What happens when faith falters?

"TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?"

HISTORICAL PATTERNS OF RESTORATION BELIEVERS WITH SERIOUS DOUBTS

By D. Michael Quinn

IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, I SEE THREE DISTINCT, though related, forms of serious doubt for a believer. The first is doubting Deity to whom you feel you owe your very existence. The second is doubting a religious leader whom you have trusted, perhaps with your life. The third is doubting a religious community or institution around which your life is structured. As a Mormon existentialist,[1] I would say that these are doubts about what theologian Paul Tillich called "ultimate concern."[2]

The majority of this study will focus on the second and third, but before going there, I'll begin with examples of the ultimate doubt—questioning the existence or goodness of Deity.

For me, the most powerful example of ultimate doubt among the Hebrew patriarchs is not stated in the Holy Bible. However, aside from medieval "mystery plays,"[3] you can find it in that most profound expression of secular scripture—the Hollywood movie. John Huston's 1966 film, *The Bible: In the Beginning,* presents a scene which I am sure occurred when the voice of God commanded Abraham to kill his teenage son Isaac as a ritual sacrifice to Yahweh. In shock and anguish, the Hollywood Abraham cries out that this would make him no better than the Canaanites who sacrifice their children to the

false god Molech,[4] and he asks: "Are you really the LORD my God?" The Hollywood voice of God answers: "Thou knowest." And indeed, despite the temporary doubt Abraham experienced at the command to sacrifice his son, the venerable patriarch did know.

Then, as Abraham lifts the sacrificial knife to kill his son, the Hollywood Isaac asks his father: "Is there nothing He can ask of you that you will not do?" Abraham answers simply, "No, nothing." I think John Huston's version is better than the Bible's silence about the father-son reactions to this event—which, even in scripture, had a Hollywood ending (Genesis 22: 1–17).

But my favorite proof-texts in the Hebrew Bible about existential faith and doubt come from Job. Whether your approach is form-critical (like Claus Westerman),[5] or literary gloss (like Archibald MacLeish),[6] or Bible-as-literature (like me), or fundamentalist (like Jerry Falwell),[7] the Book of Job is subversive scripture. It subverts the idea that God protects those who trust him, that prosperity is an index of goodness, that there is value in suffering, that traditional religion can give comfort in tragedy, and that God conforms to human expectations of justice, mercy, and rationality.

My favorite line is the testimony of Job: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13: 15), which has been repeated by hundreds of millions of "pagans," Jews, Christians, Muslims, and dissenters who have been killed for their particular faiths.[8] The Bible's ultimate assessments about Job are that he suffered because of his steadfast faith, that he was justified in being bitter about his suffering, that he remained righteous even while daring to question God, that he didn't know enough about the cosmos to understand the answer to his basic question "Why?" and so God didn't give him an explanation.

The title of this study employs a New Testament passage

D. MICHAEL QUINN is an independent scholar living in Southern California, who recently finished a year as Beinecke Senior Fellow at Yale University and Post-Doctoral Associate in its Department of History. An earlier version of this text was given 3 February 2005 as the Eugene England Annual Memorial Lecture at Utah Valley State College. Without the specific examples of Utah Mormons who have confronted doubt and without its final section, this essay appeared in briefer form in The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal 24 (2004), *whose editor kindly allowed this expanded version to appear in* SUNSTONE.
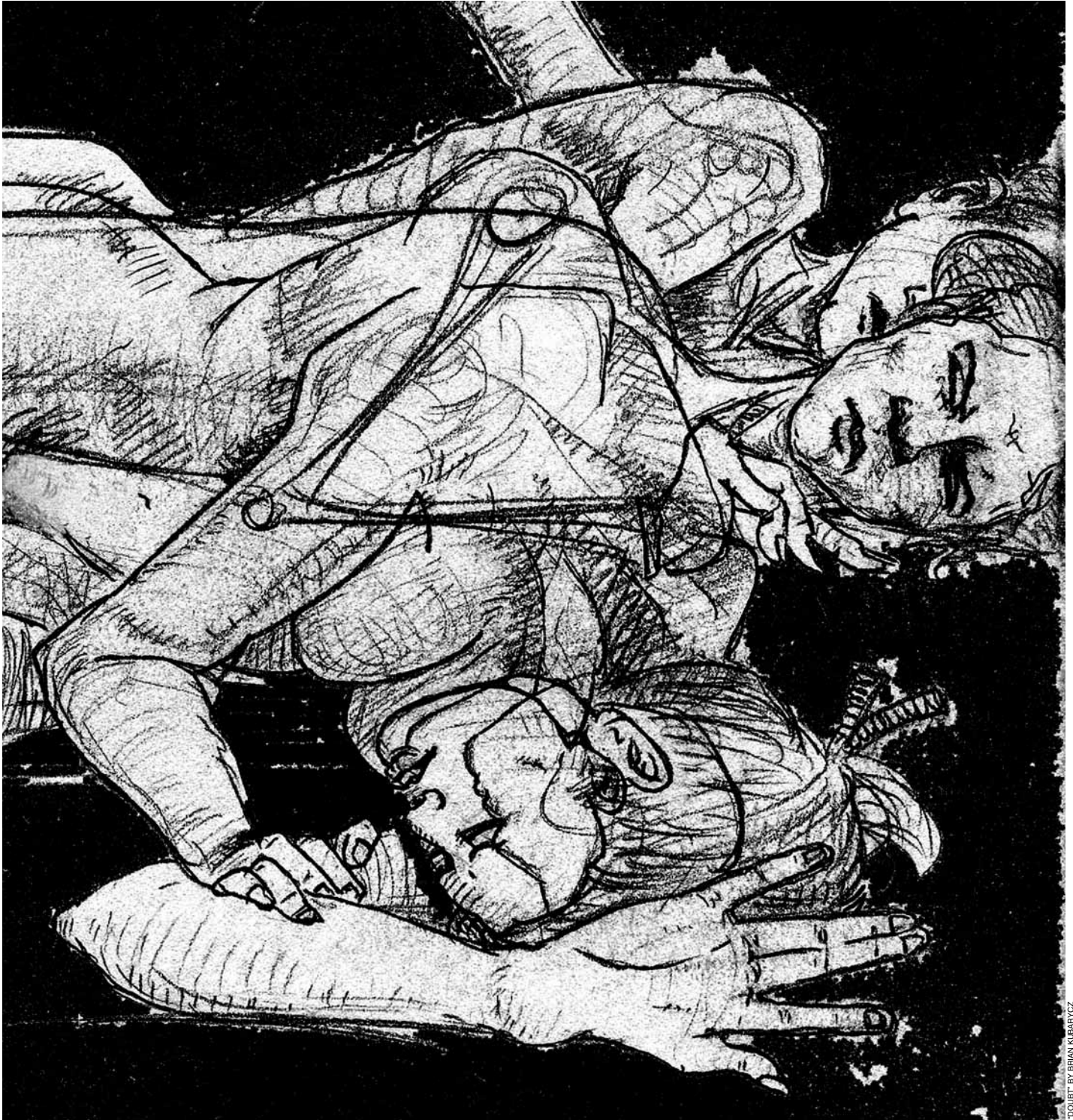
"DOUBT" BY BRIAN KUBARYCZ

which serves as a bridge between the first and second types of doubt. The Gospel of John describes Jesus teaching a large number of his followers something he knew they could not understand—that they had to eat his flesh and drink his blood in order to obtain eternal life. As a consequence, "Many of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" (John 6: 48–61). The result: "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with

him." Jesus asked his twelve apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6: 66–68).

Some readers think this reply meant that Peter knew Jesus was his only hope for salvation, but such interpretation misses the entire chapter's meaning. None of his disciples at that time understood that salvation is through Jesus Christ. Instead, Peter affirmed that the reason the apostles weren't leaving was

"thou hast *the words* of eternal life" (i.e., Jesus was inspired to speak God's words). The apostle didn't know then that Jesus *is* eternal life. Peter continued to follow his Master on this occasion because he regarded Jesus as an inspired man, even if he didn't understand everything this prophet taught. The disciples who "walked no more with him" had not lost their faith in God nor in the future Messiah, but they doubted that Palestine's Jesus of Nazareth was God's spokesman as they had once thought.

Likewise, as we reflect on the history of those who have believed in America's Joseph of Palmyra, part of that experience involves believers in this nineteenth-century "Restored Gospel" who confronted doubt.

And I must state a fundamental bias here. Just as I regard most people who profess religious belief as basically good and honest human beings, I regard most religious doubters as basically good and honest people. This is not to deny that some religious leaders are frauds, nor to ignore the fact that both those who profess belief and those who announce disbelief can be self-serving. But I accept at face value the claim that a person who was once an ardent believer has confronted gnawing doubts, sometimes too great for the good person to maintain former beliefs in a religious leader, or organization, or community. I also accept the claim of ardent believers who say they have never had serious doubts.

"I THOUGHT I SHOULD
LOSE MY SENSES"
*Doubt takes many forms and
follows many paths*

WHEN STRUGGLING WITH doubts that are sufficient to cause them to contemplate abandoning their faith, believers consider doubt's next step: "To whom shall we go?"

A relatively small percentage of Restoration doubters go to the media, but this minority of formerly ardent believers has throughout time given some very important details and insights into the Mormon experience. The earliest example was Ezra Booth's series of letters which *The Ohio Star* began publishing in October 1831. The Internet now gives twenty-first-century readers instant and worldwide access to the electronic publication of such narratives by former believers in various forms of the Mormon Restoration Movement.[9]

I'll delay discussion of an important question. Have these publishing disbelievers ever been representative of the "silent majority" of Restoration believers who have doubted their former faith or abandoned it?

Aside from published narratives, there are privately created accounts of disbelief—letters, diaries, autobiographies, and (in very recent times) electronically recorded narratives by former believers. Rarer still are the statements and explanations of Mormon disbelief that have ended up in transcripts of testimony at court proceedings, civil and criminal.

Over the years of examining those various sources, I have noticed patterns of doubt among Restoration believers from the 1830s to the present. Some regard disbelief as a passive experience which just "happened" to them, while others affirm that they actively abandoned a faith they had actively discovered to be false. While some doubting believers cite a single matter as crucial, others refer to a gradual accumulation of spiritual discomforts which smother the fire of faith. Some can point to a particular year, month, day—or even moment—when faith crumbled, while others are surprised when they discover that they no longer believe and cannot give any chronology for this remarkable change. Aside from these diversities, some disbelieve particular claims of the faith, while retaining belief in much of it. Others are chronological disbelievers who affirm "the old time religion" but reject "modern" leaders, doctrines, or practices. Still others, who eventually reject all faith claims of the Mormon Restoration, are embarrassed that they ever believed any part of it.

With the exception of transparent manipulators like John C. Bennett in his 1842 *History of the Saints*,[10] sadness is a common denominator in all accounts I have encountered by former believers in Mormonism or in one of its prophets. They have lost a confidence, enthusiasm, trust, happiness, and sense of belonging that at one time seemed the center of their lives. The next most common emotion expressed by former be-

THEY HAVE LOST A CONFIDENCE, ENTHUSIASM, TRUST, HAPPINESS, AND SENSE OF BELONGING THAT AT ONE TIME SEEMED THE CENTER OF THEIR LIVES.

lievers is anger, (indeed, some of these former adherents try to portray anger as the *only* emotional response they feel toward their former faith and its leaders).

Linked with their active emotion of anger is the passive feeling of betrayal often expressed by disbelievers who say they were deceived—victimized—by Mormon leaders, missionaries, doctrines, or by the community itself. I think the best expression of this was published by British convert Fanny Stenhouse:

> As the truth became clearer to my mind, I thought I should lose my senses;—the very foundations of my faith were shaken. . . . For ten years the Mormon Prophets and Apostles had been living in Polygamy at home, while abroad they vehemently denied it and spoke of it as a deadly sin. This was a painful awakening to me; we had all of us been betrayed; I lost confidence in man, and even began to question within myself whether I could even trust in God.[11]

Once former believers have defined themselves as victimized by Mormonism, they regard believing Mormons as of only two types: either passive dupes or active participants in fraud.[12] These former believers are the most likely to go to the media with their outrage, to publish expose narratives, to define themselves as "anti-Mormons," and to join with groups of like-minded crusaders.

Whether or not they become anti-Mormon crusaders, however, former believers who define themselves as victimized tend to maintain a dichotomous view of the particular claims of religious leaders and organizations. These are either true or false, good or evil. Such former believers then resume their quest for the "one true" religion, the "one true" church, the "one true" leader. If they retain belief in Restoration claims but have rejected certain leaders or developments, these former believers seek "the only true" version of Mormonism. If they have rejected its essential claims, these former believers seek the only true religion in another fellowship, perhaps returning to the one they abandoned for the latter-day Restoration.

More complex are doubting believers who see Mormonism as mortally flawed rather than fraudulent. Having once regarded the Restoration as a pristine religion—the only one on earth—these faithful doubters have reluctantly concluded that such expectations are impossible. They acknowledge themselves as part of the problem. Rather than victims of false prophets and a fraudulent religion, these formerly ardent believers see themselves as participants in latter-day hopefulness and perhaps as accomplices in self-deception. They are the least likely to feel anger toward their religious leaders, faith, church, or community. Such people avoid the label and crusades of anti-Mormons. They are also the least likely to join other churches. They may even maintain association with the Restoration movement because they regard it as no more true and no more false than any other religious fellowship.

This was the reconciliation expressed in 1977 by Paul M. Edwards, a direct descendant of Joseph Smith:

> The theological assumptions are fair targets for analysis, and the church is a shell waiting to be opened in search of a pearl. If the shell turns out to be empty, and nothing other than a shell, remember that it has drawn us together at this hour; it has given us a community, and the roots to be the growing things we wish to be.[13]

"THERE SEEMED TO BE NO ALTERNATIVE"
*The ways believers resolve doubts are as
individual as the people themselves*

RETURNING TO THE common denominator of sadness among Restoration doubters, the emotional pain for some is almost too great to speak of. Daily diarists stop recording their thoughts or end their diaries altogether, only to acknowledge months or years later that they were consumed with doubts about Mormonism as a faith, the church as an institution, or its leaders as God's representatives.

However, many resolve this anguish by doubting their doubts. Instead of being victimized by latter-day prophets and missionaries, they see themselves as victimized by their personal weaknesses, or by those with worldly knowledge, or by Satan, or by his wicked servants, the anti-Mormons and apostates. There is an expression of this in the autobiography of a man's feelings in the last months of 1842:

> During my illness I became very much embittered in my feelings against the heads of the Church in consequence of hearing the reports that were in circulation[,] together with some outward appearances[;] and not hearing any thing in favor of the truth until some time in the latter part of the winter when I had partly recovered my health[,] I began to reflect upon the situation I was in[,] when I discovered myself lost as it were [—] I knew not what to do or where to go[,] having proved the different Sects with whom I was acquainted [and] found they were not on gospel ground [—] Mormonism too I thought had failed[,] and what to do I knew not [—] I began to ask the Lord what his will was and I was directed immediately back to the dispensation of the gospel which I had forsaken.[14]

Cyprian Marsh did not write this as a cautionary tale, nor as a public testimony for or against faith, but as a private narrative of his own religious journey.

I'll add here that I've been surprised by criticism that my 1998 *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* allegedly made "direct attacks on Mormons" when it stated that the death of a young person can require redefinition of faith-assumptions about promises in LDS priesthood administrations for the sick and of promises for long life in patriarchal blessings. One critic said the book's statement "is unfair because every Mormon knows that these things are promised on the condition that the person remain righteous."[15] When I read this confident assessment, I wondered if my critic had ever read the Book of Job or experienced the death of a beloved young person.

Joseph, the founding Mormon prophet, stated:

It has been hard for me to live on earth and see these young men upon whom we have leaned for support and comfort taken from us in the midst of their youth. Yes, it has been hard to be reconciled to these things.[16]

Yet he had seen God face-to-face and had peered into the afterlife's kingdoms of glory.

When I was sixteen, my bishop's daughter of the same age died from hepatitis. This good man and faithful Saint was so devastated by her death that he asked to be released as bishop. During the funeral sermon, her grandfather (Apostle LeGrand Richards) looked at the sobbing bishop on the front row and said: "This tragic death is no reason to doubt God or deny the gospel." Apostle Richards then told the congregation how his own faith had been "shaken" decades earlier when his son drowned at the beach while Elder Richards had been serving as mission president in Los Angeles. This occurred a short time before his son was to begin his own full-time mission for the Church. Elder Richards found it incomprehensible—in view of the promises in his son's patriarchal blessing—that his righteously living son was now dead. It was only through the *re-interpretation* of his dead son's patriarchal blessing by a younger brother that LeGrand Richards said he finally felt comfort. A year after his granddaughter's funeral, the apostle published his own experience of doubt and restructured faith in the book, *Just To Illustrate.*[17]

In 1888, general authority Abraham H. Cannon collapsed in uncomprehending grief when his two-year-old daughter died after he and his father, First Presidency counselor George Q. Cannon, promised her a full recovery in LDS blessings of healing.[18]

In 1896, Apostle Heber J. Grant was severely "tested" by the death of his seven-year-old namesake. He could not understand the unfulfilled promises of healing in priesthood administrations to his son. Moreover, Elder Grant could not "reconcile" the death of his last surviving son with his own patriarchal blessings that promised he would have sons to carry on his name.[19]

When he was eleven years old, James E. Talmage accidentally blinded his younger brother Albert with a pitchfork. At age thirty-one, while writing the first draft of *The Articles of Faith*, James asked members of the First Presidency and Twelve to administer to his brother. They inquired if he had the faith to be healed after twenty years of blindness, and Albert said, "Yes." In the priesthood ordinance of healing, they promised him a complete restoration of his sight. James recorded his equally unconditional expectation for the fulfillment of this apostolic blessing. Days passed, then weeks, then months, and Albert remained blind. Years passed, and Albert received equally emphatic promises of restored sight from other apostles and prophets. He remained blind the rest of his life. Did either brother experience religious doubts as a consequence? The diaries of James E. Talmage do not say so specifically, but they do indicate his own bewilderment and ultimate resignation about the non-fulfillment of priesthood blessings given and received in absolute faith.[20]

The existence of evil and evil-doers is understood by Mormons in terms of a distinctive LDS theology about Satan and free agency. However, the frequent lack of divine intervention in human suffering and death makes *theodicy*[21] as much a problem for LDS leaders and rank-and-file Mormons, as it is for anyone else who believes in a loving God. For the LDS faithful it can be a severe "test of faith"—even a time of aching doubt—when confronted with birth defects in innocent babes, unfulfilled prayers for healing, and the death of the young. Contrary to Job's comforters and the critic I quoted above, these outcomes do not depend on the righteousness of those who suffer and die.

In the above cases, prominent Mormon leaders experienced spiritual turmoil and apparent doubt, yet they maintained faith and continued serving the Church. Without describing *how* they fit these personal tragedies into their worldview or whether they needed to restructure their own faith, Cannon and Talmage became members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Grant became LDS president. My former bishop later served as a mission president.

DO MORMON DOUBTERS FEEL RELIGIOUSLY "BETRAYED" IN WAYS THAT NON-RESTORATION DOUBTERS DO NOT? IF SO, THAT IS AN UNCOMFORTABLE EVIDENCE FOR MORMONISM AS A UNIQUE FAITH.

Regardless the cause of their doubts, some Restoration believers resolve the conflict by deciding to *permanently* suspend disbelief and to cease questioning. The most prominent example is J. Reuben Clark, Jr., counselor to the LDS president for twenty-eight years, who wrote the following explanation to a non-Mormon:

> I came early to appreciate that I could not rationalize a religion for myself, and that to attempt to do so would destroy my faith in God. I have always rather worshipped facts, and while I thought and read for a while, many of the incidents of life, experiences and circumstances, which led, unaided by the spirit of faith, to the position of the atheist, yet the faith of my fathers led me to abandon all that and to refrain from following it. . . . For me there seemed to be no alternative. I could only build up a doubt. —If I were to attempt to rationalize about my life here, and the life to come, I would be drowned in a sea of doubt.

Clark had once believed that in intellectual faith "we may dispense with something"—even rejecting "as unfit" any LDS doctrine that could not endure intellectual tests. But on the brink of dispensing with everything, he decided his only alternative was to stop subjecting Mormonism to rational analysis.

As this First Presidency counselor looked for some way to explain his position to others, he discovered an anecdote about Abraham Lincoln. Despite his reputed atheism, this Civil War president justified reading the Bible with the comment: "I have learned to read the Bible. I believe all I can and take the rest on faith." To friends, Counselor Clark related the Lincoln story and added, "Substituting in substance the words, 'our Mormon Scriptures,' you will have about my situation." This is what he defined as his testimony of the Restoration. As the second-highest leader of the Church, he recommended this anecdote to a general conference and to individual Mormons. Having once teetered on the brink of atheism, J. Reuben Clark maintained religious faith as an act of will.[22]

Because human experience is so diverse, I must acknowledge that in the foregoing I have probably failed to describe and categorize the experience of some who have doubted their beliefs in latter-day Restoration, and of some who have abandoned their connections to the movement. Or I have described and categorized the experience in ways these individuals would regard as inaccurate or incomplete. Nevertheless, on the basis of more than forty years of researching Mormon history, I have catalogued as best I can the characteristics of believers who find themselves doubting the Mormon Restoration to which they had devoted their lives.

PATTERNS OF CHRISTIAN DOUBT
And feeling religiously betrayed

IT HAS BEEN interesting, however, to see how my cumulative perception of Mormon doubters compares with scholarly analyses of believers in general who confront doubt. I did not read these academic studies until years, sometimes decades, after beginning to note historical characteristics of latter-day doubt and disbelief. I've done my best to present the above summary without the influence of these scholarly views, which both illuminate the Mormon experience and overlook dimensions I found in it.

Although published in 1958, prior to my intensive study of Restoration history, it was decades before I read the observations of Leon Festinger:

> But man's resourcefulness goes beyond simply protecting a belief. Suppose an individual believes something with his whole heart; suppose further that he has a commitment to this belief, that he has taken irrevocable actions because of it; finally, suppose that he is presented with evidence, unequivocal and undeniable evidence, that his belief is wrong: what will happen? The individual will frequently emerge, not only unshaken, but even more convinced of the truth of his beliefs than ever before.

Festinger's book, *When Prophecy Fails*, then describes why people he had studied in the past and interviewed in the present maintained this cognitive "dissonance": "It may even be less painful to tolerate the dissonance than to discard the belief and admit one had been wrong."[23]

Only recently have I read Paul W. Pruyser's *Between Belief and Unbelief*, which amplified Festinger's observation in this way:

> We have noted that the self can be divided, at least in the sense of its holding inconsistent, contrary, or compartmentalized beliefs. Such divided selves are found so regularly, and with such great frequency, that we balk at calling them all pathological. . . . Though we may uphold the ideals of the integrated self and integrated beliefs, realism would demand that we resign ourselves to the fact that millions of people fall short of the mark.[24]

My only correction of Pruyser's assessment is to observe that "compartmentalized beliefs" seem to be common in billions of the otherwise-rational and emotionally stable human beings currently on the planet.

Having read so many accounts of Mormons who have confronted doubt—from various causes and with various outcomes—it was instructive for me to read John D. Barbour's 1994 study of autobiographical accounts about doubt and restructured faith within Christianity. Based on analysis of thirty-five autobiographies—from ancient times to the twentieth century—plus case histories published by other scholars, Barbour wrote this summary about the term he used for "loss of faith":

> [First,] Deconversion involves doubt or denial of the truth of a system of beliefs. Second, deconversion is characterized by moral criticism of not only particular actions or practices but of an entire way of life. Third, the loss of faith brings emotional upheaval, especially such painful feelings as grief, loneliness, and despair. Finally, a person's deconversion is usually marked by the rejection of the community to which he or she belonged. Deconversion encompasses, then, intellectual

doubt, moral criticism, emotional suffering, and disaffiliation from a community . . . allowing in particular cases [that] one element may not be present. He added that every "deconversion" involves conversion to a new religious view, which can also be agnosticism or atheism. Barbour's Mormon example was late-twentieth-century author, Terry Tempest Williams.[25]

While I nodded in assent at each of the characteristics he listed, I found myself puzzled by his lack of reference to a very common characteristic in latter-day accounts of doubt and disaffection—the feeling of betrayal. This was not the guilt or misgiving Barbour described in doubters who felt they were betraying the Christian faith and their religious community. Instead, it was the feeling that both converts and generational members of the Restoration have expressed that they have been deceived or betrayed by Mormonism itself.

Was Barbour overlooking this in the narratives of traditional Christian doubt? Or was I over-stating the feeling of betrayal in Restoration narratives of doubt? Or do Mormon doubters feel religiously "betrayed" in ways that non-Restoration doubters do not? If the last option is the case, that is an uncomfortable evidence for Mormonism as a unique faith.

Though not explicitly, David G. Bromley provided one approach to these questions in an essay in his 1998 book, *The Politics of Religious Apostasy*. Religious groups, he wrote, fall into three types of social organizations: first, those which are highly allied with other organizations of the larger society; second, those which have "moderate levels" of alignment with the larger society, as well as "moderate levels" of tension or contest; third, those which have few alignments with the larger society and its organizations, and are therefore in constant tension or conflict with it. This third group is actually subversive of the larger society or is perceived to be.

Confronting the first type—an "allegiant" organization or religion—may be painful for believers, but is allowed by its own procedures and rules. Even the formal resignation of such obligations as priestly office or monastic life need not stigmatize the person, if done according to the religion's own rules.

Aside from being painful, when someone confronts the second type—a "contestant" organization (religion)—he or she is perceived as being disloyal, even if he or she is trying to improve the organization by public disclosure of its failings.

However, Bromley observes that someone confronting or leaving the third type—a "subversive" organization (religion)—will face brutal stigmatization by its members and that the dissenter will often create some form of an "apostate narrative" directed to the larger society that he or she seeks to rejoin.

> The archetypal account . . . is a "captivity narrative" in which apostates assert that they were innocently or naively operating in what they had every reason to believe was a normal, secure social site; were subjected to overpowering subversive techniques; endured a period of subjugation during which they experienced tribulation and humiliation; ultimately effected escape or rescue from the organization; and subsequently renounced their former loyalties and issued a public warning of the dangers of the former organization as a matter of civil responsibility.

Apostates from subversive organizations (religions) feel the necessity to write or speak according to the model of an Indian "captivity narrative" in order to be re-admitted as non-stigmatized members of the larger society.[26]

Commenting on Bromley's thesis, Mormon sociologist Armand L. Mauss observes:

> An especially good example of this complexity from American history is the Mormon Church, which possessed all the classic characteristics of a Subversive organization throughout the nineteenth century but underwent an accommodation with American society throughout the twentieth. . . . Late in the twentieth century, the Mormons (like the Catholics) would thus probably fall on the Bromley continuum somewhere between Allegiant and Contestant, perhaps closer to the latter. . . .

MORE PAINFUL THAN DOUBT ITSELF IS THE FEELING THAT ONE HAS BEEN SPIRITUALLY DECEIVED, MANIPULATED, EXPLOITED, OR ABANDONED.

As twentieth-century Mormonism moved increasingly down the Bromley continuum from its earlier Subversive character, its public exiters were less often apostates in the fullest sense of that term and more often resembled whistleblowers or even mere defectors. . . .[27]

Because of this shift, those who exited Mormonism in the nineteenth century were more often "apostates" than mere defectors, whereas those leaving since the mid-twentieth century are more often defectors, not apostates.

STATISTICAL TRENDS
*Do Restoration doubters feel more betrayed
than other religious doubters?*

THERE HAVE BEEN few statistical studies of the characteristics reported by disaffected believers in the Restoration, and the first in the 1980s was consistent with Mauss's assessment. Based on questionnaires submitted by a sample of 1,874 Church members over age eighteen (all living in Utah), three sociologists found that 14 percent of these Utahns became permanently "disengaged" from the church headquartered at Salt Lake City. Interviews with a small sample of these former Mormons showed that about 1 percent joined some other form of the movement, 18 percent converted to Roman Catholicism, 42 percent became Protestants (mainly "born-again Christians"), and 39 percent had no religious preference. Of the main group of 1,874 Mormons, another 31 percent were temporarily disengaged for a period of years or decades. Some still identified themselves as "Mormon" while non-participating. Of the disengaged (55 percent of the total, counting both temporary and permanent), only 23 percent reported leaving the LDS church because of "problems with specific doctrines and teachings," while 42 percent left because "their lifestyle was no longer compatible with participation in the church," and still others had interpersonal problems which caused their non-participation. Therefore, the authors concluded that, at least in the 1980s, "doctrinal issues are not central to the disaffiliation process" for Mormons.[28]

Although the authors admitted that their study did not explore disaffection resulting from "the loss of one's personal faith," they failed to acknowledge a strong bias in their sampling which artificially depressed the statistics of former Mormons and of disengagement. Their sample did not include those who were no longer on the records of the LDS church due to excommunication or voluntary withdrawal of membership.[29]

Perhaps more significant, because the sociological study was based on membership lists of Mormons in local congregations, its 1980s sample did not include the "lost members file" in the Membership Department at LDS headquarters. This contains the individual record of membership for Latter-day Saints whose current addresses are unknown to any local LDS leaders, who have therefore sent the records of these "lost" members for centralized inventory, records management, and location searches. These people apparently do not want to be located because they want no affiliation with Mormonism. There are hundreds of thousands of "lost" members in the files at LDS headquarters in Utah.[30] Thus, it is premature to conclude that doctrinal issues are not statistically significant in modern disaffiliation from the LDS Church.

How significant are such statistics for the institutional churches of the Mormon Restoration? LDS headquarters collapsed into apostasy in 1837, and one-third of its leadership abandoned the church within a year.[31] I have previously described Mormonism after June 1844 as a movement "in crisis," and even a scholarly advocate of Brigham Young has acknowledged that half of the LDS membership as of 1844 refused to follow Young to Utah.[32] Entire church organizations of Restoration believers collapsed during subsequent decades.[33] According to the statistically conservative findings of the 1980s study, 55 percent of Utah's Mormon population was non-participating a century after Young's death. Since 1984, at least one-third of the RLDS church membership (now Community of Christ, headquartered in Independence, Missouri) has ceased membership due to their church's ordination of women. And I have heard estimates that one-half of the Reorganization's membership as of 1960 left the church in recent decades due to the conservative rejection of various liberalizing developments, beginning with circulation of the "Position Papers" and culminating in the backlash against the RLDS prophet's revelation authorizing the ordination of women.[34]

For more than 170 years, faithful Restoration believers in spiritual crisis have asked themselves, "To whom shall we go?" Their answers have sometimes shattered families and rocked institutions. Which brings me back to the Bible, to scholarly silence about "betrayal" in Christian narratives of apostasy, and to the devaluation of "faith crisis" by Mormon scholars who comment on LDS disaffection.

The existential Abraham who lives between the lines of the Hebrew Bible (but openly in a Hollywood epic) regarded as betrayal God's commandment to sacrifice his son. Job clearly regarded as betrayal the fact that God killed his family and allowed him to suffer without giving him any better comfort than the platitudes of friends and religious leaders. Jesus faced his ultimate betrayal, not from Judas in Gethsemane, but on the cross as he cried out in anguish: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27: 46; Mark 15: 34) Yet, beyond reason, they embraced their divine betrayer, in what philosopher Soren Kierkegaard would call a "a leap of faith."[35]

In one respect, it is odd that "a sense of betrayal" is absent from Barbour's analysis of Christian narratives about faith-change and apostasy. That feeling of spiritual betrayal was central to most of the great heresies against early Catholicism, as it was to the Protestant reformers who apostatized from the Holy Mother Church, to the Puritans who apostatized from the Anglican Church, and to Puritan apostates such as Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams. However, in apostasy, "betrayal" is a double-edged accusation, applied by the religion to the dissenter and by the dissenter to the religion. Perhaps that is why Barbour did not mention it.
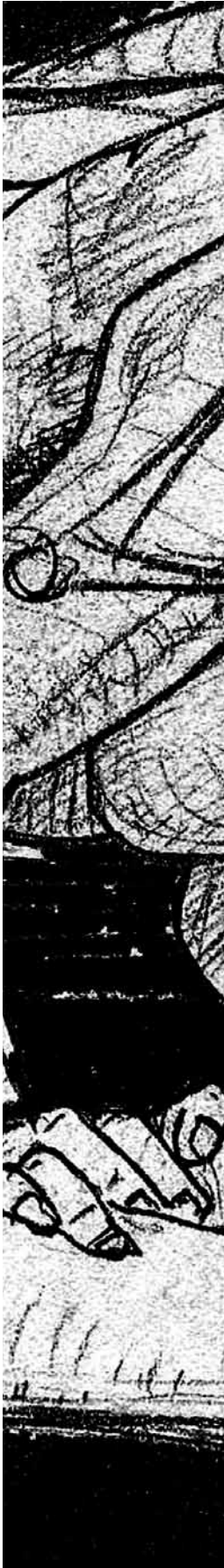
Nevertheless, a sense of spiritual betrayal by the institution, its leaders, or its members has been a common theme in apostasy narratives, both traditional Christian and Mormon Restorationist. More painful than doubt itself is the feeling that one has been spiritually deceived, manipulated, exploited, or abandoned. The 1980s Mormon sociologists also ignored this question when studying LDS disaffiliation.

Do Restoration doubters feel *more* betrayed than other religious doubters? That is impossible to judge, but it *is* possible to quantify whether a sense of betrayal appears *more often* in narratives by Mormon doubters. Someone should do that analysis of comparative religion.

AN INSCRUTABLE GOD
The ultimate quandary

TO WHOM SHALL we go if we do not simply doubt propositions of faith but feel spiritually betrayed by God or by those humans we entrusted with our eternal welfare? Like "ultimate concern" itself, this is an ultimate quandary. It is a crisis experienced by Abraham, by Job, by disciples of Jesus, by members of Holy Mother Church, by survivors of the national massacres of Spanish Muslims, French Protestants, English Catholics, Chinese Christians, Armenian Christians, European Jews, and Bosnian Muslims, by survivors of the "killing fields" in Cambodia and Rwanda. It is a crisis experienced by doubting believers in Restoration leaders Joseph Smith, James J. Strang, Sidney Rigdon, William Smith, Lyman Wight, Brigham Young, Alpheus Cutler, Joseph Smith III, Granville Hedrick,

Wilford Woodruff, Frederick M. Smith, Heber J. Grant, Lorin C. Woolley, Spencer W. Kimball, Wallace B. Smith, Gordon B. Hinckley, and Warren Jeffs.

I propose no answer to the question, "To whom shall we go?" I simply acknowledge its power in the lives of believers who confront serious doubts. I have given only a brief summary of its effects as I have observed them in past and present. If I argue for anything, it is that unshaken believers, lifelong skeptics, and self-confident academics should all stop devaluating the anguish of people they do not understand.

I also present these things with no disrespect for Deity, with no mockery, but as a Restoration believer in the inscrutable God of Genesis, of Leviticus, of Job, of birth defects and leprosy, of Calvary and the empty tomb, of Mecca, of Black Death, of Inquisitions, of Native American genocide, of Palmyra, of Haun's Mill and Mountain Meadows, of Lourdes, of multi-million deaths in natural disasters called "acts of God," of Auschwitz, of Hiroshima, of infantile paralysis, of Cambodia, of pandemic starvation, of AIDS, of Bosnia, of Rwanda, of pediatric cancers, of 9/11, who is also the God of the most recent tragedy and the most recent miracle among us. I speak with the knowledge that my own faith, hope, and love may also be betrayed.

"WHY ME?" "WHY THEM?"
Why does God intervene sometimes and not others?

PART OF MY existential faith is that God has intervened frequently—miraculously—in my own life. I mention only the first twenty years. Born with a cleft-palate, I can speak without disability because (after an LDS priesthood administration) surgery repaired this birth defect when I was eighteen months old. Stricken with polio when I was five, I recovered (according to the promises of an LDS priesthood blessing) without paralysis or atrophied muscles. Hurled into a windshield by colliding cars at age seven, glass lacerated both of my eyelids without blinding me. Warned by "the voice of the Spirit" within me to "Stop!" at age nine while walking alone in the pitch-black darkness during a guided tour of subterranean caverns, I found myself standing inches from a precipice when the floodlights came back on. Told by physicians at twelve that I would be deaf by age twenty due to eardrums that ruptured with every middle-ear infection since birth, I maintained good hearing (as promised in priesthood blessings), even though my eardrums continued to rupture dozens of times after the doctors predicted deafness. Thrown from a crashing vehicle as a full-time missionary, I landed on my back hard enough to crack my chest's sternum, but

UNSHAKEN BELIEVERS, LIFELONG SKEPTICS, AND SELF-CONFIDENT ACADEMICS SHOULD ALL STOP DEVALUATING THE ANGUISH OF PEOPLE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

without brain concussion, broken neck, spinal injury, or paralysis.

Yet other children have been permanently disabled by birth defects. The boy in the hospital bed next to me died of polio, and some of my LDS friends suffered atrophy or paralysis even after priesthood promises of full recovery from that disease. Children have gone blind or deaf. They have died in accidental falls. Young people have been killed in car collisions, sometimes while faithfully serving LDS missions or preparing to do so.

Why not me? This is the existential survivor's guilt that reverses the "Why me?" question of those who are not spared tragedy.

I have never believed that I was singled out for divine healing and protection because I was better than any of the millions who did not receive God's intervention in similar circumstances. Nor can I believe that the prayers of my Catholic father and Mormon mother were more important to God than the prayers of millions of other parents whose children have experienced disability and early death. Since childhood I have thanked God daily for His interventions in my life but have never understood why He has not spared others. I know it is not because they are loved less by their Heavenly Father.

God has the power to prevent every tragedy and heal all sickness, but He intervenes rarely, unpredictably, and inconsistently in the tragedies of His earthly children. With the divine promise of "Ask and ye shall receive," we feel betrayed when God does not protect or heal after fervent, faithful prayers. However, without sickness, tragedy, and death—there is no mortal life.

I believe in a loving God whose omnipotence is constrained by the requirements of human existence. Even understanding that principle with faith does not answer the questions: "Why me?" "Why them?" in divine intervention or lack of it. Yet there is no one else to whom I can go for comfort, strength, guidance, and intercession except this inscrutable, tragic Father in Heaven who so often seems to betray our faith and love.

NOTES

1. In addition to reading all the LDS "Standard Works" and the seven-volume *History of the Church* ("Documentary History") while in high school, I also read existentialist writings by Soren Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus. However, I did not read an academic introduction to the subject until I was attending BYU as an undergraduate. With various editions to 1990, William Barrett, *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday, 1958) remains a good overview.

2. Mackenzie Brown, ed., *Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), esp. 11–12.

3. For good examples of this genre, see Vincent F. Hopper and Gerald B. Lahey, eds., *Medieval Mystery Plays: Abraham and Isaac* (Great Neck, NY: Barron's Education Series, 1962); Alexander Franklin, ed., *Seven Miracle Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); Maurice Hussey, ed., *The Chester Mystery Plays: Sixteen Pageant Plays From the Chester Craft Cycle* (London: W. Heinemann, 1971).

Soren Kierkegaard, whom I cite later, emphasizes the Isaac sacrifice extensively in his 1846 *Fear and Trembling* (published by the pseudonym Johannes de Silentio), but he did not make the literary gloss of creating dialogue of Abraham with God or with Isaac. See Robert Bretall, ed., *A Kierkegaard Anthology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946), 116–34.

4. For more information on the Canaanite practice, see *A Concise and Practical Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Nelson-National, 1964), s.v. "MOLECH, MOLOCH"; also John Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

5. Claus Westerman, *The Structure of the Book of Job: A Form-Critical Analysis*, trans. by Charles A. Muenchow (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981).

6. Archibald MacLeish, *J.B.: A Play in Verse* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958).

7. Jerry Falwell, et al., eds., *Liberty Bible Commentary*, 2 vols. (Lynchberg, VA: Old-Time Gospel Hour, 1982); also Falwell, "The How To Book," chapter 9, "How To Endure Suffering," heading, "Purposes of Suffering," subheading, "Testimony" on the Old Time Gospel Hour website on the Internet (www.otgh.org).

8. The inclusion of "pagans" in this list may strike some as odd. However, polytheistic pagans died by the millions at the hands of monotheistic Jews, Christians, and Muslims (who also slaughtered each other with abandon). In addition, religiously motivated killing of pagans was not always due to persecution. Most of the polytheistic religions in the Middle East, Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Western Hemisphere sacrificed humans, usually believers in the deities who "required" this flow of blood. Good studies include: Moncure D. Conway, *Human Sacrifices in England* (London: Truebner, 1876); Alberto Ravinell Whitney Green, *The Role of Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the American Schools of Oriental Research, 1975); Paul G. Mosca, "Child Sacrifice in Canaanite and Israelite Religion," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1975; Bikash Chandra Gohain, *Human Sacrifice and Head-Hunting in Northern India* (Assam, India: Lawyer's Book Stall, 1977); Nigel Davies, *Human Sacrifice in History and Today* (New York: Morrow, 1981); Barbara M. Boal, *The Konds: Human Sacrifice and Religious Change* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips Central Asian Studies, 1982); Hyam Maccoby, *The Sacred Executioner: Human Sacrifice and the Legacy of Guilt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982); Patrick Tierney, *The Highest Altar: The Story of Human Sacrifice* (New York: Viking, 1989); Susan Shelby Brown, *Late Carthaginian Child Sacrifice and Sacrificial Monuments in Their Mediterranean Context* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991); Dennis D. Hughes, *Human Sacrifice in Ancient Greece* (London: Routledge, 1991); Felix Padel, *The Sacrifice of Human Beings: British Rule and the Konds of Orissa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); David Carrasco, *City of Sacrifice: The Aztec Empire and the Role of Violence in Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); Elizabeth P. Benson and Anita G. Cook, eds., *Ritual Sacrifice in Ancient Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); Miranda Aldhouse Green, *Dying For the Gods: Human Sacrifice in Iron Age and Roman Europe* (London: Tempus Publishing, 2001).

9. I am certainly not the first to comment academically (rather than polemically) on characteristics of those who have doubted or rejected their former faith in the Mormon Restoration. See Roger D. Launius, "'Many Mansions': The Dynamics of Dissent in the Nineteenth-century Reorganized Church," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 145–68; J. Bonner Ritchie, Roger D. Launius, and W.B. "Pat" Spillman, eds., *"Let Contention Cease": The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence, MO: Graceland College/Park Press, 1991); Allen Dale Roberts, "Profile of Apostasy: Who Are the Bad Guys, Really?" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 31 (Winter 1998): 143–62; Craig L. Foster, *Penny Tracts and Polemics: A Critical Analysis of Anti-Mormon Pamphleteering in Great Britain, 1837–1860* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2002), 206, whose overview also appears in Foster, "Understanding the 'Stages of Grief' of Former Members Who Attack the Church," in *Meridian Magazine*, Internet publication in 2003.

For academic studies of individual doubters and "apostates," see H. Orvil Holley, "The History and Effect of Apostasy on a Small Mormon Community" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966); Roger D. Launius, "R.C. Evans: Boy Orator of the Reorganization," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 40–50; Lawrence Foster, "Career Apostates: Reflections on the Works of Jerald and Sandra Tanner," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Summer 1984): 35–60; Levi S. Peterson, "Juanita Brooks as a Mormon Dissenter," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 8 (1988): 13–29; Lynne Watkins Jorgensen, "John Hyde, Jr.: Mormon Renegade," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 120–44; Marjorie Newton, *Hero or Traitor: A Biographical Study of Charles Wesley Wandell* (Independence, MO: Independence Press, 1992); Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994); Craig L. Foster, "From Temple to Anti-Mormon: The Ambivalent Odyssey of Increase Van Deusen," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27 (Fall 1994): 275–86; Roger D. Launius and Linda Thatcher, eds., *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), which included those who rejected a specific leader and turned to another version of the Mormon restoration; R. Ben Madison, "'Something Was Wanting': The Meteoric Career of John Greenhow, Mormon Propagandist," *John Whitmer Historical*

Association Journal 15 (1995): 63–80; Anna Jean Backus, *Mountain Meadows Witness: The Life and Times of Bishop Philip Klingensmith* (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark, 1995); M. Guy Bishop, "'Simple Folly': Stephen Post and the Children of Zion," and Richard Saunders, "'More a Movement Than an Organization': Utah's First Encounter with Heresy: The Gladdenites, 1851–54," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 16 (1996): 79–90, 91–106; Newell G. Bringhurst, "Fawn M. Brodie and Deborah Laake: Two Perspectives on Mormon Feminist Dissent," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 17 (1997): 94–113; Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Newell G. Bringhurst, *Fawn McKay Brodie: A Biographer's Life* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); James W. Ure, *Leaving the Fold: Candid Conversations With Inactive Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999); Eric Paul Rogers, "Mark Hill Forscutt: Mormon Missionary, Morrisite, Apostle, RLDS Minister," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 21 (2001): 69–100; John R. Sillito and Susan Staker, eds., *Mormon Mavericks: Essays on Dissenters* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), which also included Mormons like myself who have remained Mormon believers while dissenting from Church policies and pronouncements; plus biographical studies in following notes.

10. Andrew F. Smith, *The Saintly Scoundrel: The Life and Times of John C. Bennett* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

11. Mrs. T.B.H. [Fanny] Stenhouse, *"Tell It All": The Story of a Life's Experience* (Hartford, CT: A.D. Worthington & Co., 1874), 130; also Ronald W. Walker, "The Stenhouses and the Making of a Mormon Image," *Journal of Mormon History* 1 (1974): 51–72; Craig L. Foster, "John Sharp and T.B.H. Stenhouse: Two Scottish Converts Who Chose Separate Paths," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 17 (1997): 81–90. Foster, *Penny Tracts and Polemics*, 206, observes that nineteenth-century Mormon apostates usually expressed "a sense of betrayal."

12. Previous note 9; also stated specifically in Ann Eliza Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life In Bondage, Being a Complete Expose of Mormonism* (Hartford, CT: Dustin, Gilman, & Co., 1875), 371, 393, 507.

13. Paul M. Edwards, "The Secular Smiths," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977): 16; reprinted in *Restoration Studies* 2 (1983): 99–100.

14. Cyprian Marsh journal (1829–1888), [pages 48–49], October 1842–January 1843, photocopy of bound holograph, ACCN 1627, Manuscripts Division, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City. I have corrected and standardized spellings.

15. Ben Coates (of Tempe, AZ), "customer's review" of D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, rev. and enl. ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), submitted on 29 August 2001 to www.amazon.com, referring to my statement on page 75: "On a far more frequent basis, Mormon parents and LDS leaders have provided faith-supportive explanations for a faithful person's failure to recover from physical problems after priesthood promises for full recovery. This includes children who do not live to fulfill a patriarchal blessing's unconditional promise of long life or (at least) of serving a full-time mission in mortality." The book's footnote for this statement cited all the sources I discuss here, except the quote from Joseph Smith.

16. Joseph Smith, et al., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* ed. B.H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 4: 587.

17. LeGrand Richards, *Just To Illustrate* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961), 214–15. Richards became Presiding Bishop of the Church in 1938 and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1952. See *Deseret Morning News 2004 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 2004), 70.

18. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 24 April, 29 April, 1–2 May 1888, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. An authorized photocopy of Cannon's entire set of diaries is in Marriott Library; in Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City, Utah; in Donnell and Elizabeth Stewart Library, Weber State University, Ogden, Utah; in Milton R. Merrill Library, Utah State University, Logan, Utah. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy since 1882, Abram became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1889. See *Deseret Morning News 2004 Church Almanac,* 67–68.

19. Heber J. Grant journal sheets (23–27 February 1896), Archives Division, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. Grant lived at a time when it was common in the LDS Church to receive several blessings from different patriarchs during one's life. More than one of these, as well as special blessings by his apostolic colleagues, promised that he would have sons to carry on his name. He fathered no more sons, even though LDS president Lorenzo Snow gave secret permission in May 1901 for Apostle Grant to marry a new plural wife in order to fulfill these various prophecies. See Grant's May-June Notebook, 26 May 1901, and his letter to Joseph F. Smith, 5 January 1906, both in LDS Archives and both quoted in D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890–1904," *Dialogue: A Journal of*

Mormon Thought 18 (Spring 1985): 73. A member of the Quorum of the Twelve since 1882, he became LDS president in 1918. See *Deseret Morning News 2004 Church Almanac,* 57.

20. John R. Talmage, *The Talmage Story: Life of James E. Talmage—Educator, Scientist, Apostle* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1972), 6, for blinding his brother by accident in 1873; James E. Talmage diaries, 22 February 1893, 9 September 1899, 30 May 1928, Lee Library, for his comments about the promises to his brother of restored sight and their non-fulfillment. He became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve in 1911. See *Deseret Morning News 2004 Church Almanac,* 68.

21. "Theodicy" is defined in J.D. Douglas, Walter A. Elwell, and Peter Toon, *The Concise Dictionary of the Christian Religion: Doctrine, Liturgy, History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency Reference Library/Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), 375, as "The justification of God. The attempt to vindicate God's love and providence in the context of the tremendous problem of evil and suffering in God's world." See also Albert W.J. Harper, *The Theodicy of Suffering* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1990); Barry L. Whitney, *Theodicy: An Annotated Bibliography on the Problem of Evil, 1960–1990* (New York: Garland, 1993).

22. For quotes and sources, see D. Michael Quinn, *Elder Statesman: A Biography of J. Reuben Clark* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 26–28. Clark became a counselor in the First Presidency in 1933. See *Deseret Morning News 2004 Church Almanac,* 60.

23. Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken, and Stanley Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956), 3, 27. I have followed the common practice of citing only Festinger in the main narrative. Although some scholars have criticized his methodologies and conclusions about the living persons in Festinger's study, the statements I've quoted remain unchallenged as general interpretations.

There have been two major instances of unfulfilled, published prophecies in the early Mormon Restoration and one in Utah Mormonism. First, an 1832 revelation affirmed that "this generation shall not pass away" before the construction of a grand temple in Independence, Missouri, and the Second Coming of Jesus in glory. See Doctrine and Covenants, LDS: 84:4–5; RLDS: 83:2a–b. Commenting on the necessity of this prophecy's literal fulfillment eighty-seven years later, *The Doctrine and Covenants . . .with Introduction and Historical and Exegetical Notes by Hyrum M. Smith of the Council of the Twelve Apostles* (Liverpool: George F. Richards, 1919), 616, stated: ". . . every generation has a few who live over a hundred years." Even 173 years after the revelation, the LDS church has no immediate plans for building one of its special temples in Independence. The dedication of a temple sanctuary there in 1994 by the Reorganization/Community of Christ occurred long after the death of any mortal living in 1832.

Second, Joseph Smith repeatedly stated that this Second Coming or "winding up scene" would occur about 1891. See LDS Doctrine and Covenants 130:14–17; Smith, et al., *History of The Church,* 2:182, 5: 336. Even though quoting from the LDS publication of the official minutes, *The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,* 8 vols. (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1967–76), 1: 540, excised the prophet's 1835 statement that "the coming of the Lord, which was nigh—even fifty-six years should wind up the scene." For the gradual Mormon detachment from the immediacy of this millennial expectation, see Dan Erickson, *"As A Thief in the Night": The Mormon Quest for Millennial Deliverance* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), esp. 213–21; also Keith Norman, "How Long, O Lord?: The Delay of Parousia in Mormonism," SUNSTONE, January/April 1983, 48–58. Grant Underwood, in his *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1993), 119, 125, quotes Smith's prophecies about 1891 as the end-time for the Second Coming but limits his discussion of the expectations and disappointments of his followers of the 1880s, "the Saints read the 'signs of the times' with great anticipation" (125–26). Erickson gives more attention to these issues.

Third, the repeatedly published statements by Utah Mormon leaders from 1852 to the mid-1880s that it was impossible for the LDS church to abandon the practice of polygamy, as it nonetheless did publicly in September 1890. See D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890–1904," 24–25, 30–31, 35. This abandonment of polygamy was demonstrably a greater challenge to the emotions and faith of average Mormons. Virtually every Mormon who kept a diary or personal journal referred to the LDS president's official abandonment of polygamy in 1890 and to the Utah First Presidency's statements in 1891 against continuing to cohabit with plural wives, while very few Mormons commented in their diaries about the absence of the Second Coming in 1891 or even about their anticipations for it.

24. Paul W. Pruyser, *Between Belief and Unbelief* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 132.

25. John D. Barbour, *Versions of Deconversion: Autobiography and the Loss of*

Faith (Charlotte: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 2 (for quote), 3 (for "every deconversion [is] a conversion"), 192–94 (for Terry Tempest Williams and Mormonism). Although Barbour's introduction and conclusion listed only some of his autobiographical examples, my tabulation was based on the sources cited in his endnotes.

26. David G. Bromley, "The Social Construction of Contested Exit Roles: Defectors, Whistleblowers, and Apostates," in Bromley, ed., *The Politics of Religious Apostasy: The Role of Apostates in the Transformation of Religious Movements* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 21–38, with long quote on 37. For the captivity model, see Richard VanDerBeets, *The Indian Captivity Narrative: An American Genre* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984); also Stanley B. Kimball, "Red Men and White Women on Mormon Trails, 1847–1868: The Captivity Narrative in Mormondom," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 81–88.

27. Armand L. Mauss, "Apostasy and the Management of Spoiled Identity," in Bromley, *Politics of Religious Apostasy*, 53.

28. Stan L. Albrecht, Marie Cornwall, and Perry H. Cunningham, "Religious Leave-Taking: Disengagement and Disaffiliation Among Mormons," in David G. Bromley, ed., *Falling From the Faith: Causes and Consequences of Religious Apostasy* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988), 64–79.

29. Ibid.," 80 (for quoted acknowledgment). They do not specify their statistical exclusion of excommunicated Mormons and of those who formally withdrew their membership before the time of the study, but the exclusion is implied by the study's use of current membership lists.

30. Ibid, 64 (for sampling based on membership lists in local wards), 71 (for all these wards being in Utah).

As far as I am aware, no statistical studies of LDS affiliation have acknowledged the existence of the "lost members" files in the LDS Membership Department, whose numbers would increase all statistics of LDS "disengagement" or "inactivity" at the local level and for the Church at large. In the Deceased Membership File (1941–1974) at the Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, I found some membership records that had been marked as sent to the "Lost File" before their addresses were discovered years later. This was different from the instructions to ward clerks about the "Lost Records" of ordinances for Mormons whose names and addresses were known to local LDS leaders. For example, see *Instructions To Bishops and Counselors, Stake and Ward Clerks, No.13* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1921), 40, and *General Handbook of Instructions, Number 19* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1963), 60, both in Marriott Library.

31. For good views of the Church during this period, see Mary Fielding Smith letters to Mercy R. Fielding Thompson, July–October 1837, in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, eds., *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982), 60–68; Robert Kent Fielding, "The Growth of the Mormon Church In Kirtland, Ohio," Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1957, 245–64; Max H. Parkin, "A Study of the Nature and Cause of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio Between 1830 and 1838," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966, esp. 309–17; Davis Bitton, "The Waning of Mormon Kirtland," *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 455–64; Marvin S. Hill, "Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent," *Church History* 49 (September 1980): 286–97; Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983), 310–41; Karl Ricks Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland: Eyewitness Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989), 193–223; Kenneth H. Winn, *Exiles in a Land of Liberty: Mormons in America, 1830–1846* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 106–28; Marvin S. Hill, *Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 55–80; Milton V. Backman Jr. and Ronald K. Esplin, "History of the Church: 1831–1844," and Backman, "Kirtland," in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:609–10, 797.

32. D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books/Smith Research Associates, 1994), 242, 448n316, both commenting on Ronald K. Esplin, "Joseph, Brigham, and the Twelve: A Succession of Continuity," *BYU Studies* 21 (Summer 1981): 333.

33. Dale L. Morgan, "A Bibliography of the Churches of the Dispersion," *Western Humanities Review* 7 (Summer 1953), subsequently reprinted as a booklet; Steven J. Shields, *Divergent Paths of the Restoration: A History of the Latter Day Saint Movement*, 3rd ed., rev. and enl. (Bountiful, UT: Restoration Research, 1982).

34. William D. Russell, "Reorganized Mormons Beset by Controversy," *Christian Century*, 17 June 1970, 770; *Position Papers* (Independence, MO: Cumorah Books, 1975), commissioned by RLDS headquarters and circulated for years previously; RLDS Doctrine and Covenants 150:10a–11b, 156:9b–c: Howard J. Booth, "Recent Shifts in Restoration Thought," *Restoration Studies* 1 (1980): 162–75; Larry W. Conrad and Paul Shupe, "An RLDS Reformation?: Construing the Task of RLDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Summer 1985): 92–103; L. Madelon Brunson, "Stranger in a Strange Land: A Personal Response to the 1984 Document," *Restoration Studies* 3 (1986): 108–15; W.B. "Pat" Spillman, "Adjustment or Apostasy?: The Reorganized Church in the Late Twentieth Century," *Journal of Mormon History* 20 (Fall 1994): 1–15; Roger D. Launius, "The Reorganized Church: The Decade of Decision," *Sunstone* 19 (September 1996): 45–55; W. Paul Jones, "Theological Re-Symbolization of the RLDS Tradition: The Call to a Stage Beyond Demythologizing," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 16 (1996): 3–14; Danny L. Jorgensen, "Beyond Modernity: The Future of the RLDS Church," and George N. Walton, "Sect To Denomination: Counting the Progress of the RLDS Reformation," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 18 (1998): 5–20, 38–62; Russell, "Defenders of the Faith: The RLDS Schism Over the Ordination of Women" (tentative title of book manuscript being submitted for publication); my conversations since the 1970s with various members of the RLDS church and Community of Christ.

35. M. Jaimie Ferreira, "Faith and the Kierkegaardian Leap," in Alastair Hannay and Gordon D. Marino, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 207–08, makes this clarification about the nearly universal attribution of this phrase to the Scandinavian philosopher: "Kierkegaard never uses any Danish equivalent of the English phrase `leap of faith'. . . . He does, however, clearly and often refer to the concept of a leap (*Spring*). . . . Thus, even if the concept of a leap of (made by) faith is foreign to the terminology of Kierkegaard, the concept of a leap *to* faith remains central to his writings." For the existentialist philosopher's emphasis on God's command for Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, see Ronald M. Green, "'Developing' *Fear and Trembling*," in same collection, 258–71.

SWEET DREAMS

Am I sleeping?

A positive answer shocks.

People assume insomnia,

restless strength

to toss from side to side,

get up for tea or hot milk.

No, I love the dark,

the cool embrace of the bed,

a burrow of refuge, hibernation.

In the dark, I hear the floor creak

under your feet, feel the weight

of your body entering . . .

In the dark, you are not dead.

Dawn spews a rosy mist

the morning light annihilates.

Then tears make the sheets

cold and too heavy to lift.

My limbs are wood,

rotting in a damp forest.

The air reeks of sweet dreams

I must forget.

—JACQUELINE JULES