

From: Dennis Horne <GNOLAUMBOOKS@msn.com>
Subject: Re: Part of this Nibley quotation bit goes along with your recent Interpreter article; good stuff
Date: October 18, 2019 at 4:48:31 PM MDT
To: Jeffrey Mark Bradshaw <jeffreymarkbradshaw@gmail.com>

Yes, I have some Nibley items that may be useful for your purposes. I haven't tried to check them against the Collected Works to see if they have already been published or not, but I have some familiarity with CWHN and I don't think much, if any, of it has been published before. Though I could be wrong.

The main item is a 40 page pdf document titled "Nibley Letters" that has many excerpts from his private correspondence with various people. I do not know who compiled it or when. I picked up a copy from a contact decades ago. Also I have copies of several other private letters from Nibley. Even a couple brief ones he wrote to me.

If you want to see this material to judge whether it would work for your purposes, I can email it, and if the file is too big I can use my large file send service at work to send it on Monday.

I would love to see this material legitimately published by the right people with the right publisher, and not by Signature or Kofford.

Thanks,
Dennis

From: Jeffrey Mark Bradshaw <jeffreymarkbradshaw@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 9:35 PM
To: Dennis Horne <gnolaumbooks@msn.com>
Subject: Re: Part of this Nibley quotation bit goes along with your recent Interpreter article; good stuff

Nice quote—thank you!

FYI, I just got permission to publish the Nibley Centennial lectures in book form and we have also been collecting some things that never made it into the “Collected Works” for future publication. You’ve obviously got a knack and an interest for finding obscure things. If you’d be willing, I’d love to get the full source for this quote and anything else you have that may be out there that needs to make it to print. Any thoughts?

Best,
Jeff

On Oct 18, 2019, at 3:09 PM, Dennis Horne <gnolaumbbooks@msn.com> wrote:

Hugh Nibley:

“Mystery,” like “miracle,” is a relative term. To one who knows the answer a mystery (as Brigham Young, John Taylor and others have often pointed out) is no longer a mystery—but it is nonetheless wonderful for that; and when you know how it is done a miracle ceases to be a miracle, but in the process may become even more impressive than it was. A mystery designates something that lies beyond the boundary-line of a certain person’s knowledge at a certain time; to another person it may not be a mystery at all, and to the original party also it may at another time cease to be a mystery. Mysteries are fascinating because they lie on the borderline of the unknown and are near enough to our comprehension to beckon us enticingly. They are moreover not only the perfectly legitimate object of our investigation, but are strictly speaking the ONLY legitimate object of present search: a mystery is an unanswered question, but a question of which we are aware; as it ceases to be a mystery, new questions or mysteries pop up, and so it goes on forever. The borderline between the known and the unknown is necessarily where the action is—also where the argument and misunderstanding is. The all-important thing is to be able to handle a mystery the right way: not to treat them as “mysteries” to which a quick and easy access is provided by the lifting of a veil, but as problems to be solved by honest effort, without which God will not recognize the most fervid prayers. Mysteries are not to be approached

by those not prepared to deal with them honestly, who look upon them as belonging to the half-world of magic-shows and free supernatural spectacles....

To investigate a mystery one must have certain preliminary knowledge. The more ignorant I am of the subject, the more delightfully titillating I might find the mystery of it, and the more I am encouraged by the disagreements among the experts. But that still gives me no place in the symposium, and my participation at this stage of the game could only be a pernicious nuisance. Please note...that there is nothing whatever forbidden or secret about the mysteries AS SUCH. But there is no point to throwing them away on those who don't appreciate them (Mt. 7:6); who does have access to them? The answer is simple: anybody who is willing to make an honest effort (Mt. 7:7-11). They are withheld from the unworthy, but only because the unworthy seek a superficial and easy excitement instead of real knowledge for which they would have to work.

Another example. One of the liveliest mysteries of our time is the Book of Abraham, containing a good deal of authentic Hebrew and Egyptian lore and astronomical beliefs of which nothing was known in Joseph Smith's day. The whole thing is still 99% mysterious. Some of it we are invited to exercise our wits on: "If the world can find out these matters, so let it be." Such things are mysteries to us, but need not remain such if we go after the answers in the right way. Other things, however, are mysteries in another sense: "Contains writings that cannot be revealed unto the world..." and will only be known when and as God chooses to make them known. So there are TWO kinds of mysteries—those which can be known only by revelation in God's due time, and those which he invites us to investigate and on which he will give us help if we work for it. (D&C 9:7-9). It is folly to waste our time discussing the former type: "Oh, ye elders of Israel...when you are sent into the world to preach...Declare the first principles, and LET THE MYSTERIES ALONE, lest ye be overthrown. Never meddle with the visions of beasts and subjects you do not understand." (DHC

5:339-345, in TPJS, pp. 293f). On the other hand, there are mysteries for which we are invited to seek: “Seek not for riches, but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you...” (D&C 6:7). The first type of mystery is only for those to whom the Lord chooses to reveal them; the second type are only for those who ask, knock, and seek—who do hard and honest work.... Let us recall the ringing proclamation in the first issue of the *Times and Seasons*: “No man’s opinion is worth a straw!” Nothing can take the place of knowledge, and disregard of this fact has caused “many, having a zeal not according to knowledge” to misrepresent the Church and its teachings, according to Joseph Smith (TPJS, p. 80). He even told the Relief Society to go slow because “sometimes their zeal was not according to knowledge.” (TPJS, p. 201.)

As to the mysteries proper: A “mystery” in the strict sense is an ordinance, attended with signs, tokens and teachings not to be revealed to the uninitiated. That is the ancient meaning of mystery, the initiated being called “mystae,” i.e., those who kept their mouths shut (*myo*) in public. In the ancient and original sense of the word, our Temple ordinances are mysteries, and should be discussed only in the Temple, though we are admonished to think about them at all times; if we don’t think about them, they degenerate into meaningless routines. But that is another story. (Hugh Nibley Correspondence, 1971.)