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Welcome and Opening Comments by Presenters

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Welcome and Opening Comments by Presenters

Philip Barlow

We'd like to welcome everyone this morning. My name is Philip Barlow. I'm the director of the Religious Studies Program here at Utah State University, and we are delighted that you are here. Religious Studies is helping to sponsor this event, and I must say that I'm glad that they saved a space for me because tickets are in high demand here.

There are a number of people, too many to name, who helped make this event possible, but we want to indicate our general gratitude to them. They have helped publish the proceedings of this event, rent this space, and get our friends from abroad here to join with us—the scholars who will present, especially Margaret Barker and Laurence Hemming. These donors have made a great public gift.

We thank particularly Monica Ingold and Diane Buist, who are the staff assistants in the History Department and the Religious Studies Program, who have done extraordinary service. What began as a vague expectation to have thirty-five or fifty people attend grew to the four hundred we have registered today, not counting the many we had to turn away for want of seats. Most of all we'd like to thank the scholars who have come to us here from the region and from Britain. It is you—bolstered by your intelligence and by your untold hours of research—whom we have come to hear today. We thank all of you audience members for being here as well, and we hope that you'll be partly receptive but also partly interactive. We note that you have come here to Logan from not only Utah but from all over the intermountain area, the United States, and beyond. It's a pleasure to have you here, and this meeting should make for a rich exchange.

With an audience this size, I expect that for some of you the academic study of religion may not be a familiar enterprise. A number of you are scholars yourselves, either formally or informally. Some of you have read widely. Others of you I anticipate are simply interested in the topic. The temple has a particular resonance here whether you are a Latter-day Saint or not: it's an important fixture in the culture and is worth studying on those grounds alone. But especially for Latter-day Saints, the temple has a vibrancy, a live religious concern. Talking about the temple academically, however, can be hard. It can be terrifically rewarding, but it can be challenging if you don't have much preparation. If this is the case for you, I urge you not to get discouraged if Gary Anderson or some wise guy on the program seems to be talking over our heads; we'll bring them around a little bit with the questions we ask (and Gary will explain shortly the process of how we'll go about posing our questions from such a large audience). I urge you not to grow anxious if you grasp only 30 or 50 percent of what's going on in a given scholar's talk. That's a place to start. There will be time for questions and follow-ups even beyond this conference. We are contemplating the possibility of reassembling in a year or so; we'll see how you feel about that by the time the day is over, and we'll seek your feedback about that possibility. So let's work hard today, but also enjoy ourselves. Don't get discouraged, take what you can, and that will begin our explorations together.

Within the academy, within the formal academic study of religion, we use diverse methods. There are many different ways to parse the topic of religion. The academic study of religion is not exactly

a “discipline”—or at least scholars who do it professionally debate whether it is a discipline or not—but it is safe to say that it is a topic that has a lot of disciplinary approaches. We study every imaginable aspect of religion and from many angles. If I were to show you the American Academy of Religion annual program book, you’d see that it is thick like a telephone book. The various approaches include sociology and religion, psychology of religion, ritual studies, specific tradition studies like Buddhism or Jainism or Christianity, history of religions, comparative religion, philosophy of religion, science and religion, and many others. The enterprise “gloms” onto every possible topic. It is all highly interactive.

At the most basic level, there is a distinction between theological studies and religious studies, and the meanings of all related terms are debated. Even what religion *is* is debated and notoriously difficult to define for the approval of all. People do have some intuitive sense of what religion is, of course, but when you start examining it, start trying to demarcate the concept, then it can get complex.

With broad strokes, what I tell my students is that theological studies is not the study of doctrine or dogma or philosophy (which is one way that people frequently use the term “theological”); theology in a more active sense is critical reflection on faith from within a religious tradition. As Anselm famously put it in the eleventh century, it is “faith seeking understanding” with rigor. Religious studies is a “cooler” discipline than theological studies, because the former tries to have less passion and be more in the direction of “seeing from outside” a tradition, or at least seeing more neutrally. Scholars need not be a member of the religion they are studying. These two approaches need each other for the most rigorous result. The two approaches can be compared to biography and autobiography. In my analogy, theological studies is analogous to autobiography, where you’re thinking about the tradition, its meaning, its doctrines, and its values from within and trying to understand it. To define it with equally broad brushstrokes, religious studies is studying religion biographically from without. And there are both dangers and values to each of those approaches. Autobiography has value because there’s no way you can get fully inside

me and understand me, of course, and so there are aspects to understanding me that are unique to me. And insiders, believers within a religious tradition, a broad one like Judaism or Christianity, speak an internal language, have an internal mode. There are dimensions that, to fully understand, one has to be there internally and feel it and practice it. On the other hand, if I want my story told as an individual, as Philip Barlow, and if it happened that I became a publicly important person—if I were to become the real first Mormon president of the United States after Mitt Romney’s candidacy fails, for instance—and people were to attempt to tell my story and get at the meaning of my life, it wouldn’t be sufficient just to have me autobiographically reflecting on it. Others would have angles of vision that would be necessary to the story. Historians of a Barlow presidency might have an IQ six times mine and have four PhDs in four different subjects and be better able than me to get at my psychology, locate my gender, my Mormonness, my Americanness, my station in history in relation to a lot of larger forces. Similarly, theology needs the critical outside questioning of religious studies, and religious studies needs the inside critical reflection of theological study. I suspect you’ll hear little strands and wafts of these distinctions at work throughout the day, even if they remain unspoken, and you might attune your ears to them.

Finally, the definition of religion can be a complex matter even in a legal sense, and the courts of the land, including the Supreme Court, have had quite a history in trying to define it. They used to call on impressive thinkers like the Protestant theologian Paul Tillich to testify about what it is. There were tricky groups who, for instance, were not too keen on religion but didn’t want religion getting a tax break, so they’d invent their own religion, like the religion of Bacchus, the religion of Epicureanism. Someone could say, “My religion is ‘pleasure,’ and what I want is to make whoopee with whomever I want to make whoopee with, and I want alcohol upon demand and red Maseratis. That is my religion, and I want tax breaks for all this.” Sometimes issues like this would end up in the courts, and the secular courts would be in the awkward position of having to define religion. So they’d call in some

scholar or another to testify. In that capacity, Paul Tillich defined religion as “one’s ultimate concern” or, as others have cast it: “what one does when no one else is looking.” Some have defined religion as “the quest for the transcendent.”

As a preface to today’s proceedings, I’m going to propose to you that religion has a number of common elements if it’s going to be a full-blown religious movement. As you may have been reading these days, perhaps the fastest-growing segment of the population is what we call the “Nones,” that is, those who define themselves as having no religion or no organized religion. Some of those people are irreligious and skeptical, and some of you present may be among them. The majority of them, however, fly under the flag of “I am spiritual but not religious.” We are seeing an increasing rejection of organized religion, which is part of the American drift towards less regard for institutions as such. This is a tricky, debatable, and dangerous direction in my estimate but certainly a strong current.

I’m going to suggest, as a preface, that one way to define a full-blown religious movement is to identify four elements. Catherine Albanese, a scholar of American religion, uses a series of words beginning with the letter C to help us remember them. She suggests that a religion includes (1) a creed: things that the group believes, a world view; (2) a code: values and moral structures; (3) community: people who do these things together (the word “religion” has a contested etymology, but the predominant sense is “to bind together,” to bond together); and (4) cultus, which is a Latin technical term for ritual system.

So we’re going to talk about temple. While we’ll discuss several aspects of the temple, we’re going to have ritual on our minds and have our ears attuned to ritual. I’ve read of anthropologists arguing that if people don’t have ritual, they’re not fully human; they’re not a fully human society. The ritual is a symbol system sometimes in motion, an enacted symbol system of the community and of the value system and of the belief system. So ritualists are terribly important. In the annual program book of the American Academy of Religion that I mentioned earlier, there is an important sliver of professionals who study rituals. Ritual studies could take the form of the study of sacraments or pilgrimages or

any number of enacted rituals. There are important compelling ones to study, and not just in the Judeo-Christian tradition of temples and the rituals enacted or represented in them. So I’m particularly excited for the intellectual feast that we’ll have during the day in connection with that.

A contrast in the study of ritual occurred here last week: we had an academic expert, Dr. Hong Lee, and two monks from Tibet visit and take four full days to build, grain of sand by grain of sand, a gorgeous colored sacred sand mandala. The meaning of it was so rich, and being able to exchange with them all week long as they constructed this thing was even better. Then they stuck a knife in my heart and made me participate in taking a broom made of peacock feathers to undo the mandala, after all of that meticulous construction. I wanted to keep it here for a year or two; it was so wonderful. But that represented in me, according to Buddhist understanding, attachment. I was too attached to it. And part of the ritual was precisely to disaggregate things to symbolize the transience of the cosmos and of all things and to help us feel the process of detaching. Through this we were indulged in a very different way of the study of ritual, which provides a morsel of context for our deliberations today.

Now I’ll introduce my friend Gary Anderson to you. Among other things, he will instruct us on what is to come. Many of you, if you’re here locally, will know Gary and know that he is not a “cowboy intellectual,” which we do have in these parts, but a “lawyer intellectual.” Gary is wonderful, and he’s been central to bringing this event into fulfillment. Let us welcome him.

Gary Anderson

Thanks to Phil Barlow, because without him and his gracious staff, this event would not have happened. It’s remarkable to see so many people here today.

Now, let me move toward getting into the program. I’m just going to tell you what got me into temple studies and then what brings us to today. To give you a framework, let me quote from Hugh Nibley’s article “The Meaning of the Temple”:

The temple must be here. It is not just a myth, it is the core of all of our civilization. In 1930 this

concept began to reemerge at Cambridge. The Cambridge School began calling what they taught there *patternism*, because they saw the ancient teachings all falling into the same pattern. ... The ordinances of the Egyptian temple were the essentially the same as those performed in ours. And that can be explained very simply: they have a common origin. The clue is given in Abraham 1:26. "Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign in Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth" (Abraham 1:26). He sought diligently, he sought earnestly, to imitate the order that went back to the fathers of the first generation in the first patriarchal reign. The Egyptian ordinance also always had one purpose—to go back to the *sp tpy*—the First Time, the time of the first man, who was Adam. The Egyptians didn't have it, and they knew it. So they sought to imitate it. . . . The ancient temple ordinances, called mysteries, are found in various degrees of preservation. If you ask what Joseph Smith knew about real temples, I reply, everything.¹

Of course that's Hugh Nibley talking from a Mormon perspective, but what I'm going to talk about, since we have both a Methodist preacher and a Catholic theologian with us today, is the very interesting interconnections among us.

Let me shift gears now and talk to you about my connections with the Temple Studies Group and two of the founding members, Margaret Barker and Laurence Hemming. I first became aware of Margaret, the Methodist preacher, some years ago. I had run across some things she had written about early Christianity and the temple. My interest increased when she spoke at the Worlds of Joseph Smith Symposium in 2005 at the Library of Congress. Through some friends, I started sending emails to her on items about temple studies. When I went to England to visit my grandkids and do some family history research, I ended up going to visit her and her husband in Borrowash, Derbyshire, a few

miles away from Heaner, where some of my ancestors lived. Then I found out that they were starting temple studies seminars, and I attended the first one at St. Stephen's House in Oxford, where I met Laurence Hemming, a Catholic theologian who was presenting a paper on Melchizedek. That was interesting for me.

With that in mind, let me identify some unique doctrines that Joseph Smith introduced into the Christendom of his day through the Book of Mormon and his revelations. Then I'm going to compare that with some of the things that relate to temple studies. Most of you, if you are LDS, may be familiar with these doctrines, and for those of you that aren't, I'll try to help you understand what Joseph Smith was doing in his own day that was somewhat revolutionary.

First of all, he taught that the Bible is not complete or totally accurate (Article of Faith 8). There are a number of books that we do not have, referred to throughout scripture, and Joseph Smith had a revelation on what we should do with those books. The Apocrypha contains many things of worth (Doctrine and Covenants 29). He said that Jesus Christ is Jehovah or Yahweh, God of the Old Testament—Margaret has said a lot about that too. Joseph Smith taught the importance of Enoch and Melchizedek, who have almost been eliminated from the Bible. Joseph Smith actually, when he was translating the Bible, came up with a new book called the Book of Enoch, and Joseph's revelations talk a lot about Melchizedek. He also talks about an understanding of the relationship between the Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthoods. And that's frankly how Laurence and I got really well acquainted because we got into a heavy discussion on that topic. I found out that Laurence was coming to Salt Lake two weeks later, and we've been fast friends ever since. Joseph Smith also talked about seeing God face to face. It's possible in our era, just as it was in the Old Testament. That's what we call the First Vision. (When I say "we," again I expect that you understand that I am LDS.) Joseph taught the plurality of gods and that man can become as God as well as the concept of a Mother in Heaven. The temple is the focus of religion and needs to be among God's people so that sealing ordinances can be performed.

1. Hugh Nibley, "The Meaning of the Temple," <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/transcripts/?id=58>.

Now let me get you to go to the temple study site that the Temple Studies Group in the UK has up on the web. Just Google “Temple Studies Group.” I’m just reading from some things there:

Temple theology suggests:

That the current Old Testament is neither the text nor the ‘canon’ that was known and used by the first Christians;

That the non-canonical writings were preserved by Christians and excluded by Jews because they marked important differences between them;

That Sola Scriptura has hindered rather than helped the understanding of Christianity;

That Christianity was heir to the temple tradition and was by no means a new religion in the first century.²

This sounds eerily familiar. Margaret has told me on more than one occasion you cannot understand the Bible unless you understand the temple.

I met Laurence Hemming when I first went to the Temple Studies Group symposium. He stopped in the middle of his paper on Melchizedek and commented that it is the Mormons who point him in the right direction when he’s looking for something. There were only three of us in that group, and I thought, “What’s he talking about?” He has taught me much through his study of early Christian liturgy. I quote from a letter he wrote to me:

Gary, you and I have often discussed the meaning of Priesthood in our different traditions. The remarkable closeness of this understanding is a constant source of amazement to me. It was not easy to reach in my own tradition. Its expression in Catholic worship is carefully hidden and revealed at the same time. Something in the same coyness and religious hesitation about speaking publicly of sacred things is also a part of your tradition, something else we have in common. The relationship between the Priesthoods of Aaron and Melchizedek, the Levitical inherited ordained Priesthood and the Priesthood conferred on the church for the sake of eternity is no longer dwelled upon by many Catholics, even by many theologians. But it is here in our own non-canonical sacred texts, the texts of our

ancient liturgy. [Again, I’m trying to be as clear as I can. Liturgy, I have learned, for a Mormon, is going to the temple.] Next to the canonical scriptures, the texts of the sacred liturgy are the most sacred texts we have. My own researches have consistently led me to believe their origins or roots are grounded in the first Jerusalem temple. They are the memory and record of the secret and open traditions God has given for the work of restoration and exaltation of the whole creation that I mentioned earlier. They tell a story that is often remarkably confluent with the story told by Latter-day Saints, especially in the writings of Joseph Smith, writings which I have come to know.

My connection with Margaret and Laurence is what led me to think about organizing this conference and inviting them to participate. So without further ado, we’d like to hear from Margaret and Laurence and then John Hall, Jack Welch, and Dan Petersen.

What we’re going to do first is to give time for Margaret and Laurence, but I will draw your attention to the fact that we’re all sitting at the same table, and I think that speaks volumes given what we’ve gone through in the last few months in political debates. I think it will be a lot more respectful and dignified than that, and I hope that it will be much more enlightening. So Margaret, please go ahead. Thank you.

Margaret Barker

What I’m going to do now is tell you a little bit of my autobiography in the sense of how I came to write what I did. I realize that another person who had a different life path and met different people but was interested in temple studies would perhaps have produced something very different, but I can look back to certain events in my life, meeting with certain people and say, yes, that was a point at which a new section started. But this all began a long, long time ago when I was an undergraduate student in Cambridge, England. When I had finished my three years there, I was left with a feeling not of elation but in fact of disappointment; I didn’t stay to do any postgraduate work because I felt somehow everything we had done had missed the point. Now, this is a terrible thing to say because I

2. <http://www.margaretbarker.com/Temple/Implications.htm>, linked from templestudiesgroup.com.

had some wonderful teachers, but it wasn't what I was looking for. And one of the things that struck me most was that in the stuff I was taught—and I may have gone to all the wrong lectures, but I don't think I did—there was no obvious link between the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the life of the early church and its worship. These were separate compartments. Later in my life I was asked by a very distinguished Cambridge don (teacher) why I studied the Old and New Testaments, and he was very surprised when I said they are usually sold as one volume. You see, this is what we're up against. Now as undergraduates, we looked at all sorts of things, which was like constantly peeling the vegetables and never actually getting a meal. We looked at the sources of the Pentateuch, J, E, D, and P—lots of people have been drilled in that, haven't you?—and we looked at the sources of the books of Kings and Chronicles and at the end of it, we had learned about all these redactors that the Germans were so very fond of. We did the sources of the Psalms. That got a little bit nearer to theology, but, you know, not close enough to be much use. In the New Testament, we did the source of the Gospels and then we came to the fourth Gospel, and the big question was not what was John talking about or writing about, but did he know the synoptic gospels? And I thought at the end of this "Goodness me! This is a course in literary criticism." It wasn't really what I was hoping for. So I didn't stay in Cambridge; I went off and did my own thing.

I discovered the Apocalypses, which aren't taught very much in England—I think not at all at the time. I discovered Enoch in particular and started working on my own on Enoch. It happened that we had living next door to us in the village in Derbyshire, where I was by then married, an elderly Anglican clergyman who was retiring and downsizing his library. He said to me one day, "There are some books, would you like them?" And he gave me R. H. Charles's first edition of the Enoch in English and the three volumes of the Swete Septuagint. And I went off like a squirrel and put these in my treasure place. That's how I got interested, really interested, in Enoch and particularly in different varieties of texts, because I could look at those, such as the Septuagint with all those terrible footnotes

that go on forever and ever and get smaller and smaller, and think, "Well, how is it possible that this Greek came from this Hebrew?" And that's when I first started being aware of the varieties of the text.

Then I wrote *The Older Testament* and *The Gate of Heaven*, things like that, and they were published. They were published because I was fortunate to meet a very distinguished Jesuit theologian, biblical scholar Father Robert Murray, a great Syriac scholar and wonderful man. People sometimes ask me, How did you meet Father Murray? Because he was a great man, and I was a Derbyshire housewife. And the answer is, we met on the bus. We met on a bus going to Birmingham. He was obviously very tired from flying in from Rome and he fell asleep on my shoulder and we have been friends ever since. He's still alive, a very frail old gentleman, but he was a great influence on me and opened up all sorts of ways for me, and he encouraged me to publish. And that's why my first book was dedicated to him. So that was the first extraordinary thing, you know, how I came to meet these people, and this elderly vicar who gave me books.

Then, I did a study day in Oxford; I often do study days around the place, but I started doing them a long time ago. And one young lady came up to me afterwards. She had just completed her first class degree from Oxford and she said to me, "You know, the question that worries me is what happened to Yahweh in the New Testament." And I thought, that's a very good question, and that's when I wrote *The Great Angel*. But *The Great Angel* wasn't the book I set out to write. I set out to write something very different. When I was about a third of the way through the other book that never came to be a book, I realized I was having to reject a lot of evidence. In the end, I used that rejected evidence to write *The Great Angel*. So that was the next step forward.

I had the great privilege of knowing the late great Mary Douglas, the anthropologist and a wonderful, wonderful lady. She has been dead some six or seven years now. But she was just an experience. She was at that stage of writing about atonement in Leviticus. When I was listening to her talking about atonement, all sorts of things clicked into place for me. That's when the characteristic treatment I had of atonement came about.

Then I had an invitation out of blue from the University in Aberdeen. I'd never been so far north in England. The problem of getting a train ticket from Derbyshire to Aberdeen is quite something. In those days it was amazing. But I went up, and I did these lectures and I was exploring the idea—for the first time I was using early Christian liturgy material—I was exploring the idea that resurrection was more than simply a sort of physical restoration. And I looked at the idea of a resurrection which became a kind of temple characteristic, the idea that resurrection is what some religious groups nowadays call being born again and the implication of that for the study of early Christian texts. Because the millennium was approaching at about this time, I thought I would do what I wanted to do for a long time and write on the book of Revelation. I did that and incorporated for the first time Dead Sea Scrolls material. That's a very interesting thing to do.

Meanwhile, on another part of my desk I was writing the Isaiah section of the Eerdmans New Millennium Commentary. I discovered for the first time the problems of freedom of speech if you are writing something that these advocates of freedom of speech don't actually like. When they control publishers, things become quite difficult. I sent my thing on Isaiah in. It was the right length, and it was on time, and the book was delayed and delayed and delayed. I got back to the editors, and they said it was delayed. So I thought, somebody hasn't submitted on time and wondered who it is. Eventually one of them said, "Well, actually you're the problem; they don't like what you've written." And I said, "Well, they shouldn't have asked me." And I refused to move, and in the end, Eerdmans Millennium Commentary now has another title and was published in 2003,³ and that's one of the reasons. So that was my real first brush with people who did not want to publish what they did not like.

Then *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* was published and was reviewed for the *Times Literary Supplement* by David Melling. He got in touch with me as a result of writing this review, and it turned out that he was currently compiling an Orthodox

encyclopedia. He is a great authority on the Orthodox Church and wonderful musician. He died a few years ago, and I dedicated one of my books to him. But we got in touch, and I was telling him certain things that I had been talking about and thinking about, and he said, "Oh, do you know this?" And he produced a copy of this wonderful Byzantine hymn honoring Mary called the Akathist hymn. I read it through, and although I had never seen it before, I knew exactly where all these titles had come from. I said to him, "Well, I know where this stuff has come from," and he said, "That's why I showed it to you." That started me down this path, which wasn't a seriously scholarly method, it was simply joining dots. From further research I could see where other things had come from. So that's where the Lady first came into my temple studies.

Then another thing happened in my life. I found myself invited—it was a huge honor and totally unexpected—I was invited to join the Environment Symposium of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and joined his team of people who set things up.⁴ Wonderful inspiration. I was the biblical scholar in that outfit for thirteen years. That is now on hold a bit because the lady who organized it is terminally ill, and so we're not sure what is going to happen. But that made me realize all sorts of other aspects of temple theology, the application to the environment, things like that. From that there came the creation book, and then all sorts of other things followed.

A really quite extraordinary mix of things simply happened in my life. As I've looked back now, and I've been signing books this morning, my life has been flashing before me as I see all these titles. I believe, yes, if I hadn't met that person, if I hadn't been in that place, if that penny hadn't dropped (if you use that expression in America), if something just hadn't happened or hadn't clicked with me, this would never have happened. So, looking back over how I have done temple studies, this is in some ways my autobiography. Somebody else doing temple studies with a different life path would have picked up different emphases, would

3. *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, ed. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003).

4. See the Religion, Science and the Environment Movement at <http://www.rsesymposia.org>.

have written books with different titles, picked up different things. So, given that there are so many people interested in temple studies, with all their different life paths and experiences, I have a feeling that there is an awful lot out there still to do. I hand over now to Laurence, who is going to tell you something about temple studies in England.

Laurence Hemming

Thank you very much, Margaret. I want to begin by thanking Professor Phil Barlow for hosting this year and thanking my friends in Utah, too many to name, but especially Gary Anderson, Professor Jack Welch, and Professor John Hall, for making this event possible. It's tremendously exciting for me to be here with you. I have never had a cool welcome in Utah. I've been here several times, and this is one of the warmest welcomes I've ever had. It's a privilege to be on this platform. I could tell a very similar story to Margaret, but she's asked me not to, but rather to talk about the foundation of the Temple Studies Group in Britain. But I want to begin where I think Phil Barlow left off. Phil Barlow gave you some definitions of religion, and one of those is Paul Tillich's definition, the one which I think still sits at the foundation. Tillich's definition is very interesting because he was a theologian; he wasn't a religious studies man, but he belongs in religious studies. His definition of religion is that it is our "ultimate concern." And the question there is, who is the *we*? Well, it's a human *we*. Now, religious studies, as far as I can see, is the human study of religion. But if you're a theologian, you ought to be doing something slightly different, and what is that? For me, the faith and the work of theology has always been not about ultimate concerns, which it seems to me is about where humans reach out for the highest, but Tillich's has something to do with ultimate concerns: it's when God speaks. That's when religion begins, when God speaks. All of us live out of religious foundings. Joseph Smith is an immensely important religious founder and very recognizable to a Catholic like myself, because my own tradition is filled with charismatic religious founders. But these are not men and women who made it up. They are men and women who listened, who opened themselves or were opened in some

unusual way to when God speaks. And the history of temple studies for me is about understanding how it is that God has spoken on the earth. And that's what led me into temple studies. For me, as a Catholic, the sacred liturgy is not the words that God uses, because they are human words, but it is the throat, it is the voice which God adopts or God gives to humanity to sing his praises and to give glory to God. My own biographical account of my way into temple studies would dwell on my frustration with sitting in universities where I was constantly told that theology was a human concern, when my heart constantly told me that my job was not to make it up, but to listen.

One of the jokes that I often make when I'm in Utah is that the thing I really like to talk about is the difference between mainstream Christians and Mormons—but when you're in Utah, Mormons are the mainstream, so people like me that start using phrases like that look ridiculous. One of the things that I keep saying to my fellow Catholics is, you are no longer mainstream. We have been through a convulsion in the Catholic Church in the last one to two hundred years that has transformed our self-understanding. And I tease many Catholic theologians that the modern understanding sees Jesus as a terribly nice guy probably with a beard who, if he hadn't been born in Israel, he would have gone to Berkeley, used to speak German, but he's got over that and he now speaks English and goes around the world doing good. No one in any form of Christianity, as far as I can tell, believed that until about a hundred years ago. And therefore, one has to ask the question, what happened in that last hundred years? I was so frustrated with the way I was taught both the Old and the New Testament, I just gave it up, I kind of put it on a shelf. The liturgy became an outlet for me to be able to express the things that I really knew and wanted, knew were mainstream in the tradition and wanted to believe.

It was Margaret who actually helped me to rediscover the Old and New Testaments that I really believed. And just to coda to that, a very old and venerable theologian who taught me a lot, Fergus Kerr, once took me aside and said to me, "Remember, the Septuagint is the Catholic Old Testament, not the Hebrew scriptures." I knew that, but

nobody had ever said that to me before. So I came across Margaret's work, and saw that in the course of explaining how Jesus was not a hippie but rather somebody who fully understood who he was as the Son of God, as Yahweh, she showed that the early church fully understood that Jesus is Yahweh. And temple studies is the way to open up the path and to ask what has happened to so-called mainstream Christianity, what turned Christianity into something that its antecedents would not have recognized. And that's why we founded the Temple Studies Group. Not in polemic either, not in the modern way of bringing Christians of different traditions together to sit round a table and try to come up with a common formula—which actually means forgetting even more of what made you who you are. You're not going to say, "Well, since you don't like that, let's rub that out of my experience," but rather look for common ground.

The common ground we share is one of the murkiest periods in Christian experience. It is the first hundred to hundred and fifty years of the foundation of the Christian church. I tease my friends in the LDS Church History Department that at the origin of my form of Christianity we have icons, and in the origin of yours, you have photographs. But the reality is that the origin of our common Christian parentage is those murky hundred and fifty years which are so ill-documented but which Margaret's work has opened up. Much of what I know of my own tradition corroborates many things that she has taught me, but many things that Latter-day Saints have taught me tells me we share a common root. And that's why I think Mormons have been so important in the unfolding of temple studies, that's why I've always been delighted when I know that there are some Mormons at the Temple Studies meetings in the UK, I know I have friends because I'm more likely to have things thrown at me by modern Catholics or Protestants, who don't know what they ought to know, than by Mormons, for whom this material is actually much more readily accessible. That is why so many of you come here today. The Temple Studies Group was founded to help, as a gesture, to help the finding of the whole of Christianity back into an understanding of those first hundred and fifty years and how those

first hundred and fifty years shaped our respective traditions and inheritances. So that we know that maybe Jesus did have a flowing robe and maybe he did have a beard, but he also understood the meaning of priestly vestments, and he also believed that he was the owner of them. And when we understand that, then we can begin to do temple studies. That, I hope, explains why I am here.

John Hall

Thank you, Laurence. I think I'd like to say that my exposure to temple studies really began in my freshman year at BYU with a man named Hugh Nibley. Professor Nibley was the man from whom I guess I took the most classes as a student. He taught me Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha and temple studies in an approach that I would have been unable to define at the time, namely, the approach that Gary Anderson mentioned of Cambridge patternism, a comparative approach that is very productive in seeing beyond the text to what lies underneath the text. Now, when I first began to participate in the Temple Studies Group in London, as an attendee and reading papers, at that point in time Temple Studies was meeting in a magnificent location, and in which it continues to meet, namely the Temple Church, built by the Templars in medieval times. And now it is administered by the Church of England and by a very good scholar by the name of Robin Griffith Jones, the Master of the Temple—that is his title. He welcomes us to that location to have the Temple Studies Group meetings in London. Those who attend represent a variety of disciplines. They may be Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, Russian Orthodox, or Greek Orthodox, but the value of those meetings and the papers read there is the varying perspectives which are brought to a single subject. From that variety of perspective great synergy happens, so that we reach a greater understanding of the subject. Temple studies is what we might call an ecumenical study, a study that allows for the interchange of information, for the exchange of perspective in such a way that we are able to use the comparative approach that constituted Nibley's work for his whole career, to learn about the temple in all contexts—Judeo-Christian but also in context that precedes Judeo-Christian, like ancient Egyptian

or Greek or Roman or Middle Eastern religions, etc. For that reason, as we glean from the history of man information about the temples that existed and that they were sites whereby man thought he could become closer to the divine and move into the presence of the divine, we are able to understand what the temple is in relation to ourselves and in relation to whatever our respective beliefs might be. Therein is the great value of temple studies. As this conference proceeds today and as papers are given on various topics, I hope that you will keep in mind that comparative approach, that ability to look at the temple from many perspectives. From each of those perspectives will come beneficial knowledge to help us better hone our own individual perspectives into our relation to our Father and to Jesus Christ as we believe because the temple in all ages are structures that relate to them and to what they would have man understand about them in man's quest to return to them.

Daniel Petersen

I guess we're speaking autobiographically. Mine will be brief. I have not been a major contributor though I've been a major follower of temple studies for quite some time. Like so many Latter-day Saints, like most of those who have gotten seriously involved in it, I suppose my introduction, the pivotal experience for me, came with the introduction to Hugh Nibley. He taught not only specific facts about antiquity, but more important for me, he introduced an approach, a way of thinking about antiquity—whether this or that particular proposition survives continued study or not is less important than the overall model, the way of thinking about things that has been enormously influential on me and that I've found enormously fruitful. I'm not surprised to see such a large crowd here. In a smaller group last night, I mentioned the fact that years ago, I think it was in connection with Nibley's retirement, Klaus Baer, an Egyptologist from the University of Chicago, came to BYU to deliver a series of lectures on the Egyptian temple. And the way he approached it, as I recall it anyway—it's been a long, long time now, I was an undergraduate student then—his approach to the temple, to my mind, drained the temple of most of its interest. It

was mostly about the economic role of the temple in Egyptian society and so on and so forth, which I found not particularly exciting. But nevertheless, he was stunned because he normally spoke to groups of five, ten, twelve people at most, and here he had hundreds of people. You know, they were standing in the doorways at BYU to listen to this man speak about the Egyptian temple. He was shocked. I was not, because Latter-day Saints are that interested in the temple because it's the central thing for us. Many of you know that we talk about it constantly. The most important thing we can do is, of course, bring people to Christ, but we also talk about bringing people to the temple, getting them to the temple, to take the covenants there. Now, Nibley did not seem to have an impact on the next generation. It skipped a generation in a way, in an odd way, I think, but in temple studies as in so many other regards, the next generation, the grandchildren of Nibley, have continued to contribute, and I think I'm very proud of the fact that, for example, two rather significant books on the temple, more than two actually, published by non-LDS publishers (Thames and Hudson, and Praeger), have been dedicated to Hugh Nibley, namely, Bill Hamblin and David Seely's *Solomon's Temple: Myth and History*, and John Lundquist's *The Temple of Jerusalem*, which is a really important volume on the temple as a meeting place of heaven and earth. It continues very much the spirit of Nibley, and I don't know many people noticed the dedication in each of those to Hugh Nibley. That's significant for those who know the background, the intellectual background he gave us. I just wanted to say one other quick autobiographical thing. I think, I'm not sure, but I may be the first Latter-day Saint who noticed the work of Margaret Barker. I'm not sure, and I can't claim any great virtue in that, since it was sheer dumb luck. I was at an AAR-SBL meeting (the American Academy of Religion–Society of Biblical Literature) and there was *The Great Angel* sitting on the shelf. I go to those meetings; yes, the sessions are interesting, but I love what Bill Hamblin and I call "the Bookanalia," which is the big book sale. All the books are on sale for 50 percent off, 90 percent off. I mean it's horrible, it's just horrible; my house is awash with stacks of books. I have no longer the shelf space for them, but I saw that

book and thought, “This looks really interesting.” I brought it home and it sat there for a few weeks and then one night I was sitting in my office and it began to sort of pulsate on the bookshelf: “Read me, read me!” So I pulled it down and I have to say, and I don’t know how she’ll take this, but I have to say that I began reading it, and I thought, “Good grief, this person has to be a Mormon! But no, she’s not, yes she is! She’s got to be!” There were so many things there that were so stunning to me that I had never read from anybody other than one of our sectarian co-believers. I was just stunned at the book and began talking to people about it. As I said I don’t claim any great credit for having found it, but I did and it was transformative for me, just fascinating, stunning. So it’s really exciting to have a program like this. I’m really pleased to be here.

John W. (Jack) Welch

Thank you, Dan and everyone. It’s wonderful to be here today. We’re looking forward to a great day, and I just want to say that I certainly share a lot of the autobiographical experiences that we’ve heard from the others including Hugh Nibley, who was my Honors Book of Mormon freshman first semester teacher. Nibley had the kind of mind that moved many inert mental mountains, and mine was one of those. Margaret has had a similar effect. The friendship that we’ve had is very productive. You know things are moving in the right direction when ideas are generative, when you are going down a path and you keep finding good things. It’s good to have these introductions so you can get to know people on a personal level. Margaret and Laurence have introduced us to many ideas and have introduced us as Latter-day Saints to the Temple Studies Program when we’ve spoken over in London, so it’s our great privilege to welcome them on this occasion here to the United States. But this takes me back to one other time I welcomed Margaret, and that was the occasion of the Joseph Smith Bicentennial at the Library of Congress. Margaret was one of the speakers in the session dealing with Joseph Smith and his perception of and very deep insights into the ancient world. I picked Margaret up at the airport; she was hobbling because she was in great pain, so we put her in a wheelchair and brought

her to the hotel. That kind of dedication is the sign of a dedicated life, the kind of life that Laurence as a dedicated Catholic priest deacon lives, and that we as Latter-day Saints can live. I appreciate that Margaret would have come under those conditions. I picked her up the next morning when we were on the way right over to the Library of Congress to have her speak, and one of the parts of her paper dealt with the tree of life and the white fruit mentioned in 1 Nephi 8 in Lehi’s vision. True to form, Margaret had been up early in the morning rereading 1 Nephi 8 to be sure she had all of this fresh in mind. As we were going over to the Library of Congress, she said, “I saw something very interesting I’d never seen before as I read through this. There it talks about an iron rod that leads to the tree of life. And all of a sudden it connected in my mind that in Psalms 2:9, the King James says that God will there [beat people] with a rod of iron,” but the Hebrew can just as well be ‘leads people with a rod of iron.’”⁵ Well, I use this as an example of when God speaks, when God blesses us with ideas, it’s not just dumb luck sometimes, sometimes it is on our part. It always is on our part, but it’s the hand of the Lord blessing people like Margaret, Laurence, and so many of us who all want to understand. We seek not just a rational theology that takes care of the creed we believe, not just a moral theology that takes care of the code, nor just a natural theology that takes care of community. What Margaret has introduced is a temple theology. Margaret, I believe you’re the first person to use that phrase, and I hope you’ll all read her book *Temple Theology*, which adds to our religious experience and understanding of theology that is based on patterns, on priesthood, on ordinances, on structure, on mystery, on revelation, on things that belonged to the temple originally and still do today. Today we celebrate temple theology. Margaret, Laurence, welcome to both of you and thanks to all of you for being here.

5. See Margaret Barker, “Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion,” in *The Worlds of Joseph Smith: A Bicentennial Conference at the Library of Congress*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2006), 77.