

Why Study World Religions?

Roger R. Keller

The vast expanses of oceans and deserts that separated people have become less formidable in the face of modern travel and communication. The world is interdependent today. Economies, stock markets, energy, pollution, environment, wars, good, and evil involve the entire world community. It is not possible to hide in isolation from the rest of the world, as the tragedies of September 11, 2001, proved so clearly. To be good citizens of this world village, we need to know our neighbors. We need to seek the good that lies among them and build on that good. The good people of the world must join together to oppose the malignancy of the world's evil. Only then can the human race survive. No matter what our faith, we are all part of the human family. To know how God works with all His children is to know that the family of God is much broader than The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A PROPHETIC PERSPECTIVE

Yet many Latter-day Saints wonder why they should study the religions of the world. Why, some ask, should we, who have the fulness of the gospel, study religions that are not true? Such a question shows a lack of understanding of the teachings of the Presidents of the Church from Joseph Smith to Gordon B. Hinckley about our relation to our religiously diverse neighbors. It also exhibits a misunderstanding of the place of truth in our own religion. We need to remind ourselves of prophetic statements, both past and present, that deal with these issues. For example, the Prophet Joseph Smith said the following:

“Wherein do you differ from others in your religious views?” In reality and essence we do not differ so far in our religious views but that we could all drink into one principle of love. . . . If I esteem mankind to be in error shall I bear them

down? No! *I will lift them up and [each] in his own way if I cannot persuade him my way is better!* And I will ask no man to believe as I do. Do you believe in Jesus Christ . . . ? So do I. Christians should cultivate the friendship with others and will do it.¹

The incredible thing about this statement is that the Prophet did not demand, or perhaps even expect, all persons to become Latter-day Saints. He recognized that the Lord can move people further along the spiritual pathway through various faiths. He will lift people up in their own ways—which could be Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, or Buddhism—if they are not prepared to become Latter-day Saints. While the fulness of the gospel offers the greatest benefits, all are not prepared to receive it. Thus, the Prophet Joseph was willing to work with God in His various ways to bring people to that fulness. Similarly, President Brigham Young recognized that truth can be found in many places. He stated:

For me, the plan of salvation must . . . circumscribe [all] the knowledge that is upon the face of the earth, or it is not from God. Such a plan incorporates every system of true doctrine on the earth, whether it be ecclesiastical, moral, philosophical, or civil: it incorporates all good laws that have been made from the days of Adam until now; it swallows up the laws of nations, for it exceeds them all in knowledge and purity; it circumscribes the doctrines of the day, and takes from the right and the left, and brings all truth together in one system, and leaves the chaff to be scattered hither and thither.²

President Young tells us that wherever there is truth, the gospel is present—not necessarily in its fulness—but the gospel encompasses all that is true in whatever venue or discipline or religion it is found. Truth is truth. Wherever there is truth, God has been and is present. Mormon states the case well when he says: “Wherefore, all things which are good cometh of God;

and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually. But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God” (Moroni 7:12–13).

While the highest good would be to know Christ, there is no question that the religions of the world in their pristine forms call persons to do good. Therefore, by Mormon’s definition, all the good in them must be from God. At the same time, however, whatever is untrue in them is not from God, just as whatever is not true among Latter-day Saints is not from God. Sometimes the philosophies of human beings are found among the Saints, because even we speculate occasionally.

Just as it is important to consult former prophets about attitudes toward other religions, it is even more important to look to the current prophet. President Hinckley has clearly given us our marching orders. On July 22, 2001, in a talk commemorating the entry of the pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley, President Hinckley called us to a new style of relationships with our neighbors different from those that sometimes have been manifest among us.

This city [Salt Lake City] and state have now become the home of many people of great diversity in their backgrounds, beliefs, and religious persuasions. I plead with our people to welcome them, to befriend them, to mingle with them, to associate with them in the promulgation of good causes. . . . I repeat the words which Brigham Young spoke in 1866, 135 years ago. He said, “To be adverse to Gentiles [as the word was then used], because they are Gentiles, or Jews because they are Jews, is in direct opposition to the genius of our religion. It matters not what a man’s creed is, whether it be Catholic, or Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker or Jew, he will receive kindness and friendship

from us" (Nibley, Preston, *Brigham Young: The Man and His Work*, Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Press, 1936, 416).

I echo those sentiments. As I have said before, we must not be clannish. We must never adopt a holier-than-thou attitude. We must not be self-righteous. We must be magnanimous, and open, and friendly. We can keep our faith. We can practice our religion. We can cherish our method of worship without being offensive to others. I take this occasion to plead for a spirit of tolerance and neighborliness, of friendship and love toward those of other faiths.³

In other words, there is no room for parochialism or exclusivity amongst us. We are to live in the world and rejoice in its diversity without compromising what we believe. President Howard W. Hunter also underlined this reality when he said:

In the gospel view, no man is alien. No one is to be denied. There is no underlying excuse for smugness, arrogance, or pride. Openly scorning the pettiness and intolerance of rival religious groups, the Prophet Joseph Smith said in an editorial: "While one portion of the human race is judging and condemning the other without mercy, the Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; He views them as His offspring, and without any of those contracted feelings that influence the children of men, causes 'His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' He holds the reins of judgment in His hands; He is a wise Lawgiver, and will judge all men, not according to the narrow, contracted notions of men, but, 'according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil,' or whether these deeds were done in England, America, Spain, Turkey, or India." (*History of the Church*, 4:595–96)⁴

All of the world's great religions seek to lead people to better, fuller lives. In all of them

there are people who do not live up to the ideal, but many live lives very much in harmony with gospel principles. What is the source of their knowledge of good? A variety of suggestions have been made by Latter-day Saints to explain the truths found in diverse religious traditions. One that is often cited suggests that all contemporary religions came from a common root; namely, the gospel as it was made known to Adam. Over time the fulness of the gospel became corrupted, yet much that was true remained. President Young stated:

Can we tell how much better "Mormonism" is than other religions and isms of the present day? More or less truth may be found in them all, both in civilized and barbarous nations. How has it transpired that theological truth is thus so widely disseminated? It is because God was once known on the earth among his children of mankind, as we know one another. Adam was . . . conversant with his Father . . . and the children of Adam were more or less acquainted with him. . . . From this source mankind have received their religious traditions.⁵

This is undoubtedly one reason that truths are present in various traditions. Others suggest that God continues to guide His children even today. He gives them, through revelation, that which they are capable of receiving and adds to it as appropriate. President Hunter made the following statement:

Elder Orson F. Whitney, in a conference address, explained that many great religious leaders were inspired. He said: "[God] is using not only his covenant people, but other peoples as well, to consummate a work, stupendous, magnificent, and altogether too arduous for this little handful of Saints. . . . All down the ages men bearing the authority of the Holy Priesthood— patriarchs, prophets, apostles and others, have officiated in the name of the Lord, doing the things that he required of them; and outside the

pale of their activities other good and great men, not bearing the Priesthood, but possessing profundity of thought, great wisdom, and a desire to uplift their fellows, *have been sent* by the Almighty into many nations, to give them, not the fulness of the Gospel, but that portion of truth that they were able to receive and wisely use."⁶

Note the words "have been sent." These persons are not just intelligent and wise human beings. They are emissaries of the Almighty God. President Kimball, in a First Presidency Message dated February 15, 1978, made a similar point as he considered the role of other religious traditions: "The great religious leaders of the world such as Mohammed, Confucius, and the Reformers, as well as philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and others, received a portion of God's light. Moral truths were *given to them by God* to enlighten whole nations and to bring a higher level of understanding to individuals."⁷

Again, those of whom President Kimball speaks are God's messengers, meeting people where they are in order to lead them to greater truth and light.

We also find this idea put forward in the Book of Mormon. So often, we need to have the appropriate glasses that enable us to see what God is saying to us. The passage below is familiar to all Latter-day Saints. They have read it many times and have recognized that they learn line upon line. But I wonder how many of us have thought that all God's children learn in precisely the same way? All grow in spiritual knowledge as they are prepared for further growth. President Kimball taught, "We believe that God has given and will give to all peoples sufficient knowledge to help them on their way to eternal salvation, either in this life or in the life to come."⁸ Thus, from an eternal perspective all persons of whatever religion have the same possibilities that their Latter-day Saint brothers and sisters do, since God is no respecter of persons. Consequently, according to the following, God

gives His word to all nations and peoples and expects them to record in writing what He gives them. It is against their own writings, given to them by God, that they will be judged as they pass through the veil.

For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. . . .

For I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written.

For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it. (2 Nephi 28:30; 29:11-12)

The writings here noted are the Bible (the book of the Jews), the Book of Mormon (the book of the Nephites), yet unknown writings from the lost tribes of Israel (tribes of the house of Israel), and the writings of the world's other religions (writings of all nations). It appears that God's goodness and grace know no national or religious boundaries. Yet, despite the universality of God's love, the fulness of the gospel exists nowhere but among Latter-day Saints. It is true that all are on the way toward it, as President Kimball said.⁹ Given that, Latter-day Saints are beginning to look more for the golden threads of truth that God has preserved in the religions of

the world than for the falsehoods which may be found therein. If we seek truths, we may better see how God was and is preparing His children for the reception of the fulness of the gospel, and how we may best present it to them. If persons seek truth with all their hearts, they will ultimately be led by God to Jesus Christ, who is “the way, *the truth*, and the life” (John 14:6; emphasis added). Perhaps it could be said that the religions of the world are God’s Eliaes, or forerunners, to the fulness of the gospel found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All the good that is found in these other religions, according to Mormon in the passage quoted above from Moroni 7, comes from God. If so, God can use that truth to draw His children of all faiths to Him.

If this were not true, the work for the dead that Latter-day Saints do in their temples would be meaningless. In order for that work to be valid, it has to be assumed that people of all faiths have the potential to enter the celestial kingdom and that the ordinances by proxy are essential for them to attain that goal. We are taught that persons take into the next life all the *intelligence* that they gain in mortality (see D&C 130:18–19). As Westerners, Latter-day Saints usually view that statement in the context of informational intelligence. However, the Indian religions teach that there is a reality beyond sheer propositional truths. The *intelligence* that should be gained in this life is not solely factual knowledge about God, as important as that may be. Rather, real intelligence is derived from a relationship with God. It is that relationship, be it shallow or deep, Christian or non-Christian, that is carried into the postmortal world. It is this path of relationship with God that all religions of the world walk. People who seek ultimate reality in mortal life are all on the path toward the Father. Those who wish to find that relationship in its fulness will have to come to Christ either in this life or in the spirit world. Whatever relationship they may have developed with God through their native religions will serve as the foundation

for the reception of the fulness of the gospel. Thus, though the religion into which people are born may be incomplete, it can still serve as the springboard to the full gospel for those who follow God’s truths as they are made known to them, either in this life or in the next.

It is dangerous to speculate, based on appearances, why some are in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and others are born into Hindu, Buddhist, Protestant, or Roman Catholic homes. If externals are the basis upon which judgments about valiancy in the premortal life are made, then many of the great Saints of the Judeo-Christian tradition would appear to be failures. There were no outward signs of success as Jeremiah was imprisoned, as Jesus died on the cross, as Paul was beheaded, as Peter was crucified upside down, or as Joseph and Hyrum were martyred in Carthage. Behind surface appearances, in each case lay the mystery of the hand of God moving inexorably toward His chosen ends. Thus, judgments about people’s relationships with God should not be made based solely on religious affiliations.

Just as surely, the hand of God must move in the lives of all of God’s children. B. H. Roberts is undoubtedly correct when he says that the situation in life to be sought most diligently is the one that will enable a person to grow the most.¹⁰ While speculative, it would appear that Heavenly Father places all His children in situations that maximize their potential for growth. In whatever situations people may find themselves, they are there to grow closer to their Heavenly Father and to become more like Christ through the workings of the Holy Ghost. Human beings, with their limited perspectives and understanding, cannot fathom the intricacies of God’s plan for each of His children. We should be satisfied to know that He desires none to be lost but leads all toward Himself so long as they are willing to follow His guidance. He does not abrogate agency, but neither is His time human time. His guidance begins in the premortal life, is present throughout

mortality, and continues into the postmortal existence. Because there are many who are taught and receive the fulness of the gospel after death (see D&C 138), it is imperative that Latter-day Saints do temple work for the dead. By that very act, Latter-day Saints recognize the truth of President Kimball's statement that all people can be on the path to eternal salvation. Therefore, no human being has the right to judge another or to be arrogant in his or her faith. Only God can judge the human heart.

Yet having said this, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an evangelical church. It has an unwavering commitment to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness to every person on the face of the earth. To know our neighbors is to be better missionaries to them. We should never apologize for wanting to share with anyone who will listen what has given so much meaning to our personal lives. Not to share things meaningful to us would be to devalue our brothers and sisters, somehow implying that they are not worthy to hear what we have found. Thus, we need to listen to what they have received and to offer to add to it. We should never denigrate other peoples' beliefs, for all beliefs provide meaning to the life of the believer. However, we preach because we believe we can provide added meaning to their lives. Like Ammon, we need to find where people are in their beliefs, discover common ground, and build on that commonality. President Hunter said:

In our humble efforts to build brotherhood and to teach revealed truth, we say to the people of the world what President George Albert Smith so lovingly suggested: "We have come not to take away from you the truth and virtue you possess. We have come not to find fault with you nor to criticize you. We have not come here to berate you because of things you have not done; but we have come here as your brethren . . . and to say to you: 'Keep all the good that you have, and let us bring to you more good, in order that you may be happier and in order that you may

be prepared to enter into the presence of our heavenly Father.'"¹¹

We have seen this graphically demonstrated in Africa since the 1978 revelation on priesthood for all worthy males. Professor Dale LeBaron of Brigham Young University conducted a study in 1988 of African blacks who joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints immediately following the revelation. Of the 400 converts he interviewed, 398 were already Christians before becoming Latter-day Saint Christians. Two had been Muslims. Without the Catholic and Protestant missionary efforts in Africa prior to the Latter-day Saint presence, it is safe to say that few of the 400 would have become Latter-day Saints. They were prepared for the fulness of the gospel through the dedicated efforts of Catholic and Protestant missionaries, ministers, and priests.¹²

Taking this view, it is best that we assume God's hand to be in all the traditions we will examine, that their adherents are children whom God loves, and that He desires them to be with Him. That being the case, we should rejoice in the truths to be found in these faiths, while simultaneously recognizing the responsibility we possess as Latter-day Saints to share the fulness of the gospel with all of God's children. That fulness is found only in Jesus Christ, whose Atonement is accessed fully only through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Finally, the study of world religions opens doors into our own faith that expand and enliven what we know. When we put on the glasses of another faith, we not only see the great questions that human beings have asked across the millennia and to which we have answers, but we also see elements in our own faith of which we have been only marginally aware. It is to this last issue that I want to devote the remainder of this chapter.

WINDOWS TO OUR FAITH

Understanding aspects of another faith helps Latter-day Saints think through issues in their own tradition. Since it is impossible to study another faith without reflection upon one's own, the study of other faiths encourages consideration of various aspects of Latter-day Saint doctrine. In reality, some Brigham Young University students come to the study of world religions hoping to "escape" from traditional religion classes where Latter-day Saint doctrine is considered. What they discover, as we shall here, is that the study of other religions leads to profoundly deep considerations of multiple Latter-day Saint doctrines. Below, I will take one or two doctrines from each of the major religions that we study at Brigham Young University, explore the issue with which the doctrine is concerned, and then suggest how that issue can lead to insights into Latter-day Saint thought. We will begin with the religions of India, move to China and then Japan, and end with the great monotheistic faiths that arose in the Middle East.¹³ As we do so, recognize that these religious traditions are all complex and that there is diversity of thought and belief within them. Below are merely glimpses into some aspects of the traditions.

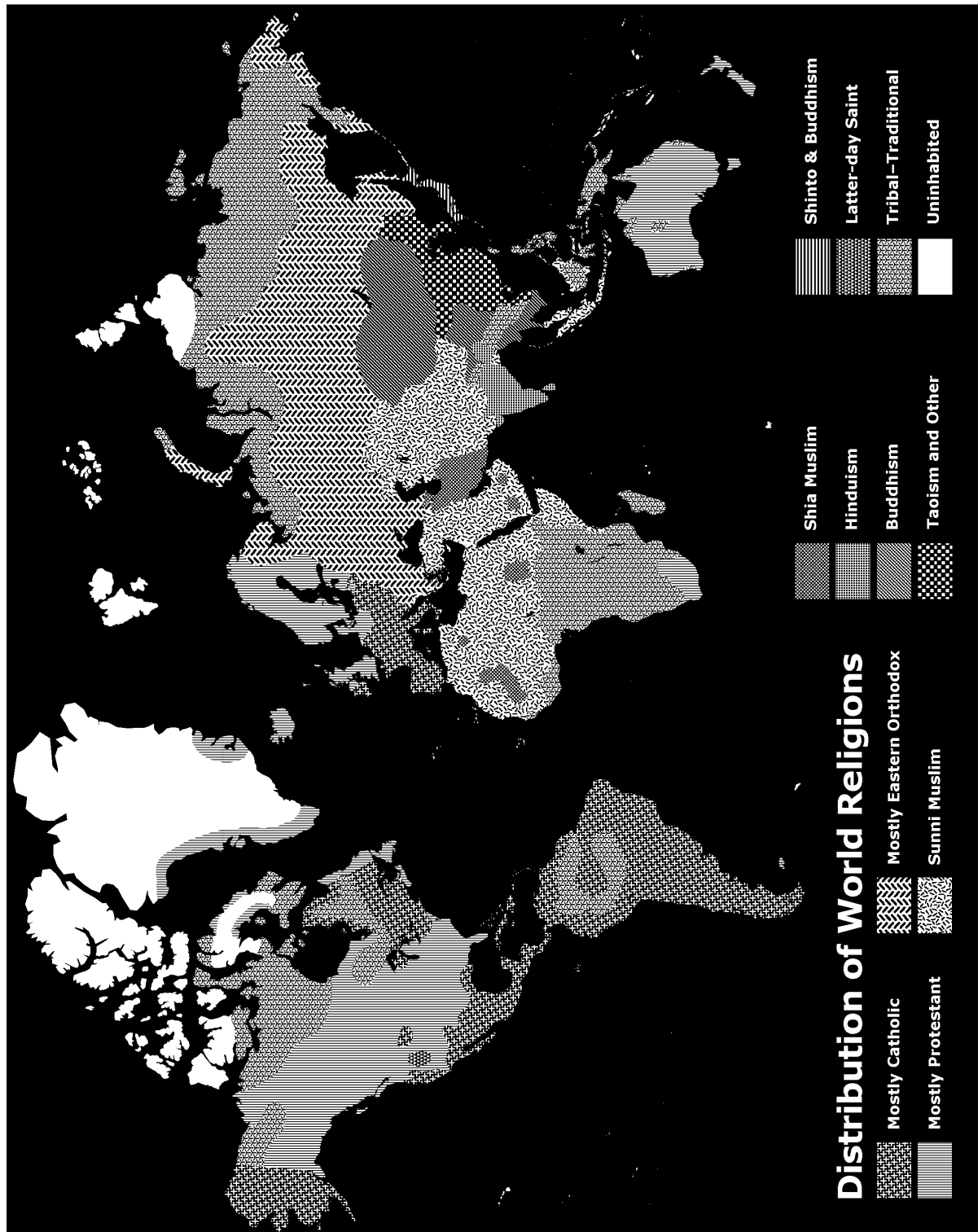
Hinduism. Hinduism is the seedbed out of which Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism arose.¹⁴ Thus, we will look at two ideas within Hinduism that carry over into the other three religions. The two doctrines common to all four of the religions are karma and reincarnation.

Karma is the result of the balance between one's good and bad deeds from all past lives. Karma is that which determines what will happen in a person's current lifetime and what will be the nature of his or her next life. All that happens to persons is a result of their karma. Its effects may be delayed, but they are inexorable and explain the differences between people; that is, why some are rich or poor, are healthy or sickly, die young or live to old age, or are spiritual or depraved. All persons are what they have made

themselves, and karma is the vehicle of their continuing identity.

Because Latter-day Saints believe we have come from a premortal existence, we often speak of the tie between valiancy, for example, in premortality and what a person is or does in this lifetime. Is this karma? No, because karma is impersonal. It is simply a cosmic computer, and there is no personality or mercy standing behind it. By contrast, Latter-day Saints know very little about what happened to us in the premortal life. We may have some glimpses through our patriarchal blessings, but in the main we know few, if any, specifics. The safest course for us to take is to adopt B. H. Roberts's position that experience is for the purpose of growth. This would mean that all of God's children are where they can grow the most, because a loving Heavenly Father stands behind each one of them. We cannot judge on the basis of outward appearance who is the most valiant, for outward appearances are deceiving. Suffering may be the sign of a divine vocation such as held by Paul, Jeremiah, Peter, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and the Lord Himself. We also know that our bad deeds may be covered through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Thus, while the concept of Karma drives us to think about accountability, good and evil, and consequences, it is not a concept that is found among Latter-day Saints. Because we stand before a loving, personal God, we are not subject to an impersonal cosmic computer.

The concept of reincarnation—the repeated rounds of death and rebirth—is closely tied to that of karma. Karma is something to be lost, for it is that which keeps people on the rounds of rebirth. But since karma is collected over many lifetimes, it is logical that it may take many lifetimes to get rid of it so that one will have the spiritual propensity to escape from the realm of reincarnation. In essence, reincarnation recognizes that perfection is not attainable in one lifetime, so there must be multiple lifetimes to gain it.



Latter-day Saints wrestle with the same problem. In a mortal lifespan, we do not achieve perfection and are thus incapable of entering into the presence of a perfect Father in Heaven. Our answer to the dilemma is not the doctrine of reincarnation, but rather the doctrine of eternal progression coupled with the Atonement. Our whole existence is one that enables us to grow, to mature, to come closer to the Savior that we might enter the presence of our Father clean and perfect. That perfection comes only as we take Christ's perfection upon ourselves through faith in Him, repentance, baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost, as well as living a life of continuing obedient discipleship. We do not make ourselves perfect by removing karma, but rather Christ removes sin and makes us perfect through His Atonement, about which we learn and in which we participate in premortality, mortality, and postmortality.

Thus, consideration of the concepts of Karma and reincarnation forces Latter-day Saints to think through issues involving premortality, progression, good and evil, and the Atonement in our own theology.

Jainism. Jainism is a small religion of India with only about 4.5 million adherents, but it has a power that extends far beyond it.¹⁵ One of its concepts, *ahimsa*—meaning nonviolence or non-injury—deeply influenced Gandhi and, by extension, Martin Luther King Jr. Jains are committed to this precept. Thus, they do not farm. They are vegetarians. They oppose war or any other human action that injures or harms. They are in the forefront of ecological and antinuclear movements. They base their views on the principle that all life is of equal value, because all life bears in it the same potential for release from the rounds of rebirth. A flea has the same potential as does a human being. In a world fraught with violence, the Jains feel it important to avoid all forms of violence in body, speech, or thought.

How do Latter-day Saints deal with this concept? At first glance, deer season seems to be

a Church holiday in Utah, which would indicate that Latter-day Saints take a radically different view of life from that of the Jains. But that is at the level of popular Mormonism. A deeper consideration is warranted. First, there is the Word of Wisdom that suggests that meat should be eaten sparingly and only in times of famine or winter or cold; that is, when the grains recommended cannot be raised. While animal flesh is approved for human consumption, it is clear that grains are the preferred food. The eating of meat requires the killing of sentient life. In this celestial world, that is at times necessary for survival, but in the millennium Isaiah tells us that there will be no hurting or destroying in all God's holy mountain and that the lion shall eat straw like the ox (see Isaiah 11:8–9). It would appear that vegetarianism will probably be the norm in a terrestrial world. Thus, the Jains foreshadow something for which Latter-day Saints wait. The Prophet Joseph Smith was clear on what human-animal relations should be. "Men must become harmless, before the brute creation; and when men lose their vicious dispositions and cease to destroy the animal race, the lion and the lamb can dwell together, and the sucking child can play with the serpent in safety."¹⁶

Jain thought also echoes that of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5:21–22, Jesus equates killing with anger at one's fellow human beings. It is what is inside people that pollutes them. Thus, to have the emotion of anger at someone is at root the same as actually killing that person, for all actions come from the internal feelings. So the Jain admonition against violence in any form—physically, mentally, or emotionally—causes us to rediscover an *ahimsa* tradition among Latter-day Saints. Christians of all ages are called to a righteousness higher than that of those whose religions are external. They are called to cleanse the inner vessel so that there is not even the thought of violence, much less the act against human and nonhuman alike.

Buddhism. Nonattachment is a principal concept in Buddhism.¹⁷ Attachments to persons, places, or things all cause pain and suffering, because all things are transitory and therefore vanish away, leaving only sorrow in the one who has tried to hold them. The goal of Buddhism, particularly Zen Buddhism, is to realize the unity and oneness of all things, thereby transcending the need to grasp at things. If we can realize that there is no such thing as individuality—that we have meaning only when we are part of the whole and not separated from it—then we will have escaped the snares of attachment. Nothing is separate and distinct from us, and consequently we need not desire nor grasp for anything, because we are a part of all. Consequently, a goal of Buddhism is detachment from the world through an ascetic life.

In contrast, Latter-day Saints seem very much to live in the world. They are a busy people, working hard to achieve success and well-being in material ways. Marriage, jobs, family, cars, and houses tend to be a major part of Latter-day Saint lives. And yet we are told to be in the world, but not of it. Is there perhaps something we are missing of which Buddhism can remind us?

Billy Graham once said that he had never seen a hearse going to the cemetery with a U-Haul trailer behind it. In other words, everything for which we work in this world will be left behind us at death. No material things, necessary to life or not, will go with us. The only things that are eternal are relationships—relationships with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, and with one another. In the end, that is all that will really matter. Yet we all spend less time working on the eternal things than on the temporary ones.

I will sometimes ask my students what their passports say. I usually hear, “The United States,” “Canada,” or “Great Britain.” But those are not the passports about which I am asking. I am curious about the one they brought into this life with them that said “The Kingdom of God,” for that is our true country of origin. We came

from the presence of God. We only have a visa for our sojourn on earth. However, the world’s glitter and glitz can be very attractive, and some of us apply for a green card so that we can be more a part of it. The next step is to apply for citizenship, and one day we receive our coveted passport that now says “Earth.” Inevitably, however, death overtakes us, and we stand before the Lord, passport in hand. He looks at it and refuses us entry, for while on earth we may have passports that say either “Earth” or “The Kingdom of God,” Christ accepts in heaven only passports that say “The Kingdom of God.” Attachments to the things of the world are of little account to the Saints of God, for they live by the higher law of consecration, being willing to consecrate all things to Christ for the furtherance of the kingdom of God on earth. Attachment is a value of the earth. Nonattachment to earthly things is the value of heaven, for Christians turn their eyes from the temporal and transitory things of the earth to the eternal and glorious things of God. President Kimball underlined this point when he said: “Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies. We must leave off the worship of modern-day idols and a reliance on the “arm of flesh,” for the Lord has said to all the world in our day, “I will not spare any that remain in Babylon” (D&C 64:24).¹⁸

Sikhism. Traditional Sikh Gurdwaras (places of worship) have four entry doors, one at each point of the compass.¹⁹ The symbolism is that all the world is welcome there. It matters not what people’s religious traditions are, for all worship the one God, albeit under different names. Hence, there is no rationale for interfaith strife. Sikhism is a highly inclusive faith and can see Muhammad, the Buddha, and Jesus as gurus—persons through whom God has been present with His people. Sikhs worship one God (True Name), adhere to the concepts of reincarnation

and karma (seeing them as warnings against wasting this life's opportunities), hold women to be equal to men, and belong, if spiritually prepared, to a society of Saint-soldiers who oppose oppression of anyone. Family life is central, and material wealth is to be tithed and used for the betterment of humankind. Sikhs are not evangelistic because they believe there are many paths to God. Theirs is not the only correct way.

Latter-day Saints, by contrast, are both inclusive and exclusive in their vision of other religious traditions. Where truth is found in other traditions, God is also found, as we have seen from the Moroni 7 passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter. God leaves none of His children alone and invites all to come to Him. Ultimately, however, there is only one complete path, and that is through Christ and the priesthood of God, that has the authority to administer the saving ordinances of the gospel. As with the Sikhs, we invite all the world to come to us, but it is not because we hold all to have equally valid religions. Latter-day Saints are incurable evangelists. Certainly all religions that contain good display God's handiwork, but they are Eliases that are preparatory to the fulness of the gospel, which is found only among Latter-day Saints since it is only among them that the full authority of God resides.

Confucianism. No tradition has a stronger emphasis on family than does Confucianism.²⁰ Three of the five basic relationships—ruler/subject, husband/wife, father/son, brother/brother, and friend/friend—that undergird society, according to Confucius, are familial. Thus, it is not surprising to discover that one of the dominant principles of Confucianism is filial piety—respect for parents and ancestors. One anecdote captures the centrality of filial piety well.

A survey was taken a few years ago in which Westerners and Asians were asked whom they would save if their wife and mother-in-law fell off a ferry and they could only save one. Westerners uniformly responded that they

would save their wife. Asians almost universally responded that they would save their mother-in-law. Here is a graphic demonstration of filial piety. Older family members deserve and are granted more respect than younger persons. As an extension of this, family members gather annually to clean the graves of their ancestors and to celebrate their lives. In many ways, the veil between the living and the dead is quite thin in Asian countries influenced by Confucian ideals.

Confucian parallels with Latter-day Saint thought are several. Certainly the family is the central entity in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The central message is that the family can be together forever. However, Latter-day Saints would probably value the wife over the mother-in-law, since we are to leave our parents and "cleave unto our wives" (Genesis 2:24). Age is respected, however, and in Latter-day Saint homes deference is usually given to the oldest generation in recognition of the patriarchal order of things. Latter-day Saints also have a profound concern for departed ancestors. Many will visit grave sites of deceased ancestors on Memorial Day, placing wreathes and flowers on the graves. But most important is the work done in the temple for departed family members. Saving ordinances for the dead are done by proxies through the authority of the priesthood. It is this latter concept which differentiates Latter-day Saints from all other religious traditions, even if they believe that the living and the dead can influence one another or that families can be together after death. We believe that none of this can happen completely unless the authority of the priesthood of God is exercised. Relationships do not just happen, nor do they just continue. There is a channel, the priesthood, through which things bound on earth will be bound in heaven. Without that authority, relationships in the deepest sense do not continue beyond death nor can the living influence the state of the dead. While Confucianism points in the right direction, there is still "more" to Mormonism.

Taoism. Philosophical Taoism does not exist today in a cohesive form practiced by any group.²¹ Its concepts permeate the society of Asia at a deep level, but it has been overcome at the level of practice by religious Taoism with its multiple deities and varied rituals. The basis of philosophical Taoism was that there should be a mystical harmony between persons and the Tao. According to the Tao Te Ching, the foundational writing of philosophical Taoism, the Tao is undefinable. However, to gain some understanding of it, we might say that it is the impersonal entity that creates harmony in the universe. Thus, if persons are in mystical harmony with the Tao, they can do no wrong. Their lives will flow in natural conjunction with all other things.

Is there a Latter-day Saint counterpart to the Tao? Some might suggest the Light of Christ, since it has an impersonal character to it, but I think this is to miss the essence of the Tao. The Tao is that which, if persons are open to it, will not permit individuals to go astray. The Latter-day Saint counterpart is the Holy Ghost. In Helaman 10:7 Nephi is told that whatever he asks will be granted because he will not ask amiss. The only way this could be is that Nephi was completely attuned to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. His mind was in harmony with God's mind through the Holy Ghost. Thus, he would do that which was right, just as persons who were in harmony with the Tao would always do right. It is not easy to be so totally in harmony with the Spirit. That is why most of us would rather be told what to do than to live by the Spirit, but the Spirit leads to newness, excitement, joy, and wonder just as following the Tao does in philosophical Taoism. The challenge of Taoism is whether we want to be religious legalists or whether we want to live on the edge of religious adventure.

Shinto. Shinto is a religion about Japan. It explains the divine origin of the land and of the people.²² The central goal of Shinto is to live in harmony with the land and the spirits (Kami)

that inhabit it. Essentially, Shinto is a nature religion, and the Japanese are highly sensitive to the beauty of the natural world. Shinto shrines are often found in close proximity to wonders of nature such as waterfalls, mountains, rocks, hills, and rivers. There is a sense of oneness between the Japanese and their land.

Harmony with nature is not usually an important element in Latter-day Saint thought, and this is one of the points where study of another religion clearly highlights something we may be missing in our own tradition. Latter-day Saints, and Christians in general, tend to stress humanity's lordship over the natural world. Too often, that lordship has led to abuse rather than stewardship of our natural resources and has brought us to the brink of ecological disaster. Shinto's emphasis on harmony with the natural world should lead us to wonder if our own tradition does not have something similar. Of course, it does. Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden with the instructions to dress and keep it (see Moses 3:15). Similarly, humans are stewards of what the Lord has given them, and that stewardship includes caring for those who have less by using the things of the natural world for their benefit (see D&C 104:13–18). To use and abuse the land such that there is nothing left for our posterity but a polluted orb is a violation of the trust that God gave us. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" were the words of the Psalmist (Psalm 24:1). We are but stewards of that trust. Shinto reminds us to return to our own tradition and rediscover the Lord's will for all creation. President Young placed the natural world in its proper latter-day context.

Not one particle of all that comprises this vast creation of God is our own. Everything we have has been bestowed upon us for our action, to see what we would do with it—whether we would use it for eternal life and exaltation or for eternal death and degradation. . . . Learn to control yourselves and that which is immediately around you, and always keep in view that the

animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms—the earth and its fulness—will all, except the children of men, abide their creation—the law by which they were made, and will receive their exaltation.²³

Hugh Nibley's comment on this was, "Adam's dominion was a charge to see to it that all went well with God's creatures; it was not a license to exterminate them."²⁴

Judaism. Judaism is a highly ritualized faith.²⁵ There are many actions and prohibitions of which Jewish people need to be constantly aware. To the outsider, the burden of commands and prohibitions appears onerous. But to the writer of the first Psalm, the law is anything but a burden. He says, "Blessed is the man . . . [whose] delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psalm 1:1–2). The law is actually God's gift to Israel. It is the mark of His special love, for He gives it so that Israel might remain safe. The law is to keep Israel ever mindful that she lives before and in the presence of God. There are two symbols in Judaism that keep the divine presence constantly before the practicing Jew. One is the *kippah*. The other is keeping kosher.

The *kippah* is a simple, round head covering that men wear. As they put it on or wear it, it is a constant reminder that God is above them and that everything they do is done before Him. Keeping kosher is also a constant reminder of God's presence, for many of the dietary laws of Judaism are at variance with the standards of the surrounding culture. The prohibition against mixing meat and milk in the same meal means that practicing Jews who choose to keep kosher cannot eat a cheeseburger, have milk with a steak, or have a creamed sauce when eating lamb. Shrimp and lobster are not kosher. Dietary restrictions are further underlined by the necessity of keeping two sets of dishes, cooking utensils, and silverware—one for meat and one for milk products. Persons can do almost nothing in

Jewish life that does not bring them up against the law of God, reminding them constantly of who is in charge. Thus, the Jewish life is a life of constant awareness of God's presence and dominion over the earth and over human life.

Latter-day Saints, while not having as extensive daily demands on them, have similar reminders of God's sovereignty if they have the eyes to see. Endowed members wear the temple garment, which as they put it on should remind them that true life is found only as people take upon them the name of Christ. It should serve as a constant reminder of covenants and promises that the Saints have made concerning lifestyles and values, as well as their spiritual ties to the Savior. Similarly, the Word of Wisdom functions much as do the rules of a kosher life. Coffee, tea, tobacco, and alcohol are the staples of social interaction for most of the world. People have begun to recognize that Latter-day Saints are different, for they refuse to use these substances. That difference leads to questions about our beliefs and lifestyles. The Word of Wisdom sets people apart from the world, and in many cases it separates converts from longtime friends who do not understand this higher standard for living. Every time Latter-day Saints are invited to have a drink or to have a cup of coffee or tea, they are reminded that they have given their lives to God and now walk by His precepts. I remember meeting in Taipei, Taiwan, with Kung Te Chung, the seventy-seventh lineal descendent of Confucius. As part of the hospitality of the meeting, tea was brought and served. Toward the end of the meeting, he noticed that we had not drunk the tea. He commented on it but then said, "Oh, you are Mormons. You don't drink tea." He knew our standards and was not offended by them. Small acts such as not drinking tea create a spiritual discipline in the lives of Latter-day Saints that is much like the discipline in the lives of their Jewish brothers and sisters.

Christianity. Since Latter-day Saints claim to be Christians who possess the fulness of the

gospel, some Saints may wonder of what broader Christianity might remind us. However, as I have worked with evangelicals over the past few years, attempting to help them better understand Latter-day Saint thought, I find myself constantly reminded of the dynamic relationship between God's grace and the human response of discipleship.²⁶ Stephen E. Robinson wrote *Believing Christ*²⁷ because he saw too many Latter-day Saints trying to save themselves by works. Somehow they had missed what God did and does for them in Jesus Christ. For too many, the Atonement was a past event appropriated through works. Evangelical Christianity reminds us that God does something today—He saves sinners through Jesus Christ now! We need to remember as Latter-day Saints that our responsibility is to open ourselves to the Holy Ghost so that Christ's Atonement can become a present reality in our lives. When we were confirmed, we were commanded to receive the Holy Ghost. If we do not open ourselves to the Spirit, then Christ's Atonement is ineffective for us, no matter what works we may do. At the same time, evangelical Christians need to remember that the proper response to Christ's Atonement is a life of obedient discipleship. John says it well: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4). Grace and works are not antithetical to one another. They are complementary and two sides of the same coin. Thus, Latter-day Saints can be reminded by evangelical Christians of God's grace in Jesus Christ, and evangelical Christians can appropriately be reminded by Latter-day Saints that grace without obedient discipleship is empty.

Islam. As I write this segment in the shadow of the destruction of the World Trade Center, I am reminded that it may be the most important part I write. Islam is poorly understood by Westerners.²⁸ Thanks to the press, Westerners see only the negative side of this powerful faith, because some persons claiming the faith

have prostituted it and made it something that the Prophet Muhammad would neither recognize nor condone. In addition, we need to remember that Islam is very diverse, but we will try to show here what mainline Muslims, be they Sunni (85 percent of the Muslim world) or Shi'ite (15 percent of the Muslim world), hold as central to their faith. For these reasons, this section will be more extensive than the sections on the other faiths have been.

When I look at Islam, I see a highly ethical, highly moral faith.²⁹ It is not enough to believe that there is one God and that Muhammad was His messenger. Rather, Muslims are called to live in the world in a way that would be approved by God. Thus, as persons read the Qur'an, they discover minimal stress on theology and a maximum emphasis on correct living. Islam reminds us that we can have all the correct theology, but if it does not work itself out in a life pleasing to God—that is, a moral and ethical life—the belief is meaningless.

The Qur'an was a product of the Prophet Muhammad's search for answers to the questions of daily life. According to Islamic tradition, as questions arose about how to live a faithful life, the angel Gabriel would visit him and give him revelations from God on various subjects, and these revelations became the Qur'an. The Qur'an touches on questions of marriage, almsgiving, prayer, pilgrimage, fasting, honesty, relationships with other faiths, and many other topics. If people live the precepts of the Qur'an, they are living a life pleasing to God. Hence, it is no accident that there are a number of Muslim students at Brigham Young University. Their parents see a standard of living demanded at the university that reflects the kind of lives that they and their faith expect from their own sons and daughters.

This attitude reflects that of active Latter-day Saints. As noted above under Christianity, we cannot just talk the talk, we have to walk the walk. A faithful Muslim calls his or her Latter-day Saint

neighbors to a higher order of discipleship and commitment than we sometimes expect of ourselves. We as Latter-day Saints can become complacent in our faithfulness, for example, by becoming lazy about temple attendance. An active Muslim who stops to pray five times a day, one time being just before sunrise, calls us to a renewed commitment to the things that matter in life. The committed Muslim summons us to a life of compassion, prayer, spirituality, and service.

Given the above, I want to look at one issue that is not well understood by non-Muslims. This is the concept of jihad, or holy war.

Concerning jihad, it must be made clear that even in the Muslim world there is not absolute agreement on the implications of jihad. Its fundamental meaning is “striving or determined effort.”³⁰ Thus, it involves all aspects of life from prayer, reading of the Qur’an, giving alms, and the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca. It is concerned first and foremost with war against our baser selves. However, it may also involve fighting for the faith. It is this dimension that Ayatullah Morteza Mutahhari, a Shi’ite, addresses in a series of lectures. In his argument, he juxtaposes Islam and Christianity in their views of religion and the state. He makes the following statement:

Islam however is a religion that sees it its duty and commitment to form an Islamic state. Islam came to reform society and to form a nation and government. Its mandate is the reform of the whole world. Such a religion cannot be indifferent. It cannot be without a law of jihad. In the same way, its government cannot be without an army. While the scope of Christianity is extremely limited, that of Islam is extremely wide. While Christianity does not cross the frontiers of advice, Islam is a religion which covers all the activities of human life.³¹

In other words, there is a place for warfare in Islam, but Mutahhari sees conditions applied to its application.

Muhammad gave the first permission to engage in warfare for defensive reasons. The Qur’an states (22:39–40), “To those against whom War is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged. . . . (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right,—(For no cause) except that they say, ‘Our Lord is Allah.’”³² Jihad is thus first defensive. It is resistance against aggression.³³ In Mutahhari’s view, there are certain circumstances under which Muslims may need to attack oppression, and this act could appear to outsiders to be aggression, since there was no overt act of aggression against the invading force. They invade to lift oppression against a subjugated people. If such an act is required, however, it is to be directed only against combatants.

But with people who are not men of war, who are not soldiers, who are not in a state of combat, such as old men, old women—in fact all women, whether they are old or not—and children, we must not interfere and we must not do any of the other things that are counted as transgression. We must not do these things. We must not cut down their trees (i.e., ruin their economic resources). We must not fill their canals. Such things we must not do. These are all transgressions.³⁴

Clearly, the acts of September 11, 2001, are far outside this vision of holy war. It is, however, this sense of supporting the oppressed that leads the Muslim world to sympathize with the Palestinians, who are viewed as unjustly oppressed by the Israelis. For some, jihad, or defense against oppression, is appropriate in the case of the Palestinians or any other oppressed people. Yet, having said this, any sense of jihad for the purpose of forcing persons to become Muslim defies the Qur’an’s clear sense that there can be no compulsion in religion (see Qur’an 2:256).

Reflecting on this issue from a Latter-day Saint perspective, war is not an appropriate act for the religious community. Historically, the

Latter-day Saint response to oppression has been retreat, as from Missouri and Nauvoo or when confronted with the invading U.S. Army in the early years in the Salt Lake Valley. The other recourse open to Latter-day Saints has been in the courts. Any army mounted by Latter-day Saints would be a spiritual one, the best representation being the missionary effort. Perhaps this is our jihad—a spiritual army marching out to change the moral and spiritual tenor of the world by changing people one at a time.

CONCLUSION

We began this chapter intending to show how the study of other religions can help us better understand and appreciate our own. As we have looked at various facets of the great religions of the world, we have been summoned to consider a range of issues, about all of which The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has something to say. Sometimes our responses to the issues have been very similar to those of another religious tradition, and sometimes they have been different. In every case, another religion's perspective has caused us to consider more fully where we stand in our own faith. Through a brief look at other faiths, we have considered from a Latter-day Saint perspective eternal progression, the Atonement, the Word of Wisdom, nonattachment, God's concern for all His children, the family, living by the Spirit, stewardship of the natural world, constant awareness of God, grace, ethics, and Holy War.

Hopefully, this chapter has helped Latter-day Saints understand that there is nothing to be feared in the study of others' faiths and much to be gained, whether that gain simply be a better understanding of our brothers and sisters, thus making us better world citizens, or whether it be a deepened understanding of our own faith. All truth, wherever we find it, is God's truth. As we said at the beginning, God leaves none of His children without guidance. He leads each in his or her own way, and the ultimate end of that

journey will be the necessity to make a decision about that person's relationship to Jesus Christ and the fulness of gospel.

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, comp. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 229; emphasis added.

2. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 7:148.

3. "Pres. Hinckley Speaks during Pioneer Devotional," *Church News*, July 28, 2001, 3–4.

4. Howard W. Hunter, "The Gospel—A Global Faith," *Ensign*, November 1991, 18.

5. Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young: Second President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, comp. John A. Widtsoe (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954), 104.

6. Hunter, "Global Faith," 19. Elder Whitney's remarks first appeared in Conference Report, April 1921, 32–33; emphasis added.

7. See Carlos E. Asay, "God's Love for Mankind," in *Mormons and Muslims*, ed. Spencer J. Palmer (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1983), 208; emphasis added.

8. Asay, "God's Love," 208.

9. See Asay, "God's Love," 208.

10. See B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel and Man's Relationship to Deity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1924), 289.

11. Hunter, "Global Faith," 19.

12. These facts were conveyed orally to the author by Dale LeBaron. See E. Dale LeBaron, ed., *All Are Alike unto God* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990), for this account of God's work among the African people.

13. For persons who may be interested in further reading on the religions covered in the remainder of the chapter, I would recommend two sources. The first is Spencer J. Palmer and others, *Religions of the World: A Latter-day Saint View*, 2nd ed. (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1997). The second book is David S. Noss and John B. Noss, *A History of the World's Religions*, 9th ed. (New York: Macmillan College Publish-

ing, 1994). The latter is an extensive introduction to the religions of the world with numerous references for further reading at the end of each chapter, as well as additional suggestions at the end of the book.

In addition, it may be helpful to have some sense of the size of the various religious traditions and their percentage of the religious world. I am listing only those that are considered in this article. There are other religions that the encyclopedia counts that will not be cited. According to the 2003 *Encyclopedia Britannica* under "Worldwide Adherents of All Religions by Six Continental Areas, Mid-2001," the statistics are as follows: Hinduism, 819,689,000 (13.4%); Jainism, 4,281,000 (0.1%); Buddhism, 361,985,000 (5.9%); Sikhism, 23,538,000 (0.4%); Confucianism, 6,313,000 (0.1%)—this figure is quite misleading, since persons raised in the east Asian world live by Confucian values regardless of whether they claim to be Confucianists; Taoists, 2,670,000 (0.0%); Shintoists, 2,732,000 (0.0%); Jews, 14,484,000 (0.2%); Christians, 1,907,363,000 (31.1%); Muslims, 1,207,148,000 (19.7%).

14. For further study of Hinduism see the following works: A. L. Basham, *The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism* (Boston: Beacon, 1989); Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Hinduism: A Religion to Live By* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

15. For further study of Jainism see the following works: Padmanabh S. Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Michael Carrithers and Caroline Humphrey, eds., *The Assembly of Listeners: Jains in Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

16. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, comp. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed., rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 2:71.

17. For further study of Buddhism see the following works: Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1982); E. A. Burtt, ed., *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha* (New York: New American Library, 1982); Philip Kapleau, ed., *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice and Enlightenment* (Boston: Beacon, 1967); Robert C. Lester, *Buddhism: Path to Nirvana* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987);

Herbert Guenther. "Buddhism in Tibet," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987).

18. Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," *Ensign*, June 1976, 6.

19. For further study of Sikhism see the following works: Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963–66); Harbans Singh, *The Heritage of the Sikhs*, 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Manohar, 1983).

20. For further study of Confucianism see the following works: Raymond Dawson, *Confucius* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Arthur Waley, trans., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); Arthur F. Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960).

21. For further study of Taoism see the following works: Lin Yutang, trans. and ed., *The Wisdom of Lao-tse* (New York: The Modern Library, 1948); Holmes Welch and Anna Seidel, eds., *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Michael Loewe, *Ways to Paradise: The Chinese Quest for Immortality* (Boston: Allen Unwin, 1979).

22. For further study of Shinto see the following works: H. Byron Earhart, *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity*, 3rd ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1982); Stuart D. B. Picken, *Japan's Spiritual Roots* (New York: Kodansha International, 1980).

23. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 8:67, 191.

24. Hugh W. Nibley, "Brigham Young and the Environment," in *To the Glory of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 21.

25. For further study of Judaism see the following works: Michael A. Fishbane, *Judaism: Revelation and Translations* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987); Jacob Neusner, *An Introduction to Judaism: A Textbook and Reader* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991); Leo Trepp, *Judaism: Development and Life*, 3rd ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1982).

26. For further study in Christianity see the following works: Alister E. McGrath, *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997); John McManners, ed., *The Oxford History of Christianity*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Mark A. Noll, *The History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992).

27. Stephen E. Robinson, *Believing Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992).

28. For further study of Islam see the following works: Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1994); Fatima Umar Naseef, *Women in Islam: A Discourse in Rights and Obligations*, trans. Saleha Mahmood Abedin (Cairo: International Islamic Committee for Woman and Child, 1999); Mujan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). See also *BYU Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001). The entire volume is devoted to Islamic topics.

29. For the changing attitude of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints toward Islam, see

Arnold Green, "Mormonism and Islam: From Polemics to Mutual Respect and Cooperation," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001): 199–220.

30. Douglas E. Streusand, "What Does Jihad Mean?" <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/jihad.htm>. The article was published by *Middle East Quarterly* in September 1997.

31. Ayatullah Morteza Mutahhari, *Jihad (The Holy War of Islam and Its Legitimacy in the Quran)*, trans. Mohammad Salman Tawhidi (Tehran, Iran: Islamic Propagation Organization, 1985), First Lecture, n.p.

32. *The Holy Qur-an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*, ed. the Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance (Medina, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur-an Printing Complex, 1989).

33. See Mutahhari, First Lecture.

34. Mutahhari, Second Lecture.