

"Give yourself to the dark side, Luke," he entreated. "It is the only way to save your friends. Yes, your thoughts betray you, son. Your feelings for them are strong, especially for-"

(Kahn. RETURN OF THE JEDI, p. 153.)

9. DARTH VADER DILEMMA:

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INTRODUCTION:

The priesthood of God is described in SMD as having existed eternally. It is also described as the force which governs everything in the universe(s). It is the force which controls the operation of chemical processes, as well as philosophical or logical principles.<sup>{1}</sup> After that sort of assertion, the pragmatic one asks the obvious question: by imputing that sort of empirical power to the ecclesiastical priesthood, is it intended to include the four fundamental forces of the physicists, as well as the authority to perform baptisms? What about the operation of chemical processes (really only special applications of the fundamental forces)? Are they subsumed by this priesthood? No direct answer is forthcoming from SMD, but there is probably a large number of LDS who will assert that, "Yes, the laws of physics and chemistry are part of the priesthood." That perspective is adopted here. Everything we see in the physical world is believed to be controlled in some fashion by, or is an expression of, the priesthood. In a similar manner, this priesthood is also assumed to be the source of all good in our world.<sup>{2}</sup>

However, generally left unsaid is a profoundly important counterpart to this concept of the priesthood of God as the power which controls 'everything' and is the source of all goodness. It is probably not accidental that SMD tends to leave this matter in the corner, even in its most liberal moments, although this is not an intentional oversight either. SMD focusses primarily on personal development, on 'good things', and employs a rosy lens to view the world. LDS do not dwell on the problem of evil, or on the meaning of the suffering which results therefrom.<sup>{3}</sup> They only view it in a one-dimensional way: as their personal, individual challenge. SMD doesn't publicly acknowledge this dilemma, or problem.<sup>{4}</sup> But the question is: from whence cometh evil?<sup>{5}</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Much of what follows is basically explication of these assertions. For example, see Chapter 26. ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM, 3+-DIMENSIONS AND SPIRITS, or 32. MICROBES, ALGAE AND LICHENS, etc. Even the texture of the paper you are holding and the color of the ink are controlled by this stunning power.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the source is the priesthood, a fairly heretical assumption, if one differentiates between the Father and the Priesthood. If not, then this statement isn't heretical.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 54. MEANING OF MENGLE'S MASSACRE for a discussion of the meaning of suffering as perceived in this model. Be prepared for a disappointing conclusion. The meaning is only what YOU as an individual experience and respond to and believe and understand.

<sup>4</sup> One asks whether the general leaders are aware of it, however. It is such an obvious problem, with such major implications within the POS, that they must see it. But some of them don't appear to be pleased by thinking such questions. The last prophet who dabbled in different dimensions of mortal experience and knowledge (not accidentally because he was a learned educator), from the standard canon, was David O. McKay. He, and significantly, his first counselor, Hugh B. Brown, both quoted freely from literature in their public addresses, and McKay even referred in a positive manner to conjectures by non-LDS.

For example, he quoted from the work entitled THE BLUEBIRD, and endorsed the speculation in it that

To most LDS, this question probably seems silly at the least, stupid in between, and heretical at worst. Where did evil derive, indeed!<sup>{6}</sup> But the problem of the source of evil exists, whether or not it is acknowledged.

In the simplest sense, the problem can be illustrated by this syllogism:

- (1) This world, and 'everything' in it, was created by God.
- (2) There is evil in the world.
- (3) Therefore, God created evil.

This categorical syllogism is logically valid. But the conclusion is not necessarily 'true'. SMD<sup>{7}</sup> probably doesn't allow this, so evil must have had another source. Evil affects us individually,

spirits in the process of being born, would approach the earth and exclaim in excitement at its beauty. And endorsed the concept that those spirits could hear the songs of the mothers beckoning and guiding them. What a glorious thing! But in 1992, no one dares do such a thing. Outrageous, indeed. Terribly sad and depressing. And, worse, unsettling, because only through the free exercise of one's agency in exploring things of mortality does and individual truly understand his/her own beliefs and their meanings and implications, etc.

From our perspective -biased we admit- we see only two valid, meaningful ways to figure out what things mean and what we will choose to believe, etc:

- 1) suffering the consequences of our choices which were made without complete knowledge, or
- 2) studying the principles within the broad context of human experience, praying, thinking and trying to comprehend how things fit together.

The reader who is disturbed by this work -who probably won't make it even this far- will perhaps judge this explanation to be rationalization. We happily grant that. It is. As distressing as it may be, in the final analysis your own reality is not at all objective, rather is a byproduct of intentional, though perhaps sublimated, and biased mentation.

<sup>5</sup> The evidence from Joseph Smith is clear. He believed in actual powers of darkness. He said:

"It would seem also, that wicked spirits have their bounds, limits and laws by which they are governed or controlled...and he (Satan) is emphatically called the prince of the power of the air; and it is evident they possess a power that none but those who have the Priesthood can control..." (HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, v.VI:576)

Allusion is made to "power of the air", as if it is a real power, and he says that these wicked spirits possess a "power". So the present discussion is founded on a sound exegesis. Note also, how powerful that power is; only "those who have the priesthood can control"...it. As becomes evident in this chapter, the operation of this, the black priesthood, is complicated and not at all well understood.

<sup>6</sup> One of the related problems for LDS who espouse this particular world view, which overlooks almost anything outside of the realm of personal development and the well-being of the community, is that they really are not capable of appreciating tragedy. Their optimism is naive, and ignores this problem. In fact, one is tempted to claim that most of them are incapable of recognizing or understanding that there is even an issue here, in spite of the massive contrary evidence that life is a fairly rotten, bad deal for most people down here.

<sup>7</sup> Actually, we are vague about this. It is our belief that SMD would not attribute the creation of evil to the Father. We say this because it is nearly an article of faith that all good, and ONLY good, comes from the Father. IF that is so, then there is no room for Him to have created evil. SMD really doesn't concern itself with the issue of the source of evil. In fact, as should become evident in this chapter, LDS probably suffer from a fairly myopic view of evil and Satan.

If one were to assert that the Father created evil, then what are the consequences? We don't know. But IF the foregoing assertion is true, that only good comes from the Father, then His creation of evil would have ultimately to be good. Right? Right. And that sort of seems like a tidy way to tie everything up into a simple bow: everything would come from Him. However. That can't be the case. We don't really think it is that simple, though it is appealing -in a trivial, and perilous manner- to have Him be the creator of evil. That would ensure that He had ultimate power over it (assuming that it didn't somehow take on a life and dimensions of its own that would exceed the span of control of its creator.) This entire section illustrates our fundamental belief that evil predated even the existence of our Father. So He couldn't have created it. The explanations unfold, but that is our basic conclusion.

and while knowledge of its source may not be germane to how we live out our lives, the matter is an important one that must be addressed in this model. So we will browse around in the PE for hints.

## TWO CHOICES:

Let's wander back to the Council in Heaven.<sup>{8}</sup> We, all 15 billion of us, were presented with two plans by their respective champions.<sup>{9}</sup> Satan and his, "Save them All and give me the glory!", versus Christ and His, "Let them do what they want! We'll lose some, but Glory to the Father!" After the dust settled, Satan, *et al*, were ejected from the Rodina<sup>{10}</sup> forever and were denied mortal bodies. Then this group of expatriates somehow became the bad guys for those of us who stayed on board to experience mortality.

This is a fair approximation of the simplistic view generally espoused by SMD of how Satan, and his legions, became the "source" of evil on this earth.<sup>{11}</sup> But if we look close at this description, keeping in mind the developmental sequence we must have gone through in the PE, maturing from spirit childhood to

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<sup>8</sup> We do this primarily because that's about the only thing about the PE that has received much attention in the canon. However, it is amazing how much can be derived the few scriptures that we have.

<sup>9</sup> The scant scriptures on the Council almost seem to imply that there was a single massive convocation in which the choices were laid out of us, after which we involved ourselves in a cosmic melee. However, I personally don't believe that is what really happened. The brevity of the scriptural accounts is a byproduct of tired scribes, or of economical revelators or limited resources.

We lived out full lives in the PE, and we lived there a long "time", and the two plans evolved gradually over this time. As we all aged there, things developed to the point that there was a crisis that forced us each to make a decision. This decision nexus was preceded by heavy campaigning by proponents of both sides, and when things were ripe, whatever that means, the crisis occurred. After it was over, we ended up being thrown out of 'heave', or retained, depending on our decision. I personally believe that the crisis only occurred after conditions had matured sufficiently, whatever that means, for the laws of heaven that were involved to be activated, in precisely the same way the millennium can only occur AFTER conditions, which Christ Himself is ignorant of, have been satisfied.

<sup>10</sup> Apropos this Russian term, here's a quote with several implications for this discussion:

"Putin was the ship's zampolit (political officer). Everything he did was to serve the Rodina (Motherland), a word that had mystical connotations to a Russians, and, along with V.I. Lenin, was the communist party's substitute for a godhead." (CLANCY 1984:3)

Everyone needs a godhead and something to believe in, even 'godless' Communists.

<sup>11</sup> This is actually a neat parallel, in terms of the technique of over-simplification, to the story of the creation of the earth, which is repeated three times in the LDS canon: Genesis, Book of Mormon and The Pearl of Great Price. All three versions leave most of the details out, doubtless because they really are not essential to the welfare and performance of us mortals, and doubtless to keep the story under a day in the first place. However, this severe simplification of the stories unfortunately creates(!) misunderstandings and misperceptions of the deeper truths in both cases. The earth was not created in six 24-hour days, nor in six 1,000-year-days, any more than Satan was THE source of sin and evil in this world. (Much more on this in the present chapter.) When the Creation Story is acted out, its simplicity has the quality of a medieval mystery play, where Everyman plays out his role with a variety of protagonists, with obvious, major morals to be taught.

spirit maturity<sup>{12}</sup> there, we must ask:

- 1) Was Satan really the one who created evil in the PE?
- 2) Is he the source of evil for this earth?
- 3) If so, how did he get so bad so fast?<sup>{13}</sup>

If he's not the source of evil, then we have a problem of cosmic proportions:

- 1) just where did evil come from?
- 2) Who set him apart to be the bad guy, or did he just somehow inherit the forces of evil, or did he earn it?
- 3) What was he doing before the PE? etc.

Tough and important questions, so let's look at them for a while. We will end up with what we believe is a startling conclusion, if you will hold still for a while.

#### WELLSPRING OF EVIL:

Let's take this question first: did Satan create evil? <sup>{14}</sup> That is a strawman, really. A moment's thought suffices to show that he couldn't have created it. There are various arguments that show this to be the case, so let's develop one of them here. Start with a basic concept: SMD teaches that worlds like ours have been being created eternally. Now embellish this concept with a few details: the major purpose -ostensibly- of these worlds was/is to allow individuals who live(d) on them to "work out their salvation." Next, remember that all of the metatheoretical constraints must be in force on all of those worlds in order for individuals to "work out their salvation", IF those worlds were created by the Father through His priesthood.

In particular, recall the OPPOSITION CONDITION. This condition requires that there be a pairing of mutually opposing forces in each world.<sup>{15}</sup> One force draws individuals to good, the other draws them to bad, thereby setting up field conditions which force them to exercise their agency in making choices and

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<sup>12</sup> There is no scripture to substantiate this claim that we evolved or developed during the PE, other the "first lessons" reference cited earlier in the last section of the D & C. We simply hypothesize this sequence as part of our metamorphosis, each phase being a microcosm of the whole metamorphosis.

<sup>13</sup> We'll address the implied assumption in this statement shortly.

<sup>14</sup> Note the implied assumption again: Satan was one of us children who were created specifically for this world. More in a minute.

<sup>15</sup> To be precise, this condition describes the condition or existence of mutually opposed forces. This is the reality and eternal nature of dark and silver. To say that the condition "requires" such opposition is to imply that there is a possibility that there could be a world in which opposition would not be present. We doubt that, though if Satan's plan was a valid option, then this possibility may in fact be reality somewhere/place. We doubt it, however. More on this later.

decisions. Finally, remember that some of the worlds created by the Father have already completed their cycle, and ceased to exist as testing pools. Therefore, since these now-deceased worlds complied with the Opposition Condition, there had to have been a source of evil for each of them. Since some of them completed their cycle before our world was even created, which means that they had the pair of black/white priesthoods before our world was created, it is apparent that Satan was not the one to originate it for this world.<sup>{16}</sup> So we must look elsewhere to find the wellspring of evil for our PE and world, even though Satan apparently did and does prosecute it vigorously.

But before moving on, let's quickly develop another argument about the source of evil in the pre-existence. As noted above, it is believed in this model that our own PE is/was actually a time of testing. If that is so, then there must be paired choices for all spirits to wrestle with. And if the first spirits<sup>{17}</sup> to be formed in the PE did indeed have access to choices, assuming a uniformity of conditions<sup>{18}</sup> for all worlds from the first instant of spirit existence, both the good, as well as the bad, then evil had to have pre-existed the onset of our PE. It would not have somehow evolved after the spirits were there, because that would have violated the Opposition Condition for some period of "time", which we doubt is allowed.<sup>{19}</sup>

#### SATAN'S DEVELOPMENT:

In regards to satan, the sketchy data in SMD seems to imply that his spirit was unblemished when it was 'born' to the Father, that he did not have a predisposition to do bad things, at least not any more than you and I did. This obviously assumes that he was created as a brother to us, and that he was created as a brother for us for this particular world.<sup>{20}</sup> It also assumes that

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<sup>16</sup> Note the important proviso: "for this world." More later.

<sup>17</sup> Note the assumption that we spirits were created sequentially, rather than all at once.

<sup>18</sup> Do not confuse "uniformity" of conditions with the concept of "initial" conditions. Both are essential to a description of the evolution of the PE and us as individuals. Perhaps we should refer to a "uniformity of initial conditions" to capture the intent here.

<sup>19</sup> Certainly it is denied in our model with this set of metatheoretical constraint defined above. This is a good example of how metatheoretical constraints define and alter and affect the development of theories. Obviously, one could argue that the opposition condition was not operant at the inception of the PE, or some such thing, but once one allows that sort of liberty with a theory, it turns to scrambled brains, and is henceforth useless. Rigor is essential. If that reveals the need for new conditions, then good, but at least there would be justification for developing them, rather than just a whim, or a feeling, etc.

<sup>20</sup> We believe that is what most LDS would admit believing if pressed, though we are not sure that the canon truly intends that meaning.

none of us were inherently predisposed to the evil side.<sup>{21}</sup> During the first part of his 'life' in the PE, he was being influenced by light and dark, just as we were. But, if we follow this option out logically, he must have developed an inordinate interest in evil and the black power, and become involved in it to the extent that he finally became the 'bad guy'.<sup>{22}</sup> Then, in the Council, he would have fully endorsed evil, and became or stood as, its champion.

We believe this is the standard LDS<sup>{23}</sup> view of how it evolved, but there is a major problem: he, too, had to have been confronted with evil from his birth, so there was something evil that pre-existed him. He could not have been the source of evil. This is the first evidence that argues against this interpretation.

Of course, some LDS will grant that Satan was confronted with evil from the first of his creation, but will then argue that he still made a decision during our PE to espouse evil. This group would probably also assume that Satan was born as one of us for this world. We disagree with the latter assumption, however, as will become evident.

#### BLACK PRIESTHOOD POWER:

SMD teaches another important concept, as already noted in the footnote above quoting Joseph Smith as stating this was so: it imputes actual power or authority to Satan, a power that enables him to influence individuals and events down here. This raises, then, two of the questions referred to earlier:

- 1) **What is the source of his authority?**
- 2) **How does he operate his authority?**

In regards to the first question, the answer that is offered in this model is that the negative authority or force existed long before this particular world was developed. This black priesthood has eternally co-existed with the Silver Priesthood, a mirror image of it, inextricably bound to it. They are head and tail of one coin. Neither can be removed from the other. This conception of an eternal black priesthood means, then, that at some point Satan

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<sup>21</sup> Given the 'genetic' inheritance concept we assumed above, which we believe was operative in the creation of formation of our spirits, it would be startling to suggest that any of God's children would be predisposed to evil, wouldn't it? Since He is perfect, wouldn't all of His creations exhibit that same goodness, and be free from seeds of evil and badness? This is one of the problems with assuming that the Father created evil.

But this more complicated. If we truly were born without evil, in His form, how do we then become evil? The answer must be that the obstinate, willful exercise of our free agency is how. We believe that is in fact that correct answer, and it illustrates the enormity of our sinfulness. We truly are rebelling and defying our very nature.

<sup>22</sup> There are some who probably would solemnly aver that he must have dabbled in mysteries and now suffers the consequences of such outrageous behavior, becoming entrapped, etc.

<sup>23</sup> Note that we say "LDS". We do not believe that the actual doctrine is clearly enunciated in the canon. That is why it is possible to come up with an erroneous 'standard' interpretation. This leaves open the question of how things really were. And that is what allows us to do what we are doing here.

had to have been empowered by someone to act through this authority.<sup>{24}</sup> This is where we enter a frightening domain.

Who, indeed, would have the power to induct Satan into the Hell of Fame? Given the apparent degree of badness that Satan possesses, his leader or senior person must be a horribly, powerfully bad person. Obviously, we are assuming that the one who inducts another into a form of authority is endowed with more power than the novitiate. But it is also possible that the induction process bestows the entire arsenal of badness on the next person, in which case the predecessor is no more powerful than the novice. But as to the source of this evil authority, we know no more than we do about the source of the silver variety. We just believe it co-existed with the latter.

In regards to the second question about Satan's *modus operandi*, we have no answer. LDS frequently allude to his influence and power, but we don't understand how he is able to interfere in our lives and affect our decisions. <sup>{25}</sup> He is apparently able to exert some sort of influence on our minds with the intent that we will exercise our agency in pursuit of evil choices. But how our spirits are open to this influence, we don't know.<sup>{26}</sup>

## SO WHAT THEN?

Next, go back to this question:

**Is there actually a black priesthood separate from the silver, or is it the good priesthood that had been perverted to evil ends by someone somehow?**

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<sup>24</sup> Note the assumption here: the black priesthood is an orderly priesthood that operates according to standard operating procedures which re mirror imaged of the SOP of the White Priesthood. Admittedly, there is no evidence to garner to support this assumption, so it could be that the black operates chaotically, without order. But we really don't believe that, based on the quote from Joseph Smith in the footnote above.

<sup>25</sup> Taking that belief literally obviously suggests that Satan & Co. are able to reach into our minds, touch our spirits, create thoughts, etc. We are troubled by this possibility, because the further implication is that he/they is/are able to actually over-ride our wills. That is troubling because that would mean that we would not have free agency at all times. It would suggest that the 'enmity' placed between us and him, didn't work all the time.

We conclude with the thought that is (1) in harmony with the concept of free agency, and (2) depressing. Satan & Co. can not truly over-ride our own free agency. We believe that we alone are responsible for allowing him/them into our minds. We are solely responsible for the evil we endorse, the since we simulate and the bad we perpetrate. Satan's influence is only enabled by invitation, namely our invitation. This means that the current LDS belief in his insidious ability to 'force' us into badness must be relegated to the dust heap of folklore because it actually contradicts the foundational doctrine of free will. Distressing because we don't have that excuse.

However, we still can accept the possibility that once he has entered the domain of our minds in response to our invitation, that he may then be able to exert greater influence over us than otherwise sounds likely, given the preceding paragraph.

<sup>26</sup> Testimonies occasionally allude to Satan's influence on individuals, but I personally suspect that a good share of those attributions ought to be directed to the egos speaking. At least if my own experience is comparable to anyone else's. Read C.S. Lewis' THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS for perceptive discussions of Satan's relationship to mortals. Wonderfully revealing insights into how he works and how we work.

The answer certainly isn't self-evident.<sup>{27}</sup> But the distinction is a real one: there is a silver/white priesthood held by our Father, and a black priesthood held by Satan and company. To reinforce this concept, let's once more pull in the critical quote from Brother Joseph:

**"It would seem also, that wicked spirits have their bounds, limits and laws by which they are governed or controlled...and he (Satan) is emphatically called the prince of the power of the air; and it is evident they possess a power that none but those who have the Priesthood can control..." (emphasis added)  
(HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, v.VI:576)**

Satan holds a power, apparently a 'real' power, which is only subject to the control of the priesthood of the Father. In regards to whether it is separate from, or a distortion of, we like the conception of evil endorsed by Obi wan Kenobi in his discussions with Luke Skywalker. He referred to the "dark side of the Force."<sup>{28}</sup> For us, the "Force" is equivalent to the Father's priesthood, and the "dark side" is equivalent to Satan's black power. This would suggest that the latter is a perversion, a shadow, a dark image, a distorted version of the former.

We like that concept, but we are troubled with at least one issue: the Opposition Condition entails two forces and since we assign this Condition to the metatheory, we are imputing an [eternal x eternal] age to the condition. Somehow -we admit the weakness, even silliness of that word- it seems that since the black power is a foundational aspect of everything, it would have an existence equivalent to that of the white. Somehow, the distortion of the white seems like it would require some interval, some time period, for someone to accomplish such a deformation. That would imply that the Opposition Condition was not operational "in the beginning."

However, in spite of the lack of evidence either way, based on the previous paragraph, we will take the strong position, and argue that Satan's power is separate from, rather than a distortion of, the Silver, and that it has co-existed eternally with it. So Obi wan's position really isn't consonant with our position after all.

SMD describes the black power as a counterfeit of the white,

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<sup>27</sup> Nor, for that matter, is it evident any other way! Nor is it trivial, though it may be irritating.

<sup>28</sup> The STAR WARS movies are among the grandest religious allegories. There are exciting special effects, and swashbuckling scenes which recommend them for pure excitement. But the real meaning of the movies arises from a deeper level than the simple story line. At this deeper level, there is a vivid conflict between the good and bad, the white and black. The grandest scene of them all, which epitomizes this conflict, is that where Luke is dueling with Darth Vader, his father, in the presence of the vile emperor. As he struggles with his father, Luke notices that his hand is turning black, so he discards his light saber and loses his arm. He learned, with stunning clarity, the effect of anger on his nature, and chose to lose the physical battle to save his soul from the evil awaiting him, if he had prevailed over his father.

an entirely reasonable way to view it from the practical side.<sup>{29}</sup> We have no better way to detect it than we do the silver sort, but they both exist.<sup>{30}</sup> According to SMD, in spite of the fact that Satan's power is real, he will apparently not ultimately prevail.

#### BLACK POWER DEACONS:

Since Satan's power is real, and Joseph stated that it is controlled by bounds, limits, and laws, we must ask the obvious question. Are there levels or degrees of this power, like the degrees of Masonry, or of the Silver? First degree, second degree, etc.? Deacon, priest, high priest, cardinal, bishop, etc.? What are the installation procedures like? Laying on of hands, burning of incense, sacrifice? What is the extent of the power, i.e. what is its domain? Can it influence creative processes, physical processes or just mental or thought processes?

#### BLACK POWER AND US:

One of the related issues that comes up here involves the doctrine that says that we will not be tested beyond our capacity to resist. SMD makes us feel good with this passage, and it is reassuring in a particular sense. However, there is the Full Dose Corollary to this doctrine which is NOT reassuring. We WILL be tested up to our limits at all times, whether or not we realize it, whether or not we want it. That is disturbing.

There is a peculiar limitation, however, to the power of evil. This is illustrated by the SMD teaching that prior to baptism, people less than eight mortal years of age, cannot be influenced by evil. There is no explanation regarding how it is that these young spirits are immune to evil, but that is what the doctrine states. Nor is there an explanation of what it is that happens to create the sensitivity to evil at that age.<sup>{31}</sup> Can we tell when this force is being applied to us? We don't know. The reason we don't know is that we believe, as noted already, that we voluntarily do so much bad, without any influence from the dark force, that we are not necessarily capable of sensing any outside influence when

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<sup>29</sup> And LDS are nothing if not practical.

<sup>30</sup> Satanic groups apparently try to contact the black power, and manipulate it to their ends. If they succeed in it, they probably succeed in damaging themselves by the process. In ways worse than any of us can imagine, if they truly are successful in those attempts. By this I refer to actual traffic with Satan et al as distinct from the nasty things that are done in the rituals, i.e. sacrificing animals, virginity, etc. The latter are repugnant and entail their own penalties, but holding Satan's hand must be akin to swearing fealty to and taking a blood oath with the Capo of Capos of the Mafia. You are then in for the duration and for your life - literally.

<sup>31</sup> I hasten to add that this does not mean that it is necessary for us to respond to it, and to allow it to affect us, because it isn't. It simply constitutes part of our environment that, from that age forward, we may or may not choose to acknowledge and respond to.

it is exerted on us. We wilfully choose to do evil, willingly deviate from the narrow path. So, in fact, there is less need for Satan, *et al*, to interfere in our lives that we may otherwise think. We probably give him more credit for bad deeds than he deserves.

Satan's role in the happenings of this world is difficult to understand. SMD attributes all evil to him, and perhaps in some generic sense he is, though the previous paragraph shows we don't fully agree with that concept. When one looks at all the evil and misfortune in the world, which things should be attribute directly to him? Everything bad? The problem with this concept is that, as just noted, we individually and willing do wrong, so should not credit him with those instances where our own free will chose evil things to do.

#### IDI, POL AND ADOLPH:

Take a few examples of extreme evil: Idi Amin in east Africa, Pol Pot of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and good ol' Adolph Hitler. These three men practiced genocide on a massive scale, each obliterating millions of people. Is that degree of evil attributable to Satan? If so, how did Satan accomplish that? Or take smaller scale instances of grossness, such a mass murders by individuals. Are these the direct result of Satan's tinkering in the minds of the killers? How about child abuse? Is that always caused by Satan's influence on individuals or on societies? Take your own life - you fail to say your prayers daily, or fail to pay a full tithe, or you get angry at your spouse or bishop. Are all of those instances of Satan's influence? Regrettably, we think not.

There is one way that we can attribute all bad to Satan, however, thereby allowing us to all have an accessory to our sins. If it is true that Satan and his company are empowered with a real authority to create evil on earth, perhaps he is responsible for all examples given. This would be so if he can set up a sort of network of evil forces and influences, which constantly impinge on our veiled spirits. Those influences could reinforce negative thoughts we have, thereby assisting or leading us more strongly in that direction than we would go without that sympathetic reinforcement. This is what we believe is the truth. The black priesthood exists throughout the cosmos, just as does the silver, and its influences are everywhere. Perhaps it is even comparable in a sense to the faceted diamond model described above for the white priesthood, there being laws and principles attached to the different facets. Satan is merely a personification, a local concentration, of the eternal evil priesthood, which fills the immensity of space.

#### MECHANICS OF EVIL:

Within the context of this mechanical model, we are unclear about the actual effect, if any, of the evil priesthood on our spirits. As you know well, we believe that there are specific positive changes that occur in our spirit matter as a result of either of two things: first, exercise of our agency, and second, the direct action of the silver priesthood on our spirit matter. So, we ask, is it possible that the powers of evil can actually alter our spirit matter in an analogous manner to that of the white priesthood?

It should be evident from what we have presented so far that we believe that the exercise of agency can induce negative effects in our spirit matter. In that sense, then, there is symmetry between good and evil in our lived. However, we don't know whether the black priesthood can act directly on our spirit matter like the white priesthood can. And we can't even guess.<sup>{32}</sup>

### SOUL BROTHERS:

Up to this point, we have offered arguments to suggest that evil pre-existed Satan's birth as our brother in the PE for this life. This brings us to the surprise: we claim that Satan himself actually pre-existed our pre-existence. We claim that he acted out his role as the counterpart of Christ<sup>{33}</sup>, in all worlds heretofore created by Him, and that he will continue to act that role in worlds yet to be created by Him in the 'future'.

This concept contradicts much of what was said above, but remember that what preceded was predicated on certain assumptions, which we believe are standard LDS assumptions.<sup>{34}</sup> If we change the assumptions, as claimed in the preceding paragraph, we derive a new concept of Satan. In this light, he may be the original bad buy after all, the one who is tied eternally in some manner to the bad priesthood, at least for this Father and Christ.

There are several arguments derived from the canon that support this concept that Satan and Christ have existed as soul brothers much longer than we down here have even been spirits, that Satan has been the eternal protagonist of Christ. There are at least three major ones to offer here:

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<sup>32</sup> But this is a depressing topic.

<sup>33</sup> We are speaking in relationship to our specific Father and Christ who created His set of worlds. We claim that this Satan acted out his part on all of them. We acknowledge that other gods who create their own set of worlds 'elsewhere' probably have their own satan-counterpart. In this sense, then, Satan is not satan for all possible worlds created by all possible gods.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to our firmly believing this is the scriptural evidence that states that Satan will be bound after the millenium and resurrection. If that is so, why would it only be so after our particular world had completed its evolution? If he lived as satan on other worlds, why wasn't he bound after one or all of them? The simplest suggestion is to interpret the binding as a reference to the fact that he will no longer be able to act on our spirits in the heavens. In that sense, he would be limited outside a boundary, within which we would reside. But he would still be free to act out his role on other new worlds, etc.

<sup>34</sup> We could be wrong, but our lifetime in the faith suggests that most LDS will perceive the PE and these things in the manner they have been presented here.

- 1) Christ created other worlds before He created this one;
- 2) Christ and Satan are both described as being our "elder" brother;
- 3) The phrase "in the beginning"<sup>{35}</sup> is applied to both Christ and Satan.

We will elaborate on these arguments now.<sup>{36}</sup>

#### CHRIST AND OTHER WORLDS:

The P of GP states that Christ created many other worlds, under the direction of the Father who says:

**"And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten."**

(Moses 1:33)

Assuming that the pattern for our world is universal, <sup>{37}</sup> we conclude that Christ the Creator was also Christ the Savior for these other worlds as well.<sup>{38}</sup> This means that He must have stood

<sup>35</sup> It is well to note that in ancient literatures, it was not unusual for the bards, scribes and poets to rely on formulas and epithets as they created their verses. This facilitated the process of (1) creating the stories in the first place, and (2) of remembering them afterward. For example, in THE ODYSSEY, formulas abound. Penelope is called "pensive Penelope" or "Penelope the wise." Odysseus is called "the great tactician." (These are from Fitzgerald's translation.) The examples could be multiplied hundred fold for Homer alone.

So. It may be that the phrases "from the beginning" or "in the beginning", like the term "elder", was a formulaic expression used to denote ancient, ancient times and beings, which meaning disappears when translated into everyday English, especially when the translator lacked sensitivity to the subtle nuances of the original formula that would only exist for one steeped in the related culture and life experience. Joseph simply gave an accurate and prosaic translation of the words themselves, missing the idiomatic meaning. This may not be so. But we think it is.

<sup>36</sup> Contrary to the SOP for this book, I'm now going to trot out a rash of scriptures in support of these concepts. I believe this argument is true, but others may accuse me of too much moon bathing. These arguments may, or may not, persuade you, but they come from the LDS canon. As Brother Brigham often said, figure it out for yourself. See if you can find a different explanation that takes the relevant scriptures into account.

<sup>37</sup> This assumption obviously is not documented in the canon. But to allow for different patterns on different worlds would be to undermine the Symmetry Condition in our metatheory. It is possible, but we will maintain the strong position, and deny it. We do this because maintaining this Condition, increases the explanatory power of our theory as we are elaborating it here. Symmetry is assumed to be characteristic of the POS and Priesthood everywhere they are manifested.

We acknowledge that there are those who believe that Christ's crucifixion/resurrection on this particular world was the only such ordeal He went through. We are troubled by that concept because it leaves the other worlds which are to benefit by that ordeal bereft of a real life example to track historically. However, we are also troubled by the concept that this Christ must be crucified again and again. We don't know what the truth is, and can't make up our mind which side we choose.

<sup>38</sup> There is another evidence to throw in that illustrates this principle of cyclicity. This involved cyclical Adams and Eves. The first passage that shows this comes from Moses 1:

"34. And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many."

"35. But only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I unto you."

There have been many other worlds created, all created by the same Christ. And the first man on each of those worlds has been called Adam. This represents, to us, a symmetrical cycle.

The second passage comes from Moses f:

"26. And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; for thus have I the Lord God, called the first of all women, which are many.:"

up in a PE for each world to offer a POS comparable to the one He offered the group of us who were destined for this particular world.

Since Christ's plan must always be opposed by the dark force's plan in a PE, there had to be a Satan present in each case to propose the latter. This causes us to believe that Satan is also cyclical, that he learned his role well elsewhere before he even came to our PE.

#### WHAT MEAN'S ELDER?

Christ is described as our elder brother. Most LDS probably think that the term refers to His place in the birth order of spirit born to this world, though most have probably heard the previous reference to Christ being the creator of other worlds. We claim that this term is an old formula that refers to His antecedents that precede our own PE and world.

The term is also applied to Satan. He is our elder brother as well. One wonder, then, why only they are so designated, in spite of the fact that there had to be many spirits who are our elders, in terms of simple birth order. Here, we claim the epithet is applied to only these two beings to indicate that they existed in the form they are in, long before our PE.

#### WHAT'S A BEGINNING?

The third argument is more complex. First, go to Abraham, 1:31 which says that Abraham had

**"...knowledge of the beginning of creation and also of the planets and the stars." (Emphasis added)**

The term "the beginning" is used to denote a time period, if we can call it that, which goes back to the creation of planets and stars which means the time, at least, before this particular world was created. It refers to the creation of the universe, which scientists estimate to be approximately 10 billion years old, give or take a few days.

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This passage is analogous to the preceding one referring to Adam: the first woman on a world is called Eve. Here we have another formula, "which are many", and it is applied to the first man, and to the first woman, on each of the creations of Christ.

Our conclusions are that first, there is considerably more symmetry between worlds and the patterns they are organized and run by than is explained in the scriptures. Second, this symmetry lends credence to the Christ and Satan concept suggested here. The problem, obviously, with the latter analogy is that if pushed to its logical extreme, we would then suggest that the Adam and Eve of this world have been Adam and Eve on the other worlds Christ created. I'm not ready for that idea because, by extension, it begins to complicate our own identity. The weak explanation, however, is to point out that the symmetry arises from the pattern, not necessarily the identity of the individuals, who play the roles. Sometimes they are the same, i.e. Satan and Christ, and sometimes they are not, i.e. Adam and Even. But the Lord uses the same name for the latter, even though the spirits are unique for each world.

(Are they really unique? If we look at this suggestion too long, then we start to get funny ideas as we remember peculiar things about Adam, eg. he's called the "ancient of Days". What does that mean? Sounds like another formula that means "from the beginning." And we recall that he was one of the creators of this world. Oh my.)

Second, in Moses 4:2, it says that Christ

**"...was my beloved and chosen from the beginning..."**  
(Emphasis added)

Here's that peculiar phrase again, applied to Christ, instead of to the beginning of creation. We believe the meaning is the same.

Third, the Father tells Moses in 1:33 that Christ "created worlds without number", referring, again in this context, to time periods prior to our own pre-existence, prior to the creation of this world. So far, then, the argument is that Christ was creating worlds without number long before this world was dreamed up.

Fourth, this concept is reinforced by Moses 2:1 where Christ says:

**"I am the beginning...In the beginning I created...."**  
(Emphasis added)

The conclusion we reach here is that the term "the beginning" in these scriptures from Moses and Abraham designates an ancient time period that predates our world's creation.

If that is true, then Moses 4:1 which says that Satan

**"...was from the beginning..."**  
(Emphasis added)

means that Satan existed in that same ancient time period. This means that he would have pre-existed our own pre-existence, and this concept is reinforced by Moses 5:24 where it says that Satan

**"...was(t) before the world..."<sup>{39}</sup>** These scriptures indicate, then, that Satan was a contemporary of Christ from way back.

This conception is further supported by a quotation familiar to many LDS. Satan said that what happened in the Garden was that which had happened on other worlds. This obviously means that he had knowledge of what had happened elsewhere. Here it is believed that the reason he had this knowledge of what was done on other worlds was because he was personally present on them, doing the same things there he did in this Eden. He had the job description well memorized by the time he got here.<sup>{40}</sup>

Another scripture that is relevant to this beginning business is the famous one from John 1:1:

<sup>39</sup> The topical guide cross-references these scriptures so this is no secret.

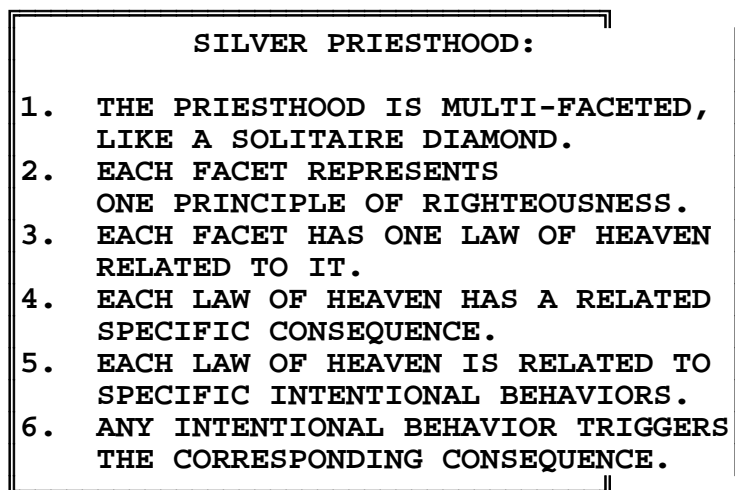
<sup>40</sup> But this raises a tantalizing question: if he remembered what was done on the other worlds, why did he persist in what he knew to be a futile effort? Or was the outcome on those worlds not somehow known to him? Does he have only a selective memory to carry forward?

**"In the beginning was the word..."<sup>{41}</sup>  
(Emphasis added)**

John obviously refers here to God, but the term refers to the same primordial period described above.<sup>{42}</sup>

#### **SILVER MODEL:**

To return to the concept of a multi-facet priesthood, we offer the following diagram as a graphic representation of our beliefs about the silver priesthood:



We used this example in Chapter 5 and have laid it out in tabular form. We perceive of the priesthood as being comparable in a

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<sup>41</sup> Another important reference comes from Budge in OSIRIS - THE EGYPTIAN RELIGION OF RESURRECTION:

"Osiris was the 'great word', and he gave orders to the Spirits and he was the 'word of what cometh into being and what is not.' In other words, Osiris the Word spake the words through which all things in heaven came into being from non-existence."

(Budge 1961:79)

Remarkable what a strong similarity there is here with John 1:1 and 'logos' or 'word'.

<sup>42</sup> This 'beginning' business pops up frequently in Egyptian papyri. The following quote, from the Papyri of Hunefer, Ani and Nekht, refers to Ra, who, in this quote, sounds remarkably like the LDS/Christian Father:

"Thou are the lord of Heaven, thou art the lord of earth; Thou are the creator of those who dwell in the heights and of those who dwell in the depths. Thou are the God One who didst come into being in the beginning of time. Thou didst create the earth, thou didst fashion man...and thou dost give life until all that therein is. Thou hast known together the mountains, thou hast made mankind and the beasts of the field to come into being, thou hast made the heavens and the earth."  
(Budge 1969:335)

This is a nice explanation of the role of Ra. And of Christ.

Note the phrase "who didst come into being in the beginning of time." (Emphasis added) That is precisely the language and meaning applied to Christ in the P of GP. So you see that to the Egyptians, as well, 'in the beginning' referred to a primordial time, just as it does for SMD. This same meaning and usage is found in the BABYLONIAN GENESIS. (Vide Heidel)

sense to a solitaire diamond, with many facets, with all of the consequences illustrated here.

We point out the salient point that there is no provision in this model for an individual to have the priesthood bestowed or conferred on him/her. It is an automatic consequence of the Metamorphosis Function. At the point our spirits were formed, our free agency was set up and programmed in such a way that it has the power across the three testing phases to interact with this priesthood.

We also point out the other important point that only INTENTIONAL acts will trigger these actions. We are not entirely sure that such is the case, but from one point of view it is essential. We say this because we don't see that a person who is accidentally good, while intending evil, should receive the same consequence as one who wishes to do good. It is likely, however, that the negative intentions would somehow cancel out the positive consequence, so perhaps there is no problem.

The Canon does not contain a complete listing of all of the good acts that trigger these good laws. There is really no need for such. Indeed, there is a contrary reason to NOT have such a listing. The reason is that being told what all of the good things are is to short-circuit our free agency. We are sent here to learn for ourselves the difference between good and bad, and what better way to internalize such learning than the learn the lessons through experimentation wherein we are benefitted or injured by our own choices. That allows each of us to formulate our own "theory" of good and bad that no one can take away from us because it is predicated on our own actions and the consequences thereof. It is also likely that the laws that are revealed to spirits in each testing phase differ in some respects. In the PE, the emphasis of our testing was different than in mortality, etc. so there would be strong reason to only reveal those laws that are particularly salient in each phase. However, we maintain that appropriate behaviors in ANY phase will trigger the law/principle/blessing, regardless of whether or not we even understood what we did. The only precondition is that the behavior be one intentionally done by the individual.

#### **BLACK MODEL:**

It comes as no surprise to you that we propose that the Black Priesthood is an exact mirror of the Silver. We claim this is so in all aspects. While this probably sits poorly with some readers who have not paid great attention to Satan and his power, we believe that some consideration of that matter, and his power, may persuade the reader that the following is at least a possible, if not plausible, description of Satan's power.

We present a diagram that contains the same six statements that we presented above for the Silver Priesthood, the sole difference being that these characteristics are the obverse, the

anti-version of the silver.

**BLACK PRIESTHOOD:**

1. IS MULTIFACETED LIKE A SOLITAIRE DIAMOND.
2. EACH FACET REPRESENTS ONE PRINCIPLE OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.
3. EACH FACET HAS ONE LAW OF HELL RELATED TO IT.
4. EACH LAW OF HEALL HAS A RELATED SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCE.
5. EACH LAW OF HEALL IS REALTED TO SPECIFIC INTENTIONAL BEHAVIORS.
6. ANY INTENTIONAL BEHAVIOR TRIGGERS THE CORRESPONDING CONSEQUENCE.

We will further claim that the statements just made about the Silver Priesthood are applicable to this priesthood as well. Individuals can manipulate it by wilful actions. Only wilful actions will trigger it, etc. etc.

CONCLUSION:

The major value for us of this perception of Satan and evil is that we don't have to struggle with the mechanism of how he became evil in our PE. He already was evil, and just came along to act out his role as the representative of badness, as he had been doing for a long time.<sup>{43}</sup> This would mean that the significant changes and decisions that occurred in our PE were the changes of heart experienced by the third of the hosts who signed on with him. However, this suggestion simply pushes back one step the question of how he became the representative of evil. But at least this explanation binds that question up with the question of the how

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<sup>43</sup> The really interesting question, then is:

In what sense are Christ and Satan brothers?

We've heard that doctrine forever, but in this light, it seems they could have existed as discrete personalities long before we were created as spirits. Part of the answer is that they were sired by the same Father we were. The next question, then, is: were they from the same mother? Or are we actually step-brothers and step-sisters? Which world did they start out on? Did they play out these same roles, including crucifixion (or some sort of sacrificial process) on each world?

Sounds like Satan remembered somehow that what he did in our Garden was the same as that done on other worlds. If there is that symmetry between Garden of Edens on other worlds, then our Symmetry Condition will entail a symmetry between the crucifixion/sacrifice and resurrection as well. There is no logic to allowing one part of the pattern to be played out by the protagonists and antagonist, with specific reference to prior worlds, and to then truncating the rest of the drama. What would be the basis for determining at what point to terminate the pattern? etc.

We acknowledge that many disagree, that they believe that the crucifixion/resurrection on our own world sufficed for ALL worlds created by this Savior. But we respectfully demure because of the Symmetry Condition as noted in the preceding paragraph.

Christ Himself was the creator and savior of other worlds.<sup>{44}</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>The unanswered questions that are never asked are these:

Does Christ continue 'today' 1) to create worlds for the Father, 2) to serve as the Savior/Redeemer for those worlds (regardless of how you perceive Him accomplishing that for prior worlds, 3) if not, why not, or 4) if so, why so?

The last two questions are really the fundamental ones. They really bring us to a deeper theological question -meaningless to our performance during the metamorphosis, but nonetheless compellingly relevant to those of us who become Celestials: when will Christ become a Father like the Father in Heaven? He is/was already a God and Creator of worlds, but what is the transformation that occurs to make Him become a Father of spirits? Nothing in the canon suggests that He has done that. Yet - though perhaps He now has, in which case no word is sent back to us because it is irrelevant. But what was the benchmark He had to meet to earn that opportunity?

The significance of the answer to this question to us is obvious: how is it that we can be promised to become gods and goddesses, and creators if we haven't gone through what Christ has gone through? Our theology promises creations unnumbered for those few who attain perfection, and we accept it here in principle. But if Christ was already a Creator before He created our world, wasn't He a God? And if He was, why wasn't He siring spirit children? And then: why will WE be able to create worlds and sire spirits when He didn't earn that privilege right away, being required to submit to so much other testing?

One possible answer, and a compelling one, is simply that the promises noted above are true, but the terms of the contract that we must fulfill remain unexplained in our canon. There is likely a great deal of learning and growth that must occur before [pre-mortals/mortals/post-mortals] can do those glorious things. Ordinances are involved, but equally importantly the individuals must be qualified in terms of knowledge and abilities. And perhaps they will be allowed to do some lab work first.

Perhaps one of the operative words in this footnote is the word 'submit'. Did the Christ somehow require such lengthy testing? Did He have to submit to that string of creations and tests? Or, did He volunteer to do that for his Father? If the affirmative is the truth, then we have a whole 'nother dimension to celestialization. Don't we? What do you think?