



AUTHOR OF  
SACRED SYMBOLS



THE TRUTH  
ABOUT EDEN

*the* Lost Teachings of  
JESUS *on*

*the* SACRED PLACE of  
WOMEN

ALONZO L. GASKILL

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## *The* LOST TEACHINGS *of* JESUS—*the* ORIGIN *of the* TEXT

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**I**n the year 1887, only a decade after the Turko-Russian war, journalist Nicholas Notovitch (himself a Russian) took an extended trip to the subcontinent of India. In a detailed memoir of his journey, Notovitch recorded, “In the course of one of my visits to a Buddhist [monastery], I learned from the chief Lama that there existed . . . in the archives of Lassa . . . very ancient memoirs, [which spoke] of the life of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

This monastery, a Tibetan Buddhist cloister, is located in northern India, in Hemis, Ladakh (within the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir). As reported by Notovitch, the monks had a number of documents dating back to the first century, manuscripts that not only contained information on the life of Christ, but which also chronicled some of His most sacred teachings.

According to Notovitch, upon learning of the documents, he became intrigued and pressed his hosts to allow him to view the ancient texts. However, he indicated that as he asked questions about the scrolls, his “persistent inquiries . . . aroused suspicion in the minds of the lamas.” Each time the subject arose, they were “on their guard” and spoke with hesitancy in response to Notovitch’s “efforts to gain information.”<sup>5</sup> In his memoir, the journalist claimed that he began to doubt the reality of the scrolls, or at least his ability to ever access their content.

Notovitch soon left the monastery with the intention of returning some time later to inquire again about the documents. However, in a rather fortuitous accident, shortly after his departure he was thrown from his horse, fracturing his femur just above the knee. This injury prevented him from traveling for some time. Thus, of necessity, he was carried back to the monastery, where he remained under the care of the monks until he was able to continue his journey. During his extended stay, Notovitch asserts that he ingratiated himself to the chief lama, who supposedly eventually consented to read the texts to Notovitch as he lay incapacitated. As the words that the Lama read were translated by Notovitch’s guide and interpreter, the journalist recorded the content of the documents verse by verse.<sup>6</sup> The words purportedly attributed to Christ in these manuscripts are said to have stunned the Russian visitor.

Notovitch claimed that the monks told him that the content of these ancient texts was acquired by some Indian merchants who had been in Judea during the last year of Jesus’s mortal ministry. Shortly after Christ’s crucifixion, these itinerant importers returned to their homeland and told of the truths they had seen and heard. According to the story, within three or four years after Christ’s death, the testimonies of these eyewitnesses regarding Christ

were recorded. Consequently, if their report is true, then their record of Jesus's teachings was penned *before* any of the four Gospels.<sup>7</sup> The monks purportedly claimed that, over time, the records of Christ's teaching were brought from India to Nepal and then eventually taken from Nepal to Tibet, where Notovitch first learned of them.<sup>8</sup>

Supposedly the texts had been among the monastics of Tibet for centuries by the time Notovitch arrived, though the vast majority of lay Buddhists were said to be ignorant of their existence and content. Jesus (or "Issa," as the Buddhist lamas call Him<sup>9</sup>) "is not recognized as one of the principal saints in Tibet." The chief lamas, according to Notovitch, were the only ones who retained knowledge of Him because they were the only ones who had access to the scrolls that told of His life, teachings, and torturous death.<sup>10</sup>

Notovitch claimed that as he poured over these supposedly lost teachings of Christ, he recognized that much of their content was not found in the writings of the New Testament evangelists, and yet they were "remarkable for their character of divine grandeur."<sup>11</sup> They professed to be "sublime words" from the Master Himself, and the Spirit seemed to accord.<sup>12</sup>

Our focus within the pages of this book will be to utilize a singular discourse, attributed by Notovitch to Christ, and purportedly discovered by him that fateful day in 1887. It is important for the reader to understand that the vast majority of scholars think that Notovitch made up the entire story we have just presented—and that no such discourse was ever given by the Son of God. *That may well be the case.* However, since others (who visited the monastery after Notovitch) described learning from the monks of the same discourse of Christ, if a fraud was perpetrated, it *may* have actually been by the monks who purportedly told the same story to numerous visitors. (See Appendix B) One can only conjecture.

Of course, Latter-day Saints have a long history of being fascinated with seemingly inspired texts which have not made their way into the standard works of the Church. Long before it was considered scripture by the Church,<sup>13</sup> the Prophet Joseph Smith was drawn to the Book of Abraham—at least in part because many of its stories and doctrinal teachings were *not* found anywhere in the Bible or Book of Mormon. He sensed the Spirit of that text when he first encountered it, and wanted the Saints to also see and feel the power and value of that book. Likewise, the Lord informed the Prophet of the value that could come to members of the Church from studying the Apocrypha *by the Spirit*—though it too is *not* part of our scriptural canon (See D&C 91:1, 5). The prophets and apostles—ancient and modern—have been quite clear that there are *many* inspiring works which have not made their way into scripture, but from which we can gain strength and inspiration as we read them—and as we allow the Spirit to use these texts as springboards to discovering divine truths. (See Appendix A) Indeed, the Lord Himself commanded, "teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the *best books* words of wisdom" (D&C 88:118, emphasis added). While not all will agree as to what constitutes one of the "best books," nonetheless, this curious discourse attributed to Jesus just might be a prime example of one non-scriptural text which—even if it is just a piece of modern literature—contains inspiring and even doctrinally correct ideas about the divinely given roles of men and women. Its encouragement to men is to reverence women and treat them as God would. Its counsel to women is to live worthy of such reverential treatment. Can anyone disagree that such teachings have been "lost" in our day?

While we cannot say with certainty whether Notovitch perpetrated a fraud, what we can say with some confidence is that what he presented as authentic words of Jesus in many ways harmonizes with what the restored Gospel teaches about the divine roles of men and women. Thus, the "lost teachings of Jesus on the sacred place of women" are ultimately *not* those given to us by Notovitch but, instead, those found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints. They are *lost* to the majority of the world today—and the Church seems to be one of the few places where they are still openly taught.

Consequently, while we make *absolutely no claims* about the historicity of Notovitch's account or the discourse he claimed to have discovered, we will employ it here as a literary device on which we will hang the teachings of Christ; teachings we *know* Christ spoke by revelation. It is our sense that those who read the “discourse” which follows, and its comparable teachings in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, will sense the Spirit of the Lord testifying to the truthfulness of these teachings which have largely been *lost* in our day.



*The* LOST TEACHINGS *of*  
JESUS—*the* DISCOURSE

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V:9 Whosoever respecteth not his mother, the most sacred being after his God, is unworthy of the name of son.

V:10 Verily I say unto you: Respect woman, for she is the mother of the universe, and all the truth of divine creation dwells within her.

V:11 On her depends the whole existence of man, for she is his natural and moral support.

V:12 She gives birth to you in the midst of suffering. By the sweat of her brow she rears you, and until her death you cause her the gravest anxieties. Bless her and adore her, for she is your only true friend and support on earth.

V:13 Respect her, protect her. In acting thus you will win her love and her heart. You will find favor in the sight of God and many sins shall be forgiven you.

V:14 In the same way, love your wives and respect them; for they will be mothers tomorrow, and each later on the ancestress of a race.

V:15 Be submissive toward your wife. Her love ennoble man, softens his hardened heart, tames the brute in him, and makes of him a lamb.

V:16 The wife and the mother are the inappreciable treasures given unto you by God. They are the fairest ornaments of existence, and of them shall be born all the inhabitants of the world.

V:17 Even as the God of hosts separated of old the light from the darkness and the land from the waters, woman possesses the divine talent of separating in a man good intentions from evil thoughts.

V:18 Wherefore I say unto you, after God your best thoughts should belong to women and to wives, woman being for you the temple wherein you will most easily obtain perfect happiness.

V:19 Here you will forget your sorrows and your failures, and you will recover the lost energy necessary to enable you to help your neighbor.

V:20 Do not expose her to humiliation. In acting thus you would humiliate yourselves

and lose the sentiment of love, without which nothing exists here upon earth.

**V:21** Protect your wife, in order that she may protect you and all your family. All that you do for your wife, your mother, for a widow or another woman in distress, you will have done unto your God.<sup>14</sup>

COMMENTARY *on*  
*the* DISCOURSE



## VERSES NINE, TEN & THIRTEEN

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*Whosoever respecteth not his mother,  
the most sacred being after his God,  
is unworthy of the name of son.  
Verily I say unto you: Respect woman,  
for she is the mother of the universe, and  
all the truth of divine creation dwells within her.  
Respect her, protect her.  
In acting thus you will win her love and her heart.  
You will find favor in the sight of God  
and many sins shall be forgiven you.*

### **The Summary of the Sermon**

While each of us is literally the spirit offspring of our Father in Heaven, the doctrine of Christ teaches that we must seek adoption into the family of Christ, spiritually becoming His sons and His daughters through faithfulness to covenants and through faith in His power to save. King Benjamin taught his people, “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters” (Mosiah 5:7).

In the lost teachings on the sacred place of women, we are informed that mothers are sacred in the divine plan. They are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Whether man or woman, boy or girl, if we wish to be adopted back into the family of God—if we wish to become Christ’s sons and daughters—we must be spiritually reborn. And a sure mark of spiritual rebirth can be found in how we regard those who have given us life: our God, who gave us spiritual life, and our mothers, who have given us mortal life.

Christ commands us to regard our maternal ancestor in the way that He does—as second only to our God. So much did Christ love and respect His mother that even in the hour of His suffering—as He hung upon the cross amid torturous pain—He tended to the needs of His mother (John 19:26–27). One worthy of the title son or daughter must hold sacred the beings who have made him such—his mother and his God. There can be no salvation for a child who does not love and respect his mother.<sup>15</sup>

We are made a profound promise for seeing the women in our lives as Christ sees them. The assurance offered us is that as we respect our mothers, wives, and women generally, we

will not simply win their love, but we will win God's love and the remission of our sins! Could we wish for any greater gift?

## **Counsel to Men & Children**

The words of this verse were echoed by the First Presidency of the Church, who, in October of 1942, declared, "*Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels.*"<sup>16</sup> No man, conscious of that truth, would *ever* show disrespect to his mother, let alone abuse or neglect her. To do so would be to abuse, neglect, and disrespect the divine. And, no doubt, strict accountability before God would be the consequence.

To *respect* is to give particular attention to and to hold in special or high regard. It is insufficient that a man acknowledges his mother as the source of his life. It is not enough for him to speak of her with warmth. To respect suggests an aspect of doting, of care. The son faithful to this counsel does not simply reverence his mother's name; he sees to her needs and is attentive to the details surrounding her well-being. Just as he feels a divinely appointed mandate to look after his wife and children, he recognizes this same obligation applies to his mother—the one being, after his God, who has been endowed with the power to create life—*his* life!

Elder Matthew Cowley of the Twelve reminded us that mothers are "the co-creators with God of His children." They are endowed with a power akin to God's—a power no mortal man will ever know. Elder Cowley noted that these good women in our lives "belong to the great sorority of saviorhood." They were each "born with an inherent right, an inherent authority to be the saviors of human souls." When faithful to their call to teach, train, nurture, and love, they build testimonies in their children that will guide them throughout their lives and throughout all eternity.<sup>17</sup> We reverence the General Authorities of the Church because of their sacrifices, because of their high and holy callings, and because of the influence they have over us and our testimonies. We, the offspring of our mothers, owe this same respect and reverence to those who bore us because of their sacrifices for us, because of the sacred calling of motherhood, and because they so dramatically affect our testimonies—giving us the foundations we need to successfully traverse this mortal experience.

So much of the mortal experience for practicing Latter-day Saints is learning to align our wills with God's. In these verses, we are taught that in blessing and respecting the women in our lives we actually bless our *own* lives—and align ourselves with God. President David O. McKay testified, "Motherhood is the greatest potential influence either for good or ill in human life."<sup>18</sup> Similarly, President Brigham Young reminded us of the divine reality that what we "imbibe from [our] mothers in infancy, is the most lasting upon the mind through life." Through the teachings of faithful mothers, said Brigham, we each have the potential to develop the "power and faith" had by the two thousand stripling warriors (Alma 56:48).<sup>19</sup> President Joseph F. Smith boldly declared: "If there is any man who ought to merit the curse of Almighty God it is the man who neglects the mother of his child, the wife of his bosom, the one who has made sacrifice of her very life, over and over again for him and his children."<sup>20</sup> When Jehovah revealed from on high the foundational laws we call the Ten Commandments, He commanded all—young and old, male and female—to "honour thy . . . mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12; see also Mosiah 13:20). The key as to why honoring one's mother will prolong one's days upon the land may be found in both the symbolism of Jehovah's words and in the verses under consideration in this chapter. This earth is to become the celestial

kingdom—our eternal, heavenly abode. As we honor our mothers, we have the promise of a long inheritance upon this globe; not necessarily a long mortal life, but an eternal life upon this earth which will be exalted. In addition, Jesus promised that if we each treat the women in our lives with love and respect, He will grant us “favor in [His] sight” and “many sins shall be forgiven” us! Could there be a greater promise?

### **Counsel to Women**

While much of the counsel above applies to daughters as well as to sons, it seems evident from the verse under inspection that the counsel to men is to respect mothers, and the invitation to women is to be worthy of that respect. Thus, in the aforementioned 1942 statement by the First Presidency, they added this admonition: “To you mothers and mothers-to-be we say: Be chaste, keep pure, live righteously, that your posterity to the last generation may call you blessed.”<sup>21</sup> A mother worthy of respect is one who does not live a double standard. The principles she teaches her children are the principles she lives. Thus, President Heber C. Kimball declared: “How pure and angelic females *ought to be* who are sent here to bear the souls of men.”<sup>22</sup>

Part of the command in this verse is that those *capable* of being mothers also be *willing* to be such. President James E. Faust stated,

Disturbing is the shift in attitude about the purpose of marriage. More and more young people view marriage “as a couple’s relationship, designed to fulfill the emotional needs of adults, rather than an institution for bringing up children.” The pursuit of such “soul-mate relationship[s] may [well] weaken marriage as an institution for rearing children.” Another disturbing challenge to the family is that children are becoming less valued.<sup>23</sup>

The Church will not dictate how many children to have nor when you should have them, but the Lord’s servants have repeatedly called for an attitude of selflessness when it comes to having a family. We must be willing to sacrifice some personal desires and comforts to bring life into this world, and we must be willing to sacrifice some personal goals and accomplishments to rear and nurture our children. As President Ezra Taft Benson reminded us, “in the eternal perspective, children—not possessions, not position, not prestige—are our greatest jewels.”<sup>24</sup> Christ invites us to both have children and to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). The work of motherhood is to lead children to keep their second estate.<sup>25</sup> The fulfillment of that divine mandate requires both sacrifice and a willingness to put our children before our own personal desires and goals. As President David O. McKay stressed, “the preservation of self cannot be called noble.” He added, “The noblest calling in life, then, must be one in which the attribute of love will manifest itself not for self, but for others.”<sup>26</sup> A mother who is second only to God in the eyes of her children will be such because, like God, she lives to nurture and bless her offspring.

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