

"When I came into being in this land, Shu and Tefnut
 jubilated in the watery abyss in which they were. Then
 they brought with them my eyes. After I had joined
 together my members, I wept over them, and men came into
 being out of the tears which came out of my eyes."¹

-THE SHRINES OF TUTANKHAMEN
 (Piankoff 1962:24)

11. SPIRIT BIRTH ORDINANCES

¹It is of great interest to LDS that in addition to the Egyptians, the Babylonians also combined their cosmological stories with references to temples. Heidel notes:

"The tablet from which this cosmological passage is taken (Ed: referring to Anu creating the Heavens) was found at Babylon. It contains a ritual for the restoration of a temple. This ritual calls for the presentation of various kinds of offerings, the singing of a number of hymns, and the recitation of the following creation story, in which Ea figures as the creator of various minor patron deities, the kind, and mankind in general. Here again we have a creation story employed as a magic formula, in this instance for the purpose of keeping away the evil influence of the demons during and after the restoration of the temple, by proclaiming the might and power of the gods.
 (Heidel 1942:53)

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INTRODUCTION:

As already noted, we believe that there are birth ordinances² which created-or whatever word describes the process of forming, shaping or organizing out of some raw material, i.e. intelligence-our spirits, just as there is a set of ordinances associated with mortal birth.³ This is pure conjecture because there are no scriptures, or teachings -at least that we are familiar with yet-of Joseph Smith, or any other general authorities⁴, that shed some light on this topic. The sort of issues raised by this assertion -that there are spirit birth ordinances (hereafter abbreviated SBO)- include questions such as:

(a) are there creation ordinances that beget the stuff termed

²We use the term 'ordinances' to refer to whatever the process was/is/will be that formed or organize(s) (d) or shape(s) (d) spirits from intelligence. The reason for such usage is self-evident: creation is a priesthood-controlled process. We define any acts performed under the guise of the priesthood, through the medium of the priesthood, as being ordinances.

³I hasten to add that there is considerable disagreement with this concept that spirits consist of the stuff termed 'intelligence', regardless of whether one believes they have existed eternally, or believes they are somehow born out of it at a point in 'time', as believed here. Rudy Rucker (1984: 57) deals the present hypothesis a massive blow:

"To a sophisticated thinker, there is something just a little too crude and materialistic about having souls and angels and God be literal chunks of hypermatter in four-dimensional space. Why precisely four? If any kind of higher-space view of higher reality is reasonable, I would think it to be the notion that our souls are patterns in infinite-dimensional Hilbert space. (ed: note his next sentence well:) A second objection to the idea of spirits and angels swarming about our space is the feeling that, at higher levels, the whole concept of separately acting individuals might well fall away."

Not enough sophistication here! But he's a good guy, and note the fascinating thing that he nonetheless buys into the possibility of spirits being something extra-mortal. Wow! He just uses a more 'sophisticated' and mathematically defined description of "infinite-dimensional Hilbert space", which entities we believe are, in a sense, simply notational variants on the intelligence concept here. But Hilbert space is no more real than is intelligence. However, it may be that the two are related?

His last sentence above is startling. Unfortunately, he doesn't elaborate this concept in his text, so we know nothing more. But in a special sense it actually describes what the nature of the Celestial kingdom -certainly a 'higher level' in this model- is going to be like. Individuals who succeed in attaining that kingdom, will be so obedient to all of the laws of heaven that they will behave in absolutely consistent ways. Everyone will do the same sorts of things, and in this narrow sense, then, they will NOT be 'separately acting individuals.' Note the NT references by Christ to the fact that people who knew Him, also knew the Father, because they behaved the same way. (Remember here we are assuming that the two are separate entities.)

Actually, his whole book is startling, and anyone who has as little math competence as I do, who wishes to grasp some of this time-space, cosmology business, can hardly do better than to dig into both of his books noted in the bibliography.

⁴That is the name applied by LDS to paid clergy residing in SLC, UT, running the world-wide show. Great respect accrues to these individuals, which on one hand is merited, but on another, not. The latter carping, ungenerous comment derives from the fact that their exemplary lives are actually less impressive, less difficult to sustain, than typically perceived to be by mainstreamers. And this is because that type of life style is actually forced on them by their employment/assignment/calling. It is a role that goes with the status, hence becomes less a product of volition than of communal compulsion. Such exemplary lives would be considerably more difficult to sustain over years by moms and dads, financially strapped, beset with all the irritations and distractions of raising 5 exuberant, refractory kids, interacting with the ways of the world everyday at work or school, hearing dirty jokes, cussing, etc.

This observation is not my own. Years ago I actually heard a general authority, whose name I have vividly forgotten, make it, and its truth is apparent. He said it differently, but the meaning is the same. He said, "It's harder for you people to live the type of focussed lives we live because you live in families in the world." And I've wondered occasionally how these GA's feel about the worship they receive from the general members of the faith. It begins to border on the kneel-and-kiss-the-ring behavior exhibited by Catholics in Boston back in the 1950's when Cardinal Spellman went out in parades, etc. Not a whole lot of difference. And not healthy for the church because such unwarranted adoration may distract them from adoration of the ones who SHOULD be adored. Can't serve Mammon and God. What's the difference if the Mammon who is worshipped is a GA? I've seen it done, and it does distract from worshipping Him.

intelligence?⁵

- (b) are these ordinances the absolute "first step" in the creation of spirits?
- (c) what are the steps of the ordinances that create the spirit?⁶?
- (d) do they actually "create" the spirit out of raw materials?
- (e) are the ordinances comparable in any respect to the mortal gestational process for creating mortal bodies?

We suggest that there is a similarity between spirit birth and mortal birth because

- (a) the priesthood is also operational during mortal body birth, and
- (b) the mortal body is created out of raw materials⁷.

However, there are many significant differences between the two processes. The mortal body is an exceedingly fragile, short-lived thing with limited capacities when compared to the eternal, indestructible spirit body with all of its magical powers. The spirit obeys a sort of Newtonian Law; however, instead of momentum continuing, it is the substance that continues.

COLOR SCALE:

⁵This issue is addressed above in chapter 8. BLACK MATTER, INTELLIGENCE AND COSMIC BULLDOZERS. But this question remains unanswered. The best we can guess or conjecture is that intelligence has the same history and source as the eternal priesthood. That's chicken, isn't it? It just pushes the question back one so we really don't have any real concept of what's going on. Sort of like a physician describing an ailment as 'idiopathic' something or other. Really sounds impressive. Until you realize it means s/he doesn't know what caused it either. So the treatment is palliative and symptomatic, and only accidentally definitive.

⁶Another parallel from Budge who quotes from the NES-AMSU papyrus follows:

"Nothing existed at all at that time, and it was I who made whatever was made. I was alone, and there was no other being who worked with me in that place. I made all the forms under which I appeared by means (or, out of) the god-soul which I raised up out of Nu, out of a state of inertness. (1969:302)

In reference to the curious term 'god-soul', Budge goes on to state that:

"this statement need not surprise us, for we know that they endowed every object in nature with a soul." (p. 302)

Their belief, then, is comparable to ours, with the difference that we use the term 'intelligence' to refer to that soul. Below you will encounter references from other religions that state the same thing about beliefs in the source of souls.

⁷This is a risky assumption, however. It appears we are taking the "in the Father's image" business a step -many steps- beyond what may really be warranted. In fact, we are extending it backward. There is no evidence at all to justify it. But the problem is, that if we don't make this assumption, then we may have to conjure up some bizarre options like the axlotl tanks of Frank Herbert, a la the DUNE series, etc. We won't go any farther into this business than to make the assumption we are making, recognizing it is unsupported, and leave it at that. The alternatives are too weird to contemplate.

Do the SBOs just form the spirit body out of intelligence, a body that will have inherent characteristics, derived from the intelligence? Or do they actually confer some characteristics on the spirit? Or both? We believe that a raw material is somehow consumed in a creation process that yields a spirit body. But it isn't clear whether that raw material has some sort of inherent, yet unexpressed characteristics that are brought out by the ordinances, or whether the ordinances somehow imbue the material with characteristics.

It would be explanatory of some of the inequalities of abilities possessed by individuals to attribute at least some of them to the quality and nature of the raw material from which they were created. That way, we wouldn't have the priesthood or a Creator somehow arbitrarily conferring more gifts or "better" gifts or abilities on some spirits than others⁸. The Scotoma Condition requires that the priesthood apply uniformly, according to previously defined conditions, without any fudging or bending or arbitrariness. That way, when the conditions for the application of one of the laws of heaven are satisfied, the law applies and transforms the subject substance in the predefined matter. This yields equality of opportunity, not of ability, of spirits in the face of the priesthood, something we believe is the Equal Opportunity Condition defined above.

But this doesn't explain why it is that some spirits DO have greater gifts and abilities than others do, which is one of the reasons to postulate innate differences in the raw material out of which spirits are created. As an analogy to illustrate what is intended by reference to intrinsic qualities of intelligence let's go to the world of gem stones.

DIAMONDS AND EMERALDS:

Pieces of the same mineral, diamond or emeralds, for example, have inherently different brightness, different colors, and different characteristics of various kinds. Diamonds are all the same category of stuff, but they vary greatly along different

⁸I'm not sure why it is that I want a blind allocation of attributes and qualities when spirits are born up there in the great beyond. I suppose it's because I dislike the thought of a Lord saying, "Well, the next one I'm going to make a moron," or some such determination. I know. He could. (At least I believe He could.) But will He, is the question.

But perhaps, again, I am allowing the methods of mortality influence my perception of pre-existent processes. I somehow like the more or less random genetic method we live with here which doesn't have anyone (so far at least) making determinations about mutants, etc. The latest national news this week regarding the first cloning of human embryos (which were deficient in the first place and subsequently sacrificed) gives me the willies. We are clearly in a brave new world where the lines between ethical and unethical genetic engineering are becoming acutely in need of definition because they are blurred by economic pressures, human suffering and lack of understanding. We are either contemplating or doing some things that perhaps ought not be done. (In fairness, we admit that part of the motivation for some of this engineering work is simply the innate drive of curious humans to try to do new things.) So the predictions made generations ago by Aldous Huxley in BRAVE NEW WORLD and George Orwell in 1984, are becoming entirely too possible. The major difference is that totalitarianism has, for the present at least, lost the last round soundly. But the genetic engineering, behavioral modification stuff is becoming reality.

Some readers are perhaps less familiar with an equally compelling novel dealing in even more graphic detail with the consequences of cross-species breeding and genetic experimentation. Frank Herbert's THE JESUS INCIDENT has that issue as one of the major philosophical threads (threats?) on which the entire, fascinating plot is hung.

scales. Take the color scale. The finest grade is blue-white and the most inferior grade is black, there being about a wide range of grades, divided generally into gem and industrial classes. Some are more porous than others, hence have different cleavage patterns, and therefore different industrial applications. But all grades are still diamond, in spite of these inherent differences. We use this as an analogy for the substance "intelligence". Some pieces or lumps will be 'blue-white', others will be 'yellow', others will be 'black', and everything in between. We propose that intelligence has a whole set of inherent characteristics, not just one like 'color'⁹.

CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE:

As we ponder what our PE experience was like, the realization that we were some how "born" implies various things that are not alluded to in SMD.¹⁰ We ask another question that arises from the belief that we were born somehow: were our spirits fully developed, competent adult spirits, sort of like button quail young that hatch fully-feathered and running? Or were we born like mortal infants, helpless, incompetent and dependent?

The concept of the quail kid probably is more in keeping with the condensed SMD concept of the PE. There is little in SMD about the PE that allows for any testing, which implies development, or allows for the development of spirits themselves.¹¹ The Abraham Convocation where "chosen" spirits were called up and recognized, probably entails the testing of spirits, but we'd bet that few LDS really perceive it that way. For that reason, the quail kid concept is probably nearer to the common conception of what our PE life was like.

However, we think that the born-as-an-adult version is less likely to be correct. We believe there was testing in the PE, and what better way to test a kid than to run him through a developmental sequence like we are put through here on this ol' mud ball? Most marvelous method to torture and test us to tease out technical details about our preferences when we are in such open, i.e. most undeveloped, states of mind/spirit. Outrageous idea. If this is the case, then we have to speculate about "age" sequences and patterns. And about the type of family or home environment we

⁹ Does all intelligence own or manifest all possible characteristics that intelligence as an overall mass possesses? If mortal substances are fair analogies, then we conclude the answer to the question is no. We say this because some characteristics are contradictory: white diamond, because of its molecular configuration that gives it its fire, cannot have the same random cleavage pattern characteristic of diamonds which are black in color due to inclusions of non-carbonaceous minerals in the latter that are absent in the former.

¹⁰ This absence could be construed as evidence that there was no birthing there, that spirits have existed eternally. We doubt that, however, as is evident. Isn't it?

¹¹ Nor, in fact, is there any evidence that there was any type of development of spirits themselves, from childhood to adulthood. However. The final section of the D&C refers to "first lessons" being given in the PE. Isn't that an indirect evidence of immaturity being remediated, even in a formal setting?

lived in. So we will claim here that our spirits went through an infant, childhood, adolescent and adulthood sequence in the PE, just as we do in mortality. If we all come from the same Dad, then we probably shared some common upbringings, but they probably took place in kibbutz-ish type settings where there were creche-surrogate parents to superintend us as we matured. Who knows, perhaps He Himself actually oversaw it all up to a particular point.¹²

The fly in the ointment for this scenario that He superintended our upbringing, in this model at least, is that testing can only occur in the absence of knowledge. So we could not have been in touch with the Lord during some, or perhaps most, of the PE. We believe we lived by faith there, at least after we became adults, so if we lived with Him as kids, then there had to be a separation ritual to move us along into the next phase of the PE. This obviously entails subdivisions, then, of what SMD represents as a homogeneous "time" for us all. Well, if we allow a childhood with Him, after which we were somehow separated, but still in the PE, we can have our cake and eat it too. We did live with Him at first, but then we were separated, which probably means being veiled¹³ in some way so that testing could be commenced on us.

This concept of a sub-divided PE is unattested in the Christian Canon¹⁴. However, it is the only way to reconcile the concept that we lived with God with the concept that we exercised faith and were tested during that phase of our existence.

¹²Recall that Alma (13:3) talked about the exercise of "faith" and the existence of "good works" in the PE. If there was, in fact, faith as we comprehend it during mortality -which seems like a fair assumption since that is the translation- then there had to have been some uncertainty for us while we lived there. True knowledge of how things really were/are/will be. And if there wasn't pure knowledge -whatever that really is- then we have to imagine that we did not live with the Father at some point after we were created by Him. Or that if we did, we somehow were altered so that we didn't recognize Him, nor understand what He was about, etc. The way the story starts to sound is that we must have been born into His home, where we would have lived for our infancy/childhood/adolescence, after which we were then 'exiled' in some fashion that put us into a sort of blinded state where faith could be operational. Thinking this way raises a host of new questions and concepts which will be explored as they arise during this voyage of discovery.

¹³This is a peculiar concept to use to refer to the PE. To postulate a type of veiling, the sort of process applied to our spirits as we enter mortality, is to propose what SMDers will consider to be a bald-faced heresy. Veiling in the PE, indeed!!

But there is an interesting correlation between the concept of a PE veiling and a paired set of ordinance during mortality, namely [baptism+confirmation]. Obviously the two differ markedly in some respects, but the similarity we suggest relates to the developmental sequences we go through. The concept we have presented of a complete progression of spirit stages in the PE, from infancy through adulthood, is analogous to the same series we undergo in mortality. The point: at age 8 in mortality, we apparently have reached a developmental milestone where we are thereafter altered in some manner in spirit, for which reason [baptism+confirmation] is provided to help us along. (See chapter 22. BAPTISM for more details on this matter.) By analogy, then, we will claim that the veiling in the PE was/is/will be applied to our spirits when they have also reached some sort of developmental milestone there, such that their spirit condition warrants, merits -or whatever term is appropriate- the veiling. Neat analogy.

By extension, then, we will predict -one of the funny things that theoreticians do- that during the post-mortal testing we undergo, there was/is/will be a developmental milestone with an attendant ordinance of some type that can be applied thereafter. This obviously derives from a broader prediction that we will undergo a complete developmental sequence there as well.

¹⁴Indeed, in our limited experience with cosmologies in general, we know of none other that postulates a developmental sequence of spirits prior to earth life. True, there are those that theorize two conditions: a condition of non-being, unformedness, followed by a formation or molding into 'spirit' form. But there is no developmental process after the formation into spirit occurred. The spirit is either immediately implanted into a mortal vehicle, or waits a while for such implantation. But it doesn't go through a testing phase there.

FATHER'S BLESSING:

Another question about the SBO: is there a "Father's Blessing" given by the creator during this creation-birth process? It is suggested below in 17. MORTAL BIRTH ORDINANCES that a Father's Blessing is given to each spirit in the series of ordinances applied to spirits in preparation for coming to earth. But as we look backward to the beginning of the PE, in the context of a developmental process, one realizes that such a blessing may have actually been bestowed in preparation for the PE itself. It could be that this Blessing is actually bestowed on the newly formed spirit.

From one point of view, that actually makes more sense than to do it right before mortal birth because it would be done at the time the spirit was created and would be a blessing that would then be in effect throughout the three stages of spirit existence. If this were the case, then we would suggest that there still may be a Father's Blessings given prior to mortal birth, but in this case, such blessings would be tailored specifically to the needs of each spirit during mortality, based on what occurred in the PE, rather than being focussed on the eternal perspective. Such blessings would be needed because of the pain and difficulty of each phase, during which we would appreciate the support and comfort.¹⁵

In fact, as just suggested, some of the experiences of the PE are probably archetypes of experiences we are going through here now. Threes are important numbers to the Lord and it appears that He expects us to be fully tested three times. The PE was one test, mortality is the second, and post-mortality (prior to the resurrection) is the third test¹⁶.

This makes the PE a much richer place than is suggested by the skimpy scriptures about it in SMD. Obviously, the business of choosing sides was a major decision that wasn't taken lightly by any of us, but that decision was only one of the many important ones we made there. We each had compiled a complete dossier on ourselves through the decisions we had been making during our

¹⁵For more on this business from the perspective of the mortal birth ordinances which introduce us into mortality, see the corresponding section in 17. MORTAL BIRTH ORDINANCES. Note also that there could be a blessing given after mortality to each spirit at the point of its transition between testing phases, to prepare it for the tests of post-mortality.

¹⁶I suspect that SMD will discount numerology as stuff and nonsense. Mayhap it be so. But: the Lord does in fact use threes repeatedly, as noted in Amos, thereby giving special value to it. Whether this is simply because "more than two" constitutes solid testimony, or whether three is a 'magic' number, we don't know. But it's important.

If you aren't familiar with the extraordinary efforts of scholars and various other types of individuals to give -or extrapolate- meaning from numbers and measurements, you might be interested into any one of the following, all three of which pertain just to the ancient Egyptians, their religion and pyramids. Comparable texts are available for other cultures. Consult: Budge's AMULETS AND SUPERSTITIONS, Schwaller de Lubicz' THE TEMPLE IN MAN - The Secrets of Ancient Egypt, or Smyth, THE GREAT PYRAMID - Its Secrets and Mysteries Revealed. We are skeptical of most of it, but include these references for anyone curious about this arcane world.

But we can't deny that the Lord Himself uses the number three for His own purposes. The Seven Seals, and angels, etc. also appear in Revelations, but those references may more be byproducts of the influence of Jewish Cabalism on John, than of Christ's belief system.

testing¹⁷. A possible explanation for why we hear about that particular decision several time in the scriptures is (a) to reassure us that this is the right place to be, and (b) to make us responsible for it because WE chose it -so no complaining, please.

SPIRIT GESTATION:

Speaking of spirit birth leads us into some rather specific questions, particularly when we take mortal gestation as a model to work from.¹⁸ Since it is suggested that male and female are needed for this procreation, we will use the mortal model as a means to explore the consequences of the doctrine that spirits are 'born'. When we think of the conception/gestation/birthing process of mortal bodies, we note first that a pair of haploid gametes must be joined, one being donated by a member of each gender. Then the mortal maternal body houses the diploid cell for the duration of its developmental phase, providing it nutrition/excretion facilities. Finally, when development is completed, a set of hormonal processes kick into gear and mom delivers the product of that gestational process, which is normally a properly developed member of our species.

So, one asks, do heavenly parents donate the equivalent of haploid gametes to produce a spirit?¹⁹ If this were the case, there would be one more partial explanation for the differences between spirits: each would simply be genotypical expression of the inherited phenotypes, with there being a wide range of variability possible. If this type of individual variation in 'genetic' material is combined with the differences in the inherent characteristics of the intelligence material itself, we have at least two dimensions along which spirit differences develop.²⁰ But it isn't clear how the variations in the intelligence would

¹⁷ And doesn't it feel strange to remember that some of our brothers and sisters are still 'up' there in that testing condition, experiencing whatever the society is there, anticipating their voyage down here?

¹⁸ Obviously, there is no evidence to suggest that this is the correct model to use when considering the creation of spirits. SMD implies variously that only [male+female] pairs in the top third of the Celestial kingdom will be allowed to procreate after the resurrection, thereby engendering massive progeny to people the creations of the holy pairs.

The argument we raise here to support the claim that our spirits were born to two parents in the PE is to draw on this doctrine. If eternally married couples succeed in reaching the Celestial Kingdom and procreate new spirits, then we claim that this is the model that we were created through. It would be inconsistent to allow our own creation to have been different. So this supports the concept of there being some sort of 'genetic' combination occurring. Why else would two individuals be needed for the creation of new spirits?

¹⁹ Of course, we begin to wonder about the nature of such a haploid cell. And about how the library of "genetic" information is encoded. In mortality, sequences of the simple amino acids are all that are required to encode the monumental set of genetic information we all carry. DNA and RNA handle the entire process. Is there an analogue of amino acids and DNA in the spirit world such that each individual god/ess transmits part of its library to the new individual?

If there are analogues, then we start to suspect something about specialized tissues, which suggests organs, etc. We'll stop there for the nonce.

²⁰ If the two parents do contribute, one might question what technique is used. Mark Twain's ribald suggestions notwithstanding in LETTERS FROM THE EARTH, this process may be unknown to us. We'll discretely draw the curtain and turn out the lights for now.

translate, during the 'gestational' process, into attributes, gifts or traits of spirits.²¹

SPIRIT CONCEPTION:

The question of whether or not each parent contributes a gamete to the formation of a spirit child has fascinating implications for spirit bodies themselves. If the answer to the question is affirmative, then it is obvious that immortal bodies have a method to produce such "cells". And if those bodies have that capacity, then they have to be constructed in such a way that some part of the body performs that function. Specialized parts of mortal bodies are called organs, i.e. liver, kidney, etc. So there would be the analogue of an organ in a spirit, although the organ of an immortal body may be quite different than we understand organs to be. And if there is one sort of organ, then there are probably other sorts of organs as well. It is also possible for the immortal body to somehow contribute a gamete without there being gamete-producing organs, but there is no suggestion about how this would be done. Of course, it could be that a fragment of some sort of the body could be donated, but that doesn't fit with our mortal model -not that it must. If the immortal body were truly homogeneous, this latter idea might be feasible (though the technique can't be guessed at), but then the implications for the immortal body of this idea are rather startling to say the least.

This mechanical approach to the spirit birth\creation process does raise this fundamental question about the molecular structure of our parents. As noted above, we mortals are comprised of a mass of cells, each of which has a nucleus, within which is a complete library of genetic information that describes everything about our body. This information is contained in complex double-helices of specifically sequenced amino acids that we call DNA -deoxyribonucleic acid.²² So, one asks, are spirit bodies comprised of cells? And if there are cells, do they contain information of this type about the entire body or are they somehow unique? Or is the body simply a sort of matter that exists in a uniform molecular form without variations? If the latter is true, then one has really no guess about how "genetic" information would be transmitted from each parent to the offspring. But if there are analogues of cells, which contain genetic information, we may have spirit gametes. The implications of the undifferentiated cell theory for spirit bodies

²¹And it isn't even vaguely clear what the gestation is like, or how intelligence would be consumed in the process. Does mom 'ingest' it? Christ ate fish and honey comb after his resurrection. Hmmm.

²²For a fascinating and readable account of the discovery of the three-dimensional characteristics of DNA, read Watson's THE DOUBLE HELIX. Illuminates what the "scientific method" is REALLY like, which is a far cry from the images we get in college of systematic, dull methods of scientific research. It tickles me how a pair of young turks with hardly any resources managed to outfox the great Linus Pauling who simultaneously was expending great energy and resources on the same problem, seeking the glory that go to the discover of the three dimensional structure of DNA. He finally started pedaling Vitamin C as a cure-all. Makes a sort of twisted sort of sense.(?)

are disturbing: we would then no longer need to have ANY particular structure to the body. It could simply be a shapeless mass of "matter", and then the mass could perhaps assume whatever form it needed to under particular circumstances.

To look at the gestation period, if we use the mortal model, we assume that the eternal mom will somehow carry the developing "fetus" internally until delivery is appropriate. This somehow doesn't seem very likely to me, but it is the consequence of assuming that mortal models are analogues of spirit ones²³. If this is how spirits are formed, then, we ask, how does the raw intelligence get involved in the spirit body formation? Does mom somehow "ingest" it? How long is the gestation period? Is there a "physical" labor process? What triggers labor - a set of hormones? etc. The questions merely raise more questions.

CONCLUSION:

Whatever the process of spirit birth is like, it is the method whereby our spirits were formed. It shaped us to this shape, and set us on a voyage of development, i.e. our metamorphosis, that will eventually culminate at the resurrection. We are still embryos, because we are still developing. But we have the good fortune of having survived the first instar successfully, so should feel some satisfaction from that knowledge²⁴.

One last comment before wandering off: if intelligence is of various types -containing different degrees of goodness, or differing degrees of certain qualities, etc.- how is the decision made as to which type we are made of? Or are we made of various amounts of various types of intelligence? Is there some sort of judgment -though one can hardly imagine any candidate for judgment at this point in our voyage- that affects our spirit constitution, etc. We find it hard to believe that if there are different types of intelligence that the process that selects one type over another one for each spirit formation is a totally random one because that isn't how the Lord. But, sorry, no guesses about this one.

But in any event, the process of spirit creation and birth was under priesthood control. There is a set of ordinances that are applied to the individuals at the appropriate intervals to ensure that the processes are (what happened here?)

²³This is one of those things that result from the simple-minded idea that two eternal parents create spirit children along the lines of the mortal method, which seems to be dimly implied by SMD, or at least believed by mainstream LDS today. Somehow this seems faintly ridiculous, though we can't suggest really why, nor can we suggest an alternate method.

We also want to note here that the process of drawing parallels between mortal entities and spiritual ones is one that most religions utilize. In a separate note on the next page, we have laid out a comparison between two 'religions' to illustrate several points.

²⁴I don't know what to compare the accomplishment to, but for me, it would be sort of like winning the Boston Marathon without having ever trained, and with some sort of orthopedic infirmities, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, poor weather, internal stress for personal crises, etc. Essentially, the challenge was basically a set of impossible circumstances that were miraculously -the right word- overcome by each of us.

Divine condescension is the only reason that our imperfect performance there, a complete analogue of our imperfect performance here, earned us the right to come into the second phase.

CHAPTER ENDNOTE: QABBALISM AND KUNDALINI YOGA

When one is first exposed to other religions, especially if this occurs when a person is young and has been heavily indoctrinated into a particular faith, his first reactions are probably fearful ones. He is probably judgemental of 'that' religion, and discounts it, really out of fear. Judgements we make arise from problems inside of us. Judgement doesn't seem, usually at least, to be an accurate statement about anything, rather is a window on one's own soul and its problems. In any event, fear is our initial response to other faiths. We perceive them as being different.

However, as one looks at more faiths, and looks deeper into them than a superficial naming, it becomes apparent that there are a surprising number of parallels between faiths. The most obvious one is the simple fact that faiths all have creation stories, and that the central actor(s) in these stories are divine beings. Why should that be so? Pure coincidence? We think not. Right living, good choices are also common to religious systems. Why should that be so? There are satanic groups whose emphasis isn't on good works, so it is definitely possible to have religions whose focus is not good. So why are the vast majority of faiths predicated on good? Fear is probably the answer. Fear that the malignant powers that most faiths believe in will mistreat us if we mistreat them, or mistreat other people. So out of a fear of punishment, or a desire for rewards, i.e. bounteous crops, rain, etc., religions persuade people to do good.

However, there are considerably more complicated comparisons between some religions, parallels that cannot be explained in this simple-minded way. The example we are driving at is Qabbalism and Kundalini Yoga. Qabbalism is a Jewish belief system several millenia old, that espouses doctrines based on a set of sefirah, which are, in the simplest sense, a set of values. These are drawn up into a tree which is used to illustrate many things. Numerology is central to this system, as is the attribution of arcane meanings and values to the hebrew letters that also appear in the tree. The point of this system is to explain why things are as they are in this world, how we should behave in relationship to each other, what sort of religious system should be practiced, what sort of relationship should exist between man and wife, etc.

Kundalini Yoga, a frightening form of Tantric yoga practiced in Tibet and North India, is founded on the belief in the existence of spiritual centers in human beings that can be activated through practices of various kinds. These centers, which are six in number, are termed 'chakras' and they 'exist' along the spinal cord.

These two faiths, if that is a correct designation to use, share remarkable similarities that we wonder about: whence cometh such deeply important, complex similarities?

SEFIROT AND CHAKRAS:

The first one we will note is the comparison between the sefirot and chakras. The sefirot (singular 'sefirah') are given 'anthropomorphic representations'²⁵ which are displayed on the following page in the left column. The chakras are also given physical approximations which are described on the following page in the right column. You will note for yourself how many parallels there are between the two. Is that surprising? Perhaps not if one begins to look for parallels between religions concepts and our anatomy and physiology. The question is, then, what lead these two faiths to do that?

The second comparison to note is the dominant role of sex in both schemes. The surprise is the amount of sexual detail provided in the Qabbala. However, rest assured that there is equally great amounts of sex permeating the chakras. The table of chakras simply summarizes the centers, but says nothing about the activities or sex roles involved in the liturgy.

The third comparison is the role of the mind, head or skull. Both grant pre-eminence to this thing, which isn't really surprising since it seems to all of us to be the thing that runs the show.

A fourth comparison between the two that isn't evident from the tables is the relationship of the sexes. The Qabala²⁶ places her at the bottom. Malkhut is the Sacred Daughter, the wife, the sister, etc. And she is sort of off the tree if you ever see it drawn out. So she seems to be given secondary status. In Tantrism, the female seems also to be given secondary status. She sits in a three and a half coiled pile in the perineum. However, both religions afford a remarkably powerful role to their females. To the Cabalists, a man is only complete when he is in congress

²⁵These are from Kaplan 1979. Similar representations are available in virtually any text on cabalistic practices, i.e. Waite's THE KABBALAH.

²⁶For any red-pencil English teacher who staggers this far into this mess, please rest assured that we have not gone off our nut. The variety of spellings of this name is a) the richest we know of any word in any language, and b) acceptable. It's like we gave a spelling bee for a gaggle of fourth graders, and offered this word as the first one, after which we kept the rich variety of spellings. Even if these variations don't show up in your OED or any other dictionary, be assured that they are found in the rich literature on this topic. (And remember that a dictionary isn't a law-giver anyway. It's merely a historical snap shot of the state of the language at a particular point in time. We merely afford it authority out of desperation for someone to be in charge of spelling!)

QABBALAH

NAME OF SEFIRAH	BODY PART
1. Chakhmah	skull, mind
2. Binah	right brain
3. Chesed	left brain, heart
4. Gevurah	right hand
5. Tiferet	body, torso
6. Netzach	right foot, right kidney, right testicle
7. Hod	left foot, left kidney, left testicle
8. Yesod	sexual organ
9. Malkhut	mouth (of organ), mate

TANTRISM

NAME OF CHAKRA	LOCATION ALONG SPINE
1. Sahasrara	Lotus of a Thousand Petals
2. Ajna	Pineal eye (Behind eyes)
3. Vishuddha	Throat
4. Anahata	Heart
5. Manipura	Naval
6. Svadhishtana	Sex organs
7. Maladhara	Perineum

ANTHROPOMORPHIC REPRESENTATIONS OF SEFIROT

with a woman¹, not just in a state of marriage. And a woman is the source of inspiration that is called down, or can descend, on the male who honors his wife. To the yoga, Mother Kali, simultaneously transcendentally beautiful and horrible, resides in the male's body in the perineum. As he starts his journey to enlightenment, she is coaxed to rise upward, piercing each chakra in order. If he succeeds, he does so only because he is successful at persuading her to rise, she retaining the power to sit still. His attainment of the Lotus of a Thousand Petals, the state of temporary enlightenment, is only possible if She is present. Then, to literally save his life, he must coax her to recede downward, closing each chakra in order. In both religions, the female plays equal roles with the male.

It is interesting to note that the Jewish faith gives the female power the same description as Tantrics:

**Who is she who looks forth at the dawn, fair as the moon,
clear as the sun, terrible like an army with banners?"
Song of Songs 6:10**

To the ancient Jews, the Song of Songs is more than just another poem. Kaplan says:

"The Song of Songs is thus said to be the Holy of Holies. The 'Holies' are the six male Sefirot of Zer Anpin, while the 'Holy of Holies' is the 'Holy'² that pertains to these 'Holies', namely Malkhut-Kingship. (1979:180)

But note his next comment, that emphasizes the similarities between the two faiths:

"Similarly, when a person enters into a mystical state, he is said to enter the realm of the 'Holies', that is, of the Sefirot. But the one Sefirah through which one must first pass is Malkhut-Kingship, and it is there for the 'Holy of Holies'". (1979:180)

The status of Kingship being given to the female, not the male, is indicative of the major role of the female.

Another comparison involves the spinal cord. The chakras are actually described as located on the spinal cord. The spine is given the name Mount Meru, and Kali must ascend Mt. Meru on her voyage. The surprise to us is that Qabalists also attribute importance to the spinal cord. Kaplan said, "...the lulav is the spinal cord." (1979:180) In the Feast of Tabernacles³, non-edible vegetable matter plays a central role. At one point in the celebration, people grasp two bundles of branches: in the right hand is a combination of lulav (palm), myrtle and willow, while the left holds etrog (citron) which is the female portion. At one point, the two are placed together to symbolize the joining of male and female. The lulav is the part we are interested here. It is

used as an emblem or symbol of the spine and ribs. Both religions utilize that symbol in their belief systems.

Another comparison that will surprise most readers is that between the final states sought in both faiths. The object of Tantrism is to attain what Westerners call perfection, which to them is voidness. At that point, reincarnations cease and the soul has completed its development. Note that we don't say 'achieved perfection' or 'is happy', etc. The term used to designate the final state of being is voidness because there is nothing. No good because that would mean that bad would be present, no happiness because that would mean that sadness was present. Nothing. To most Christians and Jews this seems like a peculiar thing to seek. However, the Qabbalist has a different belief. Kaplan notes:

"As a suffix, Yod means 'my', since, even though it can be perceived by us, it is still a level that belongs solely to God. This is also the level of Atzilut-Nearness, which we experience as Nothingness." (1979:103)

So to the Cabalist, Nothingness plays a role in his faith, just as to the Tantrism.

The two faiths also share a belief in opposites. Kaplan says:

Once we have the concepts of cause and effect, another concept comes into being, namely that of opposites. In order to speak of opposites, however, we must also be able to speak of similarities. Two new concepts thus come into being, namely similarity and oppositeness. In the language of philosophy these are thesis and antithesis, while in Kabbalistic terminology, these two are Chakhmah-Wisdom and Binah-Understanding, the Yod and initial Heh of the Tetragrammaton." (1979:105)

It is this same belief in the pairing of opposites that seems to lead Tantrism to the conclusion that the final state that can be attained is one of voidness. One thing implies its opposite, so there can't be anything there. To the Qabalist, this state of Nothingness is simply one of four creative levels, so isn't the final state.

1. Which is properly accomplished at midnight on the Sabbath.

2. At one point, the term 'holy' even refers specifically to the female receptacle. Kaplan suggests that all comparisons and meanings be kept in mind at all times, in order to comprehend Qabbalism at all levels. This is a good example.

3. This festival turns out to be THE central Jewish celebration. Everything in that faith is derived in some fashion from this seven day party.