

## CHAPTER TEN

# WE HAVE FOUND THE MESSIAH

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I have selected as a topic a passage from the testimony of John. They are the words of Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. On that day he had talked with Jesus, and he was so excited that the first thing he did was find his brother Peter to tell him about it. He said: "We have *found* the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41; emphasis added).

Although the passage does not tell in detail of the background and what these men had talked about previously, there is a clue in the way the sentence is worded to show us that finding the Messiah was important to them and must have been something they had talked about on earlier occasions.

To get the full impact of what it meant to them to find the Messiah, we need to look at the extended passage. In order to catch the force of these words, please notice the frequency of such words as *seek*, *find*, *come and see*, and *we have found*. I am going to read it from Joseph Smith's translation because it is a richer account. The setting is this: John the Baptist had taught a special delegation of the Jewish leaders that the Messiah was on the earth, among them, but that they had not recognized Him. Beginning with John 1:35, we read:

Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples,  
And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, Behold the Lamb  
of God!

And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Then Jesus turned, and saw them following him, and said unto

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them, What seek ye? They say unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master;) Where dwellest thou?

He said unto them, Come and see. And they came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day; for it was about the tenth hour.

One of the two who heard John, and followed Jesus, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a seer, or a stone. And they were fishermen. And they straightway left all, and followed Jesus.

The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

Now Philip was at Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. (JST, John 1:35–45)<sup>1</sup>

There is an underlying awareness, almost taken for granted, that all these brethren were cognizant of the things Moses and the prophets had written about the Messiah. They placed a high value on those words of the prophets and considered it of greatest importance to find that Messiah who was so highly spoken of in the scriptures. Notice the joy, the sense of fulfillment, when a person is able to say, "We have found the Messiah."

The discovery by these brethren—Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael—reminds us of the words of the Lord to Jeremiah: "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 29:12–14).

This same idea has perhaps become more familiar to many of us through Felix Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*, in which it is beautifully expressed this way: "If with all your heart ye truly seek me, ye shall ever surely find me, thus saith our God."

In the writings of Moses to scattered Israel, we find this promise: "But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy

4:29). And Father Abraham, after a marvelous personal manifestation and blessing from the Lord, reflected on his great experience and wrote of it as follows: "Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee; . . . and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice" (Abraham 2:12–13).

Let it be remembered and noted that this Messiah, this Jesus whom the fishermen of Galilee had found in *their* day and in *their* country, was the same being, the same God, whom Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many others had sought for and found in their day, whose name was Jehovah. Jesus, the Messiah in the New Testament, is the same being known as Jehovah in the Old Testament.

### SEARCHING FOR THE MESSIAH

The hearts of righteous men and women hunger for more contact with their Savior, and to find Him is manna to the soul. To be in His favor is even more refreshing than drinking cool water in a thirsty land or finding a covering from the sun in time of heat. Knowledge and testimony of Christ are food for the hungry spirit, just as meat and potatoes are food for the hungry body.

Heaven, knowing the proper price to put on all its goods, has so arranged things that one has to seek and search in order to really *find* the Messiah. The Lord has to be searched for and found, discovered, as it were, by each person individually. Information *about* the Savior can be found almost everywhere, but there is a significant difference between knowing the Lord and only knowing *about* Him. We may learn *about* the Savior by reading or listening but must obey His commandments to *know* Him and understand much about Him. The Lord Himself has promised to unveil His face and be made known by His servants, but He has told us that it must be in His "own time," in His "own way," and according to His "own will."

I will read an excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants 88:63–68:

Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient for you;

And if ye ask anything that is not expedient for you, it shall turn unto your condemnation.

Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness—in the wilderness, because you cannot see him—my voice, because my voice is Spirit, my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound.

And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.

Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.

We may think that because we live so long after the mortal life of the Savior what is being talked of in these verses—a personal visit by vision or divine manifestation—is considerably different than seeing Jesus on the roads and byways of Galilee or the streets of Jerusalem. But it is not entirely different. If we had lived at that time, in that place, and had seen Him in the mortal flesh, we would not have known that He was the Messiah or that He was anything more than a man unless the Holy Spirit whispered it to our own spirit. Many saw Him but knew not who He was. John the Baptist knew Him and declared plainly that He was the Messiah, the Son of God, but also explained, “There standeth one among you whom ye know not” (John 1:26). It is only by the testimony of the Spirit that anyone can recognize the difference between the Messiah and any other man. This is one of the functions of the Holy Ghost: to bear witness of the Father and the Son (see Moses 5:9). The scriptures testify of Christ, and the Holy Ghost bears record that those scriptures are true.

The lengthy passage quoted from the first chapter of John showed that two of the disciples of John the Baptist subsequently became Apostles of the Lord Jesus. These two are John, who was later known as John the Beloved or John the Revelator, and Andrew. However, other passages suggest that perhaps most, if not all, of the Twelve were tutored by John the Baptist, and that it was from him that they learned their earliest lessons about the Messiah, who had already come to earth and who actually lived in their neighborhood.

In Acts 1:21–22, we read a statement of Peter at the time of the choosing of Matthias as a new member of the Twelve. Peter says that from among the believers who had “complicated with” the Apostles all the time, “beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he [Jesus] was

taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." This sounds significantly as if most of the Twelve had been followers of John the Baptist and from him they had learned that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. John's mission was to be a forerunner to prepare the way for the Savior and to prepare a people to receive Him. What more effective way than for John to actively tutor and start on their way those who later became Jesus' chief witnesses! He taught them the right way to find the Messiah and introduced many of them first to the doctrines of the Lord and then to the Lord in person.

### THE YOUNG JESUS

Let us now review from the scriptures what it is that people find when and if they find the Messiah. The shepherds near Bethlehem, being prompted by the angels of heaven, found the Messiah as a little babe, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12, see 8–18). He looked like other babies in outward appearance, but because the shepherds knew who He was they worshiped Him and could hardly wait to tell others of it.

About forty days later, when Joseph and Mary brought the infant Jesus to the temple to fulfill the rites of purification according to the laws of Moses, they met a righteous and devout man whose name was Simeon. To him it had been revealed by the Holy Ghost that before his death he would see the Messiah. He recognized the baby Jesus as the Messiah, the "Hope of Israel," and took Him in his arms and blessed Him. This man was made happy because by the Holy Spirit he had seen, understood, and found the Messiah (see Luke 2:25–35).

At that same instant, Anna, a righteous woman of great age, who had been left a widow more than eighty-four years after only seven years of marriage, came into the room. She saw the child, knew who He was, and gave thanks that she had seen the Messiah (see Luke 2:36–38).

The Wise Men, being led by His star—not just a star, or *the* star, but as the scripture says—*His* star—a special star, found Jesus in a house as a young child, for it was a year or two since His birth. He no doubt looked like other children, but the Wise Men, being spiritually endowed and having knowledge, knew He was wonderfully different, and they brought Him gifts and worshiped Him (see Matthew 2:1–12; JST, Matthew 3:1–12). In the King James Version, the Wise Men came seeking him that was born to be king, but from the Joseph Smith Translation we see an additional

dimension and learn that they were seeking not only a *king* who would *rule* but the *Messiah* who would *save*. You see, he who looks for and finds the *Messiah* is wiser even than he who only looks for and finds a king.

Later, when Jesus was twelve, He was taken to the temple in Jerusalem by His parents, according to the requirement of the law of Moses for the Passover observance. When the formalities were over, Joseph and Mary were returning to Galilee and had journeyed about a day from Jerusalem when they discovered that Jesus was not with them. I have often reflected on the fear, the sorrow, the near-panic emotions that must have surged through Joseph and Mary's souls, to have lost track of that son in such a large and crowded city as Jerusalem at the time of Passover.

Such an experience would be almost overwhelming for any of us with our natural children. Mary and Joseph would have had the same pain we would have, but more, for they had lost the very Son of God. That is worse than losing 116 pages of manuscript or almost anything else that could have happened to them. After three days of searching, they found Him. What did they really *find* when they found Him? A normal twelve-year-old boy? They found Him teaching the learned doctors of the scripture. The account given in Luke 2:46 reads as follows in the King James Version: "And . . . after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions." I suppose that it is something to write about any time a twelve-year-old boy will sit for three days and listen to a discussion of the scriptures and even ask questions. However, that is only the lesser part of the story. The Joseph Smith Translation reads as follows: "They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, and they [the doctors] were hearing him, and asking him questions." With this clarification, the next verse then takes on more meaning: "And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers" (v. 47). What did the learned doctors find when they "found" the Messiah in the temple courts? They found a young man who looked like other boys but with wisdom, knowledge, and more understanding of the spiritual things of life and the scriptures than they had been able to acquire through years of study and experience.

How did it happen that Jesus came by such wisdom at so early an age? When He was born, a veil was placed over His mind and His memory, the same as it has been with us, but He had the power of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost. In John 2:24-25, we read that Jesus "knew all things, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man" (JST,

John 2:24–25). In John 3:34, we read that the Father giveth Him the Spirit in unlimited abundance and not “by measure.”

The Joseph Smith Translation adds yet another passage that allows us a glimpse of the unusual ability and personality of the Messiah as a youth and a young man. “And it came to pass that Jesus grew up with his brethren, and waxed strong, and waited upon the Lord for the time of his ministry to come. And he served under his father, and he spake not as other men, neither could he be taught; for he needed not that any man should teach him. And after many years, the hour of his ministry drew nigh” (JST, Matthew 3:24–26). We often hear it said that we do not know anything about the Savior’s early life, but we can see from these passages that we do know something.

### VIEWS OF THE CHRIST

Let us read from the scriptures the words of those who knew Jesus as an adult man and who found Him to be the Messiah. What did they say they found when they found the Messiah? As we have already read, they identified Him as the one of whom Moses and the prophets had written. Many other people, when they saw Him and heard Him, thought He was one of the ancient prophets come back to earth again—perhaps Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets (see Matthew 16:14). Herod, upon hearing of His miracles and wonderful works, but having never seen Him, thought He was John the Baptist risen from the dead (see Matthew 14:2).

There is not a single case in the four Gospel records that represents Jesus as impatient, critical, or unkind to people who were repentant, teachable, and willing to change their lives. He forgave transgressions and mingled with publicans and sinners on condition of their repentance. He cast out devils, healed the lame, raised the dead, fed the hungry, opened the eyes of the blind, gave hearing to the deaf, and restored the sick to health if they but had the faith that He could do it. But He was a terror to the workers of iniquity and those who were self-righteous, deceptive, or hypocritical. In dealing with the repentant, He was kind and gentle yet firm: the promised Messiah. To the proud, the haughty, and the arrogant, He was absolutely indomitable and irrepressible and a threat to their craftiness.

A few years ago, I made a list of Jesus’ teaching methods as illustrated in the four Gospels and discovered that His methods were adapted to the need and the occasion. The idea for this search was first suggested to me by a former faculty member Glenn Pearson, in his master’s thesis, so I am

indebted to him for some of this material. I have listed twenty-three methods as follows:

- Used simple exposition (Matthew 5; 6; 7; John 7:14–18).
- Spoke with forthrightness and authority, not secondhand (Matthew 7:28–29).
- Performed miracles (Matthew 12:9–13).
- Used irony, almost sarcasm (Matthew 9:10–13; Mark 2:15–17; Luke 5:27–32; 15:1–7).
- Used subtlety and wile (John 4:15–19).
- Prophesied (Matthew 12:36–42; 24:3–51).
- Appealed to Old Testament for precedence (Matthew 12:1–8).
- Quoted from the Old Testament (John 10:34; Matthew 19:3–6; 22:31–32).
- Taught with parables (Matthew 13).
- Used logic (Matthew 12:24–28).
- Used object lessons (Matthew 18:10; 22:16–22; Luke 5:4–10).
- Asked questions (Matthew 16:13–15; Luke 24–26).
- Asked questions of those who asked Him (Luke 10:25–28).
- Bargained by means of questions (Matthew 21:23–27).
- Used invective (Matthew 11:20–24; 23:1–39).
- Used repartee (Matthew 22:15–46).
- Posed a problem (Matthew 22:41–46).
- Candidly corrected those who were in error (Matthew 22:29).
- Used debate and argument (beyond mere discussion) (John 7–8).
- Was selective in what He taught to different groups (Matthew 7:6; 10).
- Refused to give signs (Matthew 12:38–40).
- Changed the subject, thus avoiding the full force of the issue (Matthew 22:30–31).
- Sometimes refused to say anything (Luke 23:7–11).

## VIEWS OF UNBELIEVERS

But what did the Jewish *rulers* find when they encountered the Messiah? They saw Him as a threat to their way of life. They were amazed at His strength of character and endless wisdom. He had *not* gone through their training and curriculum or their schools, and yet He knew much about the scriptures and about men and many other things. Once, in what appears to be a mixture of surprise and dismay over Jesus' success as a teacher, they marveled and cried out, "How knoweth this man letters, having never



learned?" Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:15–16). John records: "And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people" (John 7:12).

Three days before His Crucifixion, Jesus spent the entire day in a vivid confrontation with the Jewish rulers. They found that in defense of truth He was superb. He was righteousness coupled with facts—an unbeatable combination. They learned the truth of Job's expression, "How forcible are right words" (Job 6:25). I will read only a portion of what the record tells us took place on that day. Just one day previously, Jesus had cast the money changers out of the temple. When He came into Jerusalem and to the temple the next morning, the chief priests and the elders approached Him as He was teaching and asked:

By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

But if we shall say, Of men: we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. (Matthew 21:23–27)

Discussion then ensued, and Jesus pointed out to them several flaws in their character, such as greed, perfidy, spiritual blindness, and such everyday things. Then the Pharisees held a meeting to see how they might entangle Him in His talk (see Matthew 22:15). "And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men."

This was to be a trap. No matter which way Jesus answered, they could challenge Him about it and seek to discredit Him.

Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?

But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went on their way. (Matthew 22:16–22)

On the very same day the Sadducees came to Him, also to refute Him and if possible to embarrass and discredit Him publicly. They had a “hard question” to ask Him about marriage and about the Resurrection. It is important to note that the Sadducees did not believe there is any resurrection from the dead. We need to know that so we can understand that this question is not asked in good faith or with a desire to seek the truth but is in reality the setting of another trap.

The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

And last of all the woman died also.

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine. (Matthew 22:23–33)

This passage is usually the one that members of other faiths use to refute doctrine of eternal marriage because of the words “for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage.” A *casual* reading might lead a person to think that is a denial or a rejection by the Savior of the doctrine of eternal marriage. But a *careful* reading will show that this is one of the strongest examples in the Bible showing that Jesus plainly taught the doctrine of eternal marriage.

I had an experience that will illustrate this point. When I was a seminary teacher, playful high school students would sometimes put whisky bottles, cigarette cartons, and the like on my front porch during the night. Sometimes they put cigarettes under the windshield wipers on my car. Why did those students do those particular things? They thought it to be a clever reaction to my teaching about the Word of Wisdom in seminary class. They did not put milk cartons or soft-drink bottles—only liquor and tobacco items.

Once as an experiment, I said in class that some people feel that the eating of chocolate is contrary to the Word of Wisdom. And do you know what was under the windshield wipers the next day? A chocolate candy bar. I was not astute enough at the time, but I have often thought since that I should have told them that the love of money was the root of evil.

Now return to Jesus and the Sadducees. Since the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection anyway, and since this was a hostile audience and encounter, it is easy to see that these clever men were trying to give the Messiah a hard question about marriage and resurrection that they supposed He could not answer. Why do it on the subject of marriage in the resurrected state unless it was widely known that He had been teaching such a doctrine? They were reacting to what He had said. His answer simply was that this woman and her seven husbands had not been married by the proper power and authority, and hence there was no problem at all, since none of her marriages would be eternal. I say this passage, when read in its context, is one of the strongest evidences that Jesus taught both eternal marriage and resurrection from the dead and that everyone there knew it, but the Sadducees did not like it.

The chapter ends with one more encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees, and after they were properly rebuffed for their deliberate neglect and lack of understanding, the scripture says, “And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions” (Matthew 22:46).

## FINDING HIM TODAY

Now, in closing, let us ask, what do men and women find when they discover the true Messiah? Finding the Messiah is the greatest of all discoveries. If we were to discuss the most important thing about Jesus the Messiah, what would it be? If we were to go home today to our families and say, “We have found the Messiah!” what would we say about Him? What is the most important thing about Him that we could tell another person? Would it be His height or weight, the color of His hair, the style of His clothes, the tone of His voice? Everything about Jesus is important, and any true detail or concept would be worth knowing, but what would be the single most important thing to find out about Him? I could answer that with my own opinion, but let us take a clue from what the scriptures say about Him.

I think it can be summarized in John 3:16, “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.” While that is the central concept, it takes a considerable amount of study to know what that one verse means. I’ll tell you what I have discovered about the Messiah that I have learned from the scriptures and the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. The greatest message about Jesus Christ is that He has conquered death—both spiritual and physical death. He is literally the light and the life of the world (see D&C 10:70).

We are given a plain discussion of the redeeming role of the Savior in the following scriptures:

From Paul: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

From Jacob:

For it behooveth the great Creator that he suffereth himself to become subject unto man in the flesh, and die for all men, that all men might become subject unto him.

For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfill the merciful plan of the great Creator, there must needs be a power of resurrection, and the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and 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. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more.

O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more 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 Nephi 9:5–9)

And from Nephi:

Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ; for, for this end hath the law of Moses been given; and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him.

And also my soul delighteth in the covenants of the Lord which he hath made to our fathers; yea, my soul delighteth in his grace, and in his justice, and power, and mercy in the great and eternal plan of deliverance from death.

And my soul delighteth in proving unto my people that save Christ should come all men must perish. (2 Nephi 11:4–6)

Do we understand that Jesus made payment with His blood in order for mercy to satisfy justice? No other person, no human being, could redeem us; the redemption could be made only by a God, as explained by Amulek:

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; for the Lord God hath spoken it.

For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made.

For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner

of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice.

Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood which will atone for the sins of another.

Therefore there can be nothing which is short of an infinite atonement which will suffice for the sins of the world.

Therefore, it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice.

And that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal. (Alma 34:8–14)

What does this mean to us? It means that our association with the Messiah is not optional or casual. It is critical.

By the Fall of Adam, all mankind has suffered two deaths—a spiritual alienation from God and a physical death. We have all suffered the first—the alienation. We will yet, with no exceptions, suffer the physical death. We are thus dominated by death because of the fall of Adam. It is absolutely necessary that we understand that Jesus, in order to be the Messiah, had to be divine, that He had to be the literal, biological Son of God, and thus was not dominated by death and sin as is all the rest of humanity. Had He not been the Only Begotten, He could not have been able or worthy to pay the debt of the Fall of Adam and of our own individual sins. The infinite Atonement required the life and the death and the sacrifice of a God, not of a man.

The plan of salvation is equally real. Adam was a living person in time and in space. The Fall is so real that, if we knew the details, we could place on a calendar the time when he fell. Also, if we knew the details, we could mark on a map the location where he ate the forbidden fruit.

In the very same manner, the Atonement of Jesus Christ is so vital and so necessary in time and in space, that if we had the facts, we could place on a calendar the date of His birth, the date of His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, the date of His death, and the date of His Resurrection. In like manner we could mark on a map the place of His birth, suffering, death, and Resurrection. These are all events in time and geography. This is the Messiah I have found, and I believe this to be the greatest message in the world. It is the message of John 3:16 in its expanded form.

When that morning comes that any of us stands in perfection of body and spirit, resurrected, cleansed, and with eternal life in the presence of

God, we will then know with full meaning what we perceive only in part today when we say, "I have found the Messiah!"

**NOTE**

1. See Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the New Testament: A Side-by-Side Comparison with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005).