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Hugh W. Nibley

## Figure 6 of Facsimile 2

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### Summary

In this informal lecture, Hugh Nibley proposes that exploring the explanations of the facsimiles was not timely in Joseph Smith's day, but the 1960s opened avenues for serious investigation. He reviews some of the mythical details in the Egyptian account of the premortal council. He also cites examples of Egyptian truisms that relate to Hebrew wisdom literature.

Transcript  
Pearl of Great Price, Abraham

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## Figure 6 of Facsimile 2

Hugh W. Nibley

If the figures in Facsimile 2 were pictures, then we could all play the game of guessing what they mean. But they aren't pictures. Joseph Smith knew that. Notice what he says about them. He starts out saying, "Represents," "signifying the first creation," "stands next to," "called by the Egyptians," "made to represent," "answers to the Hebrew word," and so forth. These are representations, symbols, pure and simple. They're not pictures. But, of course, a symbol wouldn't have any significance unless it had some resemblance, some kind of a hint, to the thing it refers to.

But it is not enough to say what I think the thing means. It is necessary to show, as much as we can, how the Egyptians themselves interpreted it. You say, "It means that," but what did the Egyptians themselves say about it? And that's what we do, and we have a lot of text to go on, lots of things. You'd be surprised how much we get to illustrate things. So it doesn't leave us in doubt. This object here, this hypocephalus, has a set composition because there are many of them, and they follow exactly the same pattern, so they're going to have a definite message. There is a whole literature, you might say, about each figure. They're all familiar figures, and yet they all retain their basic meaning and their basic relationships. This is a very important thing. Well, let's begin.

When Joseph Smith published the Egyptian documents along with his interpretations, he committed his followers, of course, to a course of serious thought and action. Because it's only sixty pages long, the Pearl of Great Price has been



treated as a relatively easy subject for commentary and so forth, but on the contrary, it's the hardest. The General Authorities have wisely refused to become involved in any arguments about it, and this was plainly the Lord's intent. The Pearl of Great Price—and especially the book of Abraham and especially the facsimiles—is to be kept on hold for some years long after Joseph Smith. These are not to concern us before then.

Notice what it says in Figure 8: "Contains writings that cannot be revealed unto the world; but it is to be had in the Holy Temple of God." Figures 8 and 9 "ought not to be revealed at the present time." See, these things are being kept on hold. Sometime they're going to be significant but not in Joseph Smith's time. All the arguments in the meantime have been so much wasted breath, actually, as we see. And Figures 10 and 11 also are not to be revealed. But again, you see, the thing is left open: "If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be." Then nine figures (twelve to twenty here) "will be given in the own due time of the Lord." We had no business messing around with them prematurely. But has the time come now? is what we're going to ask.

Most of these—some of them, especially the writings—were missing in Joseph Smith's day and had been clumsily replaced, but they could be restored in due time by the discovery of many other hypocephali and by following the same pattern, we could supply some. We could supply the missing figures. It could be done in that case, but it couldn't be done in Joseph Smith's case because this was the first one ever published. There were none others known at that time except the one, the Florentine. The last time they were seriously studied, in the 1800s (1983 and 1984), only twenty-five of them were available. Now there's almost a hundred, roughly a

hundred, of the good ones. Mrs. Varga had eighty-nine of them. So these weren't available. Nothing, no controls were available in Joseph Smith's day. So the Lord is telling us, "Lay off. This isn't the time for it."

Again, he says, "The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give at the present time." See, it wasn't in one block that he gave us a translation. He didn't give us one at all. It is all very tentative. So, that should make it clear that the facsimiles are meant to be held in reserve for a while, and yet we're open to investigation. It's very much related to the 93rd section. It deals with this very sort of thing. It shows us how incomplete we are. We're barely started. We barely know where we're going. There's so much more to come, all related and so forth. It shows that we can leave the door open for all sorts of other concepts, even other religions, as far as that goes. That marvelous 93rd section. Well, it relates to this sort of thing.

So the question is, why now? Is it time now? This is the point. Well, yes, for some things. Why have we waited so long? The course of events has shown that most prior studies of the facsimiles have been a waste of time because suddenly, in about the mid-1960s, everything broke loose, about since the 1960s. Everything is a different ball game now, completely. To begin with, in 1967, the Church acquired the original manuscript. [The Church also acquired] the writings of the Brethren during their own studies and speculations. The toilsome efforts they went through to try to make something of it were quickly abandoned. See, the Lord says, "It's all tentative. It's all on hold. Don't try to go too far right now." The original Egyptian papyri showed, first of all, that Joseph Smith had not altered the images to suit his explanations, as had been maintained. The acquisition in 1967 immediately started

things moving. That suddenly started stirring things up. Well, this was to go a long way, but it was still the Old School that was in control of lots of changes.

I have found seven or eight important things that happened in the mid-1960s that changed the whole story. The first intensive comparative studies of Egyptian and Hebrew wisdom literature were undertaken. It would've been noticed way back—especially in the fifties—that there was a lot in common between the Old Testament wisdom literature and the Egyptian. They said that was purely incidental. They'd have nothing to do with it. To get involved in the Bible would get them into religion, and they simply loathed it. You couldn't even mention religion. During the brief time I was at Chicago, they'd throw you out of the room! And yet religion is all in all with the Egyptians. It seems rather ironic, doesn't it? Like *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out. Any resemblance was brushed aside before. And then they suddenly started realizing this is practically the same literature.

In 1965 Albright delivered the Jordan Lectures at the University of London showing a prevailing condition in institutions in the days of Abraham common to the whole Near East—that is, showing that Egypt and Canaan were like hand in glove. They were side by side, as far as that goes. They started saying they now considered their literatures to be very close together—actually, they're practically the same one.

Then the 1960s saw, as Koch called it and worked on, the rediscovery of apocalyptic, especially the two great apocalypses, those of Enoch and Abraham, the very two that Joseph Smith gave us. In the sixties they were discovered, and they were very important. The Abraham one came out of Egypt. This is a very strange thing, but it is agreed upon by everybody today. So, here's another thing that shows

it's right to proceed now. And then the fourth point: In the 1960s—perhaps this is the most important—arose what is called the New School, or the Northern European School of Egyptologists. That includes people like (G.) Barton, (Jan) Aspen, (Erik) Hornung, (Philippe) Derchain, (John) Baines, and others with a totally new direction, with a totally new view of things that are going on. They focused their attention, above all, on Egyptian religion. In the mid-1960s, then, began a positive scramble to write studies on Egyptian theology, a thing nobody would touch with a forty-foot pole before. Everybody is writing on Egyptian theology now. It's an amazing thing. All this has changed everything. The theology is a very different picture from what you might think.

At the same time, in general studies of ancient religions and philosophies came the new position of cosmology. They always talked about nature myths and rites and mythology. (This is what they thought anciently. We have ancient mythology in the sets over in the library and so forth.) That wasn't it at all. It was cosmology they were concerned with more than anything else. It was hitching their systems to the cosmos. [Cosmology] was very closely related to the observation of the heavens, and they philosophized on that basis. It was recognized with a scientific emphasis. They were interested in ancient religion in the physical basis of our preexistence and postexistence.

Point number six: This went along, again in the 1960s, with radical new views of the universe itself, you see. You get into the whole business about quantum, and this has changed now. We're taking on new views. Already they are in popular books, the only ones I can read on it. They deal with plurality of worlds, endless creations, and things like this. These were themes never touched before. This

becomes the big thing now. Steady state and the big bang and all those things—they are full of singularities. And an adjunct to this is the new science fiction. This is to be mentioned because this is in the 1960s. They broke loose.

This deals, you notice, with the idea of intelligences on other worlds and intercourse between the worlds. It's fascinating. We have half-a-dozen, I suppose, series going on TV now dealing with this. People just can't leave it alone. It's a new thing now. The thing that makes it scientific is the element of plausibility, you see. You can go on. (I know some science fiction writers—Orson Scott Card is a relative, as a matter of fact.) There is a difference from what was written before, from what they called fantasy literature. Now they have to bring this element of [plausibility] and make it a scientific issue. In fact, my son Thomas is on the board right now of the Star Trek people. He says they just sit around and laugh their heads off. They invent all these terms and invent these fantastic situations. Then they have [the actors] pressing a few little buttons and using a lot of gobbledygook, and this gets them out of it in the last minute. And then he says they fall of their chairs laughing at the whole thing. But you can see that they follow this same pattern. This is the interesting thing. But, of course, in the book of Moses, the book of Abraham, that's the thrust. Abraham takes us into cosmology in a big way. So does the book of Moses. So then, we have that.

In the 1960s began the serious debate—there have been a lot of articles published on it—over myth, ritual, and history. Is a myth an explanation of ancient rites, with the rites coming first, as some schools say? Or are the rites just a dramatization of the myths? And are the myths and the rites simply a continuation of folk memory of history, of things that really happened? See, these things all go together. This is

being debated around and around and around today. This is very important for the book of Abraham because the book of Abraham makes it very clear that everything that's happening to Abraham here [in the book] is in a strictly ritual situation.

During the year rite, he's a sacrifice, as has been done. The three virgins and others have been sacrificed on the same altar as Abraham. It was all rites and rituals, and it was all ritualized, the whole shebang, which explains a whole lot about Abraham's position and so forth.

Well then, in 1965 Madame Varga (Edith Varga of Budapest) published the first serious examination of the hypocephali to appear in sixty-five years. The last one, [published] in the 1880s, only had twenty-five or thirty to go on. That's all. She [Varga] was able to collect eighty-nine of them and bring them together. But nothing had been said about them. There was one fight between two men (in 1942, 1943, and 1944) about one hypocephalus. She stirred it up again. Thus, we have comparative studies. It looks as if the time is drawing near now, doesn't it? We can get into something.

We may ask, why now? There's some good answers. We can ask, why Egypt, of all places? Again, the doctors were dead set against it, but it was tradition. There was something that Abraham went to Egypt to teach and to learn. Moses, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Solon and all the great Greeks insisted that they went to Egypt for their instructions. (The Germans said, "No, it can't possibly be the case.") There is the uniquely monolithic nature of the Egyptian [civilization]. It has the longest and most consistent record on earth. It certainly does. From beginning to end it preserves the same basic ceremonies, the same basic scenario. (They call it the basic scenario now because you find it in Egypt. You find it in other places, but it's all

broken and interrupted there.) Babylon is a patchwork quilt. But Egypt, right from the beginning, before the pyramid text, the prehistoric writing—things like the Shabako stone, right through to Christian times, you have the same themes being followed. From beginning to end, they preserve this scenario, which is an attempt to explain man's condition and give him the assurance that it is the sole duty of religion to provide. [Religion] really has just one purpose, to answer the terrible question, Is this all there is? This is what the New School was after, not just the Berlin school—they're the most reluctant of all. The thing they were after is, Is there a real resurrection and a real eternal life? We don't want to be a drop of water in an ocean of being. We don't want to be a mystic or a beautiful thought or something like that. No, I want to be resurrected. I want to be real. I want to eat. I want to be with my family.

I had a wonderful lesson on that today from a Coffin Text. [It was a lesson of] a man's passion to be with his family and to have them sealed to him and all that sort of thing—it looks that way. Namely, [he talks about] the certainty of the resurrection and the certainty of life, not in any mystical or abstract sense. They were looking for the lost key. They didn't have the answer. I. E. S. Edwards—I quote him often on this—said, "The Egyptians were like a man who had lost a key and knew he'd had it once. But he's looking for it, and anything that resembles it he keeps." They never throw anything away, so we have a very valuable collection here. (Incidentally, I had a long talk with I. E. S. Edwards yesterday on the phone. He called from Cambridge. He's my age; he said we should celebrate our birthdays together. He's a great old guy. He's full of humor too. He's lots of fun.)

This basic scenario is a recitation or dramatization—the main themes, that is—of the great Council in Heaven at the creation and destruction. I have quite a number of these that I've collected here. There are distant echoes in world literature—Prometheus, Job, Faust. That is the theme of the prologue in heaven. They have the meeting. They meet with God. They discuss things and so forth. Prometheus, Job, and Faustus—in the opening chorus. I remember that opening chorus ends: *"Es herrlich wie am ersten Tag, und alle deine Herrschaften sind herrlich."* They had planned on creating things, on saving the world, and all is to be renewed and is as glorious as it was on the first day. So you have a cycle. There's a re-creat[ion]. They're engaged constantly in the rites and ordinances of renewal, renovation, restoration, rebirth and so forth because we've got to keep going. We do die, and we can't deny it, they say. So, how do you get over it?

This is the theme of the hypocephalus. It is very well treated, incidentally. This is carried on in the literature. The last one we had (which Brother Mike [Rhodes] was teaching me) was the Book of the [Divine] Cow. This is the meeting in heaven. There's a marvelous account of how it happens, including the protocol, the celestial courtesy and so on, and things that go on in this great assembly of the gods. It's supposed to get back to the beginning of things. It is never the first council. There have always been councils before, and there will always be endless ones after it.

Now, in this one—this Book of the [Divine] Cow, a fascinating document. It's a long one—we learn that Re (he's called the self-begotten) calls the meeting but only after men and gods have been living together for a long time. The world was waxing old. The men had begun to murmur and criticize god (Re) and to lay plots against the great god, who was getting old and feeble. Well, he's got to do



something, though he was supposed to be number one. He summons, first of all—that's the big four; that's Nut, Geb, Shu, and Tefnut, earlier first parents—and, quoting here, and the fathers and mothers that were with me in a previous existence in the Nun. He's supposed to be the first, and yet he'd had fathers and mothers before, worlds without number, and as one world passes away another one comes into existence. This is the pattern set forth in the book of Abraham.

"And summon my God Nun," he says, "to bring his councilors and his people with him too." So, we're having others' councilors, others' worlds—worlds without number, as they say—all assembled and bowed before him on both sides. He then presents the situation in the presence of the oldest father. They bring someone else in from another time who created the human race and is the king of all mankind. All being assembled, they give Re permission to talk. Notice it's very democratic. Nobody's autocratic. Nobody dictates here. They give him permission to talk. He defers to the oldest god before he starts talking. They say, "Speak to us that we may hear."

It's like the pattern in the temple where they say, "We will go down." When God gives a command, each of the others say it—and formerly in the temple everybody said it every time [the Lord's servants] were sent down. Here, they say it just the first few times and so forth. Peter, James, and John say it. Jehovah and Michael say it. "We will go down. It is our own will too." See, they consent: "We will go down." They use "will"—not "we shall," but, "We will go down." They are not commanded to go down, but they say, "Yes, we'll do it of our own free will." Everything follows that pattern, here, where he says, "The oldest god from whom I am descended and ye assembled gods and ancestors, behold, mankind established by

my eye has murmured and is plotting against me. I cannot destroy them until I have heard what you would have to say."

See, it's like the meeting of the Twelve here. Everything has to be unanimous, the opinions that are going on here. There's never a trace of autocracy here. You notice in Moses 7, when one world is destroyed, [God says,] "all the workmanship of mine hands" and all the other worlds mourn together (Moses 7:36). Because they all have a share in each other. Each one contributes to every new world that comes along. We always have an interest and a share. So, it tells us a number of times in the seventh chapter of Moses there, when Enoch and everybody is weeping. And the Lord is weeping, and he says, "Why should not the heavens weep and all the creations of my hands weep, for they see this world must perish?" They all have an interest in it. It's the most universal thing. It's not autocratic at all.

Now, Nun, the father of previous creations, is the one who speaks. (He's older than Re.) He says, "My son Re, who is greater than his begetter and older than those who created him"—you have to read the 93rd section to understand what we're talking about here. They have these same concepts here. Remember, intelligence never was created, neither can be. Man also was in the beginning with God. You can't make a time chart here and place this here and this here. He says, "Older than him who created him." Man also was in the beginning with God.

This best commentary on this is the 93rd section, as I say, which also shows us that narrow positivism is out of the question if we aspire to see the whole picture. And Nun says to [Re]: "Take over and as you please." Then everybody defers. And so we see that ranking at the top. Re insists that all these proceedings and revelations and resolutions shall be kept secret from mankind because they on earth

must have their own free will to operate. I collected a number of quotations on this particular matter. "Man must be free to do their own thing. We mustn't scare them beforehand. We must hold back. We mustn't interrupt with revelations every time they take a step," he says, "because on earth they're to be tested by their own merits." This is the point. This of course, is another teaching in the Pearl of Great Price.

In Joseph Smith—Matthew, when the master of the house goes forth, what does he do? He comes back and catches them by surprise. If you prepare the troops for inspection beforetime, the barracks will be in perfect order when you come for inspection. But you've got to catch them as they usually are, and that's when the Lord comes back and catches them napping. And he says—this is Pearl of Great Price still, you see—the Lord says to make sure that when he comes back, he won't find you oppressing the poor. This is marvelous. We have a passage from the papyrus of [Vongia?], which is being studied more than it used to be. In [Vongia?], God asks two things of one who has been back down to the earth and comes to report: What are the conditions of the temple, and what is the condition of the poor? He hears that they're both pretty awful. It's time for destruction—well, not long after this.

We go into cycles here: He says here: "Behold, they fled to the desert." They're terrified. This is a migration to the land of Nod. The land of Nod means "the land of wandering," "the land of nomadism," just as you nod back and forth. It might not have been that migration, but it doesn't have to be, because we're speaking of characteristic repeated events here, the only kind we can be sure of. You can never check up on a unique event in history. You'll never know what really happened. But things happen again and again. That's why they're talking so much about myth

and ritual and doctrine and so forth today, because we can only check up on things that are characteristic and repeated. So, then you can be sure of them. Throughout all our history, we're just repeating what's happened before, and it's not so different either. You change the properties, you change the set, but the plot's the same, the play is the same, the same characters are having the same temptations and going through the same rigamarole. So, you can always say, "This is where I came in," as if you're seeing the same thing happen again.

This happens here. "Behold, they have fled to the desert." Now, this is a quotation right out of the book of Moses. "They have foresworn themselves" and become evil (Moses 6:29). The Canaanites did; the pre-Canaanites did; the Watchers did. There have been various times when the world went evil, and it had to be punished and restored again. Well, remember the Lord [basically] says in the Book of Mormon, "Jerusalem has been destroyed and has been restored and destroyed and restored." That's the fate of mankind and the world, too. We go through these same dismal cycles all the time. We never get out of them, and this is the last one. These are the last days, and this is why this particular book is so important here.

The assembly votes to have Re send down a representative, his eye [Hathor]. She goes down and returns and reports, and vengeance is decreed. When she goes down again, there is the flood. All the world is underwater. There is a mixture of [ocrecyclosis?] in which the water is made to resemble blood. The human race is practically exterminated. And to forget the horror of it all, they have a drinking party. They make wine, and she gets drunk, as Noah did. Remember, after the flood, Noah had a vineyard, and he made wine and got drunk and caroused with his two daughters. This is the year rite that takes place, and this takes place here.

They made the wine, and they drank it so they would forget the horror of the flood. And then the new age [occurs] to celebrate the new world here. Then after this she crosses the desert to go to Egypt.

Not long after this, the very opposite happens. (This is the book of Ether, you see.) The world is in a condition of dust and heat and darkness and wind, but it is especially at the drought. It's the great drought. Remember the wind flood that came in the book of Ether, when the wind didn't cease to blow. The great winds have gone forth from the mouth and so forth. It was a terrible time. (There's quite a literature about that. I think in *The World of the Jaredites* we talk about that wind and so forth.) Her trip across the desert is famous. There's a famous work called *The Eye of the Sun*, or *The Sun's Eye*, that talks about the lady going to Egypt. She goes to Egypt to settle her son there. She is the one who discovers the land. She discovers it underwater, and they cultivate it. It says here, back to the Book of the [Divine] Cow, that she turns to cross the desert and dust after the flood. Well, it gets light—there was great darkness and heat and all the rest of it. Well, you can see what this suggests. When you combine dust and heat and darkness and winds, it's either volcanic or it's meteoric, something like that. Some real catastrophe has happened.

Now, today, again the sixties, it was in 1861 that [Otto H.] Schindewolf wrote his first work on new catastrophes, and lots of people laughed at it, at [the idea that] there had been great extermination periods in the past, and the new catastrophes mean that there have been [ones in the past]. It hasn't been a steady, onward, unchanging evolution from top to bottom. These catastrophes have been real. This is accepted now. This is a very important part, of course, of our concepts of

dispensations. So, when it got light, it says the people came forth with their bows, and then began the continual warfare. Remember, when the people of Shum went forth and fought the people of Canaan, they started whacking. There's the story of Nimrod and so forth. Again, it doesn't matter which of these periods [we're talking about] because there's been more than one, we know now. There have been five or six—they say six—major extermination periods geologically. The flood story ends with a journey of Hathor to Egypt, toiling across the desert toward the green promised land. To survive, she must adapt herself, as Sakhmet, with the dust devils, the heat, the flies, and so forth. Miserable picture. It was a new creation. (We'll skip these things).

The interesting thing is that, at this time, Re has summoned Geb, who is the master on earth, the one who supervises things down here, and tells him to watch his step, especially about the reptiles, the serpents. The serpents occupied the earth at that time. There's a lot said about that by a number of writers, especially 825 Salt [Papyrus]. They talk about the earth, and of course, they always had to live with them [the serpents]. When they went into Egypt, it was a seething, massive, rich swamp, crawling with serpents, if you can imagine that. (This is in the days of King Lib in the Book of Mormon.) It says that they [the serpents] rule the earth. They have their place once aside, and they rule the earth. [Geb is told to] beware of the magic that is a part of them. They [the serpents] are to remain on earth with them. He [Re] says, "Make special preserves for them. You cannot fight them. You must not exterminate them, so you make preserves, and you put up a sign warning people against these things where these snakes assemble," or something like that.

It's a very interesting thing, this, because the Hopi say the same thing, remember. They hate the snakes. They don't love them at all. Why, they carry them in their mouths and so forth. They say, "Our obligation is to share the world with them. We are not to judge. They have as much right to this as we have." This is the doctrine that is taught here, the doctrine of the serpent. (Someone has got to write a dissertation on that someday.) And the plans are completed in heaven. He says, "These shall be [?]." Well, I'm going to skip that.

So, this statement is interesting, these things I'm running into all the time. I point these things out to Mike [Rhodes]. He thinks I'm some kind of nut for overdoing it, but I do. He says, "I will let you comprehend the heavens both with your perfections, your *neferu*, and with your lights." Well, Abraham 3:1 begins: "And I, Abraham, had the Urim and Thummim," in which he viewed the heavens. This says, "I will let you contemplate the heavens with your perfections and lights." Of course, the Urim and Thummim means "lights and perfection." It means the very same thing. That may just be an accident, but it's a happy accident anyway. I love them.

Every individual on earth may enjoy initiation into this order of things. It ends saying this: "But ye must be anointed with olive oil, washed with soap thoroughly." (That's the *natron* they used, the equivalent of soap they had.) It was a lump of soap, or *natron*, in his mouth and [suflagio?], incense. And he must be washed with the waters of the great flood because the earth had just been purged by the great flood, remember? He says, "That I may be purged from the filthiness that has gone out of me." The seventh chapter of Moses again. And the earth has been cleansed of its filthiness. After that it says he must put on white sandals so as to not

contaminate the earth—or not to be contaminated by it, as the case may be. Right after saying, “You’re washed with the waters of the great flood,” the real flood waters, “then you must put on these white sandals, and you must put on a two-piece linen garment.”

I noticed yesterday in a Coffin Text (149), it says, “Here’s a spell for giving a man powers over his foes. The man must be shod in a pair of white sandals and clad with an apron and a sash.” That the apron and the sash is added, but it’s not added here though. All this says here is: “He must put on a two-piece linen garment. And put *maat*, the sign of truth, on his tongue in green ink so that he may never speak guile.” The sign of truth is put on your tongue with a dab.

Then come the promises of the opening of the mouth. It ends with that, like our initiatory. He shall have power to see and all his senses and members be restored forever. That’s the whole idea of the initiatory, you see. The final words are so interesting: “That he may walk and not faint.” That’s the final words. Then people will recognize him like Re on the day of his birth as if he were the son himself being reborn. It’s all this idea of rebirth, resurrection, and the rest of it, I guess. These things are quite ecstatic.

The Egyptians had these things by tradition but were never sure of themselves. [They were] “frustrated pharaohs,” I. E. S. Edwards says. Egyptologists today recognize that their constant dread was this: The very real belief in approaching the end of the world. If you do not make a mental effort, the universe will go away because the universe is founded on intelligence. Intelligence and awareness—without that there wouldn’t be anything. The great French Egyptologist, Derchain, has written a lot on that particular subject. He says, “The great fear of the Egyptians



was that the ceasing of thought would ipso facto be the end of the universe." The [Jumilac?] Papyrus shows the human race living right on the edge. We must make a constant effort all the time to think of these things, because thought is a part of it. It's very close to the modern doctrine of anthropism, held up by such people as Bohm, David Bohm. In anthropism, remember, you share in the experiment. Unless you were there, the thing was not going to happen. You have to be there for certain things to happen, and this is in the laboratory, as far as that goes.

So, the public life was a constant celebration of these new beginnings and rebirths in which everybody participates. Renewal. This is found in all ancient civilizations, but nowhere as passionately as in Egypt, and nowhere better expressed than in our Facsimile 2 here.

The Pearl of Great Price, then, as far as I'm concerned, brings into prominence a tract for our times, for these last days. However it came together, these five books or so are together. The basic scenario here calls for the Egyptian idea of endless progression of creation and destruction. You notice he says here, "As one world shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come. [And then comes a very significant statement:] And there is no end to my works, neither to my words" (Moses 1:38). The only thing that gets it started and keeps it going, according to the Egyptians, is Sia and Hu, the intelligence and the word—"to my works and my words."

What better summing up [can we have] than a setting forth of the seven dispensations that we have here in the Pearl of Great Price, this gem of a thing? Each one of them [the prophets]—they are the seven: Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Joseph Smith—each introduces a new dispensation in

the first person with his own autobiographical explanation of how it got started. At the same time, each came at the end, right at the end, of the preceding world. We always live in the last days. "And again, this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:31; see also Matthew 24:14). Not the beginning, but the end. They came at the end. They all come in the last days. All the great epics begin with destruction you know. The Iliad, the Aeneid, the Fall of Troy, and so forth and whatever you have, Gylfaginning [a Nordic myth], and the rest.

Adam's family, notice, his first family apostatized. Again we have this cycle going. His first family apostatized (see Moses 5:12). He made all things known unto them and gave them the complete gospel. "And they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters. And Satan came among them saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish" (Moses 5:12–13). The whole thing went down the drain. Adam and Eve could do nothing but mourn before the Lord. Well, that's the end of it. They thought another chance came with Cain. (We're dealing with these cycles.) So Adam and Eve put their hopes in a new beginning with high hopes for Cain: "I have gotten a man from the Lord; wherefore he may not reject his words. But behold, Cain hearkened not" (Moses 5:16). They went down again. Aren't we ever going to win here?

Then we come to Enoch and what could be worse than the world he was in? It was about to be destroyed by the flood, as you know. Horrible times. This Egyptian passage is right out of the Book of the [Divine] Cow here. They have foresworn themselves and have brought upon themselves death. "The God of heaven looked

upon the residue of people, and he wept" (Moses 7:28). This is when Enoch came, right at the end of the world. "How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rains upon the mountains?" (Moses 7:28). (I have a wonderful passage I got from that.) Well, when Enoch saw the flood, "he had bitterness of soul, and wept, . . . and said unto the heavens: I will refuse to be comforted" (Moses 7:44). That was the end of that period. Then the Lord says, "Oh no, it's not over yet. Watch. I'll show you something else." And then he looked forward to another day, the day that the gospel would be restored. This would be another day, but what was going to happen then were the days of wickedness and vengeance. There will be other days, but they will be wickedness and vengeance too, and down they will go.

It shall be in the meridian of time. He asks, "When shall the day of the Lord come?" (Moses 7:45). In the meridian of times (Moses 7:46). Would you say, "In the days of joy and rejoicing?" No. In the days of wickedness and vengeance. They turned him down. [He was] a man of sorrows, despised and acquainted with grief. "The Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head" (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58). Every one of these dispensations seems to be a complete flop, and we go through it again and again and again. Teachings tell us why this is: [it is] because it's an awfully good test. He says here, "The Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance" (Moses 7:60).

Then Noah disputes that he saw the end of the world and that he was the sole founder of the new world, the beginning. And Abraham's ten trials—the father of the faithful, he began Israel with his great-grandson Israel. The ten trials of Abraham. He didn't have a place to set his head. He was a wanderer and a stranger all his life and had to rent a grave and all these other things. He lived in a fiercely

depraved world and he found no rest there. He did right when everybody else did wrong. Then we come to Moses and the trials of Egypt and the desert to the depravity of Israel, and he says in his farewell address, "I know you'll go the same way as your fathers. I've given you this, but it won't do any good."

Then, of course, Christ in His times. In Matthew 24–25, the Lord is showing the Jews about the destruction of Jerusalem. He's telling the apostles on the Mount of Olives, and he says, that this is but "the beginning of the sorrows which shall come upon them" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:18–19)—in two thousand years, such sorrows there have never been before—because they fell away. And then we come to Joseph Smith, of course, in the last days, the latter days. (It's funny, in all the other languages you can't say "latter-day saints." You have to say *dul major, letzten Tage, ulta majorni*—these are the translated "last days." That's the name of the Church in every language we can think of. We call it "the latter days" because this is the last of the last days. These are the later last days. So, the last of the last of the last is what we're looking at. There's plenty to show us that that's the case here, you know.)

Well, this suddenly makes sense in our own age. It's not necessary to read the news notices from around the world. Our Facsimile 2 represents graphically and symbolically the process by which life moves from the highest to the lowest realms, in order of the numbers given by Joseph Smith. I think they're speculative, of course. As I said, these are not pictures but abstract symbols. But they couldn't serve as such if they didn't give us some hint of what they're referring to. But there isn't nearly enough pictorially to justify anyone's guessing. We must have explanations from the Egyptians themselves.

The figure I want to discuss is the very last one in this process I've been talking about, the most enigmatical of all. It's these figures here. It's the long panel here, and at the end comes these figures of the leaf—the plant is a lotus, mostly—and the herbivore and the carnivore, in different orders sometimes. It doesn't make any difference because this is the cycle of life on earth it's talking about. It's going to tell us how it gets started. See, this has to do with the incarnation of all sorts of things, and this is a well-known figure. There are lots of cases of it. Moortgat has collected them in Babylonian seals, in Mesopotamian seals. It is that the herbivore eats the plant, doesn't he? The carnivore eats the herbivore, and the plant eats the carnivore. That's Samson's riddle. Out of the killer came strength. The lion dies and rots, and out of him grows the grass and the plants and so forth. So we have this life cycle. How do we initiate it? How do we get it going? They like to discuss it here now. This is the very last one.

We are taught that the Egyptians were not mystical, not magical, and not superstitious. That is emphasized unconditionally today, absolutely. Horning will tell us, for example, they don't have a spark of mysticism in them, or magic. They used to call it magic. Now we can call it miracle. They believe in miracle, but they don't believe in magic. There's quite a bit of difference there. How did the universe come into being, and how does it keep going? The New School devoted their attention to that. The answer is, of course, it begins with intelligence, as mentioned. The basic principles are constantly emphasized in their funerary literature and their wisdom literature. "Wisdom," says Miriam Listheim, who's been a great one for collecting it, "lacks complete composition." But what we do find is a limitless expanse of ruins and fragments *und eben zeibarest Trummerfeld*, ruin field, to

which the basic themes constantly refer. Of these we can be sure. We have grossly underestimated the value of this writing. The Egyptologists have always considered it just as folk wisdom, peasant wisdom, street corner wisdom, and so forth.

Actually, it is the substance, copied from age to age, of the profoundest learning of the schools.

For Christmas I sent my son Michael a book I had, a cute little tiny book, but it had about two thousand pages in it. It was called *The Apothems of the Ancients*. It was a land book published in 1581. I now regret having giving it away to him because it was an awfully good book. But it contains the wisdom of the ancients. This is exactly what we find in the Egyptian wisdom literature that is common with the Hebrew literature. It's the same sort of thing. This is what they taught in the schools in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and has come down to the wisdom of the schoolmen. It really is the wisdom of the world. These are popular sayings, and they're picked up by the Greeks and the medieval and modern texts and the most important ones. This tells us the process by which the world wags, we might say.

The first one, the commonest one, is, One day is never like another. These are things you can be absolutely sure of if you want to explain our condition. First off, you'll have to admit, one day is never like another. So, since the beginning when the gods were on the earth, it's always been the same way. "The righteous man knows that change is the law of life"; "Yesterday is not like today." This is number one. She's counted all of these, and which is the commonest? This is the ruling one.

The most prevalent of all maxims, according Jan Aspen, was the *unprophetenbarkeit* [sic] *der Zukunft*, the unpredictability of the future. You cannot fine-tune it yet; you can be sure of the general pattern, but you can't control it. So one thing we can be sure of is, it's always going to change. You have to adapt yourself to that. We don't like that, but this is the driving mechanism. Whatever it is, it has to move away from where it was. (Again we're quoting here.) "God has decreed that change is the law of life." Well, the second question is, So it changes, but does it have any direction? Does it change in all directions? It has a definite direction. You can be sure of that, and it's down. It's entropy. You can't escape that either. They talk an awful lot about that. Downward. The heat death always moves from the hotter to the cooler, and so we move from a state of higher to lower energy, to a way of least resistance—we say less exertion. This is expressed in this way: The stronger always prey on the weaker. We always push downhill. We always do the easiest thing to do. Everything is preying on everything else, and it goes on.

Well, this leads to one thing or another. The wicked prosper. The lazy get rich. The diligent go broke. Good to bad. Everybody wants wealth, but it all comes from the Lord. But don't say, "God made me a sinner." These things are moving necessarily because we're moving in the direction of our weaknesses, always giving in to our weaknesses. We don't fight them enough. There wouldn't be weakness, we would get rid of them entirely, but we don't, and as long as they're there, we'll keep gradually subsiding lower and lower until, well, we'll see what we come to. So it says here, "God made me a sinner." He hates sin. Don't say that. God made man and gave him his free will. He offers fire and water. Put your hand into whatever

you wish, life or death. Remember, Abraham [says this]. And Moses says the same thing to the children of Israel. And over them, being related to the gods, through his reason, man has some understanding of the divine, and with it, the ability to choose the good—and the *responsibility* for choosing the good. But he doesn't, you see. This is taken over by the Greeks and the others. No man is trustworthy. All are deceitful and care for their own advantage. Life is suffering and violence. Everyone is interested in his own ego. We're aware that there're others also, and that really makes us vulnerable and feel threatened and insecure, because we're not as sure that we're that great after all. So the world is always in that dangerous situation. We have everybody now-a-days allowing things to slide downhill excessively.

This is one of the [?], a great collection of demotic ones that she has translated completely. Thank heaven, Miriam, because we have to leave it to Mike [Rhodes] to get into demotic. That's over my head. It says, "Violence, want, insult, unkindness—they never rest," and so it goes. The stronger is always preying on the weaker. Here's an interesting one. It describes our gangs, the tensions that rise in society. It is awfully good. "Do not smile as you approach a group in the street. The smile gives rise easily to misunderstanding. The misunderstanding would lead to a quarrel. There would be loud words. There would be recriminations. There would be an exchange of insults, then an exchange of blows, a scuffle, a fight, and somebody w[ould] get killed—all because of a meaningless look." That is how brittle, how shaky, our foundations are. We have such a narrow base. We're liable to topple. The center of gravity is very small.



These forces are always at work. So then, the next question is, If it goes down, where does it go from there? How far can you go down? Well, it leads to irreducible dust and ashes. (There's not a blackboard, so I won't talk about that.) It's a heap of slag. It can't go any further. They're completely mineralized, and that's that. The ashes can't go, and the dust can't. All animal and vegetable are turned to mineral. Where do we go after we reach this center of repose? Jeremiah's dead bones? Where do you go from there? How far can you go when the organic become inorganic? I was going to talk about that. It's very interesting how they talk about that. Why hasn't it all ended long ago, in that case? Because something is working in the other direction. Remember, as 2 Nephi 9:7 says, if the order of nature was followed, it would be perfectly natural to die and decay and to fall and rot, never to rise again. But something is working against it. Of course, this is being pointed out today by a number of people: Why are we here at all if entropy has been working for ever and ever? What hope is there?

Well, that desired reversal is twice represented here around the rim where we have our picture of the *benben* stone, yes, the *benben*, which is the perch or monument or obelisk of the phoenix bird. Remember the phoenix bird? In Egyptian, it's the *benben*. Every five hundred years he dies. He's immolated and becomes nothing but ashes, and then he rises from the ashes. This is the legend of the phoenix. We know that it was very convincing to the Christians. First Clement quotes it as the strongest proof of the resurrection. The phoenix story is the bird that goes to [Rega?] and comes back to Egypt every five hundred years to Heliopolis, sacrifices himself on the pyre, and rises from it again. But how do you do it? As I say, our Facsimile 2 represents the process by which life moves from the highest to

the lowest realm. Then, right at the end, in the final figure of the long panel, we get these three, you see. You have the biological cycle, the food chain, in which the vegetation is eaten by the herbivore, the herbivore is eaten by the carnivore, the carnivore dies and rots, and after the lion rots, out of the lion comes the strength, the new life. So we find things suddenly reversing their course in Figures 5, 6, and 7 (see Facsimile 2).

Well, like the big bang, the thing is a singularity—that is, a paradox—but it's real. It's supposed to be real. It's the reestablishment of this biological food chain once it's been stopped. I see the time is up. Good, I can stop there. The combination comes up frequently on old jars and seals, like this one we have heard. We have noted that everything preys on everything else. This is the first thing. This process is, everything does prey on everything else. So it does go down. How can everything eat everything else? One [explanation] they were fond of is picked up by a [Hikar?] and is also a famous Egyptian one. Sheshong gives us his wisdom. It's a great wisdom book again, you see. If the greater always eats the smaller, that's the end. No. They explain [what happens] when you get to the end: it doesn't go in one direction. Then he tells the story of the lion and the mouse. The smallest thing can be so effective that it can damage the greatest thing. They are all equally dependent on each other. So, it doesn't end there.

Here's a famous one about this process. It says the sand flea is eaten by the lizard, the lizard is eaten by the coney, and the coney is eaten by the snake. The snake is eaten by the tope? fish, and the tope fish is eaten by the vulture. The vulture is eaten by the great nar? fish, the nar fish is eaten by the lion, the lion is eaten by the griffin—the griffin is described as a dinosaur—and he goes on and destroys himself.

The moral of this: For truly he who kills shall be killed. He kills himself off. And Sheshong says, "Nothing happens on earth which is not decreed by God in heaven, for he alone is good. When he is angry with the land, law, sanctity, reverence, justice, and value all cease to be in it." He might be quoting Simon, or Timon of Athens, who gives a marvelous picture of that same thing, that eating each other. This is the process. How does it get started again, though? That's the thing we're talking about here. What starts things going?

The most valuable depository of Egyptian wisdom literature is placed in the coming of the Great Lady of Egypt. She's coming to establish her sons as pharaohs, and the land is underwater, but she has to cross this howling desert. To make sure that she won't change her mind and go back, the cat and the ape are commissioned to urge her on, to tell her amusing stories, to describe to her the beauties of the land of Egypt and what she's coming to and so forth, and her responsibility, and to keep her interested, you see. She comes after the flood. They tell her stories about how it happens and about how it's going to be started. She's coming to a new land, and she has to establish new life in it.

When Eve came out of the garden, she brought with her into the desolate outer world—what did she bring? Well, Adam brought the basic substances: the olive, the vine, and what else do we need? The most necessary things. I can think of some other things, like the fig. Eve brought only one thing. She brought swarms of bees because they would establish the new world. This is the mystery. The mystery is the bee. The funny thing is, it is full of references to that. We don't have a picture of the bee because they never drew a picture of the bee, as Gardner tells us, for superstitious reasons. This is how they're going to do it.

The lady Night—she's called Night here—crossing the desert to Egypt, brought bees with her. Her sons, the kings of Egypt, have the title Bitty, "he who belongs to the bee," and she was Night, whose name means "bee." The purpose was to start life from scratch in the new world, and it is the bee, the great pollinizer, [who does this]. In the first place, we're not going to have any crops unless we have bees. They say, unless we have any bees, we're not going to have any apricots. They [the bees] have to make the green things grow. That's the first thing they do. (The Egyptians talk about a lot of this. This isn't just something we make up, you see.) The purpose is to start life from scratch in the new world. [The bee] pollinizes the fields and the woods to bloom and the vegetable life to feed the world. But he also, at the same time, supplies quick energy in the most delicious food to get the human race going again.

Here is the great paradox. How does he get it? Nobody knows the miracle. Everything is paradoxical about the bee. We must accept here [. . .] don't ask why. Of what does the bee make its nectar? When things have gone as far downhill as they can, the busy bee turns it around. Whatever the bee uses, where does he get it from? (They talk a lot about this.) He gets it from excrement, from filth, from rot, from decayed corpses. That's where he gets it from. That's the old riddle of Samson, you see. Out of the corpse came the strength, which was the honey. That was a universal saying throughout the old world. This is the marvelous thing of it because they say the bee actually does this.

You can prove that the bee is a paradoxical animal. The bee doesn't fly, but it *does* fly. It can't fly. As shown aerodynamically, it can't fly—but it *does* fly. Here, it takes the filthiest of all things—I like this. The bee uses only what is useless, what is

perished, what is dead and gone, what nobody wants. (As I say, the Egyptians talk an awful lot about this.) Whatever it produces from, it makes that that is useful, whether it's wax, or royal jelly, or honey, or fertilization, and so forth. It takes the useless remains and the wreckage of a world and turns it into something useful.

Man does the exact opposite. For their purposes, they take only what is wholesome and healthy from nature, the most nourishing, the most clean for industrial purposes and so forth. We want everything pure. This Micron has a big problem with water, haven't they? How are they going to get enough water for that? Well, that's another thing. We're not going to discuss that. What do [humans] do? We only take first-class material to put into our products, and what do we turn it into? Garbage and sewage. That's what we turn out; that's our big production. It's our big problem.

Now, don't think the Egyptians weren't conscious of that. They certainly were. Way back in the old kingdom, they boiled the water of the Nile before they drank it. They were aware of these things. And you think of it as a pure land. So, this is the thing, this garbage and nothing else. It may seem strange that the Egyptians dwelt continuously on this thought. Hundreds of times we read on a person's tomb: "I will not eat filth. I will not step in it. I won't smell it. It is an abomination to me. . . . I can't stand it. I want to eat the pure white bread of the gods and drink pure water, but while I live on earth, I must live in the garbage dump." What a place. They have the touch of the resurrection. I have a whole list of the marvelous things the bee does. I'm just going to refer to them.

Well, when the lady comes to Egypt, they represent it richly. She comes sounding her flute to make the bees swarm and beating her sistrum, which is the

same thing as beating on pans to make the bees swarm too. And this also excites lust in the human race. So, this is what the lady does. She wants to get the human race and the bees busy at the same time. She names her son "the Bee." The son is of the king is a bee, and she is the bee, belongs to the bee. First, she cleansed the temples thoroughly. Then, she brings the spark to start things going, which is the spark, which is the cat, which is the eye, which is the *uraeus*, which is called the honey fly, which is the bee. Where is the bee in the hypocephalus? Well, Gardner said, "For superstitious reasons, it's not to be drawn." The bee crowned is always referred to as the [Werethekau?], "the worker of great miracles"—that's the bee crown, the red crown with the antenna of the bee on it.

Well, just closing here, I'll list some references here. We can find references to the bee here. Number two, this is Wepwawet. He's holding the staff with Wepwawet, the dog that leads him. The name of this figure for the Egyptians is called the [Shewasbuit?], "the one who follows the bee." Notice, he's a wanderer. He wanders in both directions, and he's holding the staff. This is his dog, Wepwawet, who leads the way into foreign lands and so forth. So, he is the follower of the bee. Figure 7 is Min. Min here is the one who founded Coptus, the oldest settlement in Egypt; he gave Egypt its name. He founded it as the son of the Great Woman. He (this Min) has a garden there, and he has beehives. The purpose of his garden is to feed the bees, and the bees feed the garden. So, he gets things going. He is the bee god in Figure 7.

Figure 6, as I say, is Samson's riddle: Out of the killer comes strength. The lion has killed everything. The lion of the desert, or the face of the lion, is the very symbol of death, and out of that comes the strength, the honey. The bee brings it

out. The Philistines had the same story. Figure 5 is the cow. The bee came from the cow. It was out of the cow that the bee makes its nectar. The manure of the cow is sacred because the bees get their honey from it. They convert it into honey. What an operation, see!

There are some other things. In Abraham 1:9: Syria's Shagreel refers often to the bee here. Shagreel is Syria's atoning priest who bestows honey, wine, and oil and who founded the [Battid?] dynasty of Syria [Sarina?], which is the bee dynasty and so forth. (That's Abraham 1:9.) Cereus? is mentioned often here. Cereus? and the sun destroy everything. And then Proteus, first man, he comes throughout the world, and he follows Abraham's example. See, Abraham goes into the world, and everywhere he goes he digs wells, he plants orchards, he cultivates the earth, and he helps and feeds people. This is the same thing. We're following the same pattern here. We're beginning in a desolate world and starting anew. The problem is, what is happening to the world now? How far can it go, and is there any hope after that? This is what this thing is supposed to be showing us here.

I don't want to take up any more time, but again, in front of him is the dove—the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove—as a messenger. He's delivering a message to the heavens, as it says here. And again, these are the doves, the oracles of Ammon that come from Egypt and give the notice of the resurrection. Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8—the four gods there go back to a very early American writer Shelem Balaam? of that Mayan document that shows how swarms of bees—different colors from the different directions—four swarms of bees come and establish the people in the land and so forth.

So, this is what it is, brothers and sisters. There are serious things to be considered here, and it's good clean fun. As we move forward much more will be found out, of course. We've just begun to scratch at it. I like to guess. If you don't, you never get anywhere; and if you do, you risk making a fool of yourself, but that's what we're here for. So, I bare my testimony of the truth of these things. If you take this with something like the 93rd section, it shows us how little we know, how much is there, how much we are a part of the rest of the world and how much our time spans. We're embraced with the same problems, the same situations. It doesn't change at all.

So, my testimony is, the Lord is seeing us through these times, and I'm thankful for the boost we are being given now. I think there is a spiritual boost in the Church right now, and we're going to need it to go forward as the world gets worse and worse. We had better start doing something better. I pray, may we all be true servants of the Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.