Flood of Light* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990), 44.

32. We learn this from a poem written by Joseph Smith in which the following is stated: "He's the Saviour, and only begotten of God – By him, of him, and through him, the worlds were all made, Even all that career in the heavens so broad, Whose inhabitants, too, from the first to the last, Are sav'd by the very same Saviour of ours." "The Answer. To W. W. Phelps, Esq. A Vision," *Times and Seasons* 4 (1 February 1843): 82–83.

33. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 471.

34. Generally, most theologians believe that the suffering of Christ in Gethsemane was emotional agony related to his future suffering on the cross. The following is representative of most theologians' views. "In Gethsemane he underwent a most unusual sense of being troubled that we must feel is connected not only with the fact that he would die, but that he would die the kind of death he faced, a death for sinners. Jesus was a brave man, and lesser people by far, including many who have owed their inspiration to him, have faced death calmly. It is impossible to hold that it was the fact of death that moved Jesus so deeply. Rather, it was the kind of death that he would die that brought the anguish. . . . Jesus would be one with sinners in his death,

he would experience the death that is due to sinners, and it seems that it was this that brought about the tremendous disturbance of spirit." Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 667.

35. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 51.

36. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 38.

37. Maxwell, *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 35.

38. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 613.

39. McConkie, "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign*, May 1985, 10; see also McConkie, preface to *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, xiv.

40. Maxwell, *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, 35-36.

41. Maxwell, *Even As I Am* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 116-17.

42. B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel and Man's Relationship to Deity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1924), 20-21.