

## Building Bridges Series III

### Tentative Schedule

1. 10/17 God
2. 10/24 Jesus
- 3. 10/31 The Church of Jesus Christ**
4. 11/7 Video: Bible vs. the Book of Mormon
5. 11/14 Reliability of Scripture
6. 11/28 Salvation, Grace & Atonement
7. 12/5 Heaven
8. 12/12 The Priesthoods & “Authority”
9. 12/19 Prophet, Bishop & Pastor
10. 1/2 Faith vs. Works
11. 1/9 Video: Lost Book of Abraham
12. 1/16 The Temple - Purpose & Role

### The Heart of the Series

**Ephesians 4:11–16** - And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints 1) for the work of ministry, 2) for the edifying of the body of Christ, **13** till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **14** that 1) we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **15** but, 2) speaking the truth in love, 3) may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—**16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

**1 Corinthians 13:1–3** - Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, **but have not love**, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. **2** And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, **but have not love**, I am nothing. **3** And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, **but have not love**, it profits me nothing.

**1 Peter 3:15–16** - But sanctify (Gk/*hagiazō*=hallow) the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason(Gk/*apologia*) for the hope that is in you, with meekness (mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit), and fear; (that they might reject the message due to the messenger) **16** having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

**2017 Statistical Report for 2018 April General Conference**, 31 March 2018

Fulltime Missionaries - 67,049 ([https://www.lds.org/church/news/2017-statistical-report-for-2018-april-general-conference?lang=eng&\\_r=1](https://www.lds.org/church/news/2017-statistical-report-for-2018-april-general-conference?lang=eng&_r=1))

Building Bridges III  
**The Church of Jesus Christ**

## **Mormon Doctrine**

### **The Church of Jesus Christ Ceased to Exist on Earth**

“The First Vision”

**17** It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*

**18** My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)—and which I should join.

**19** {I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that:} “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.” **20** He again forbade me to join with any of them; and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time...

(Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith—History, Extracts from the History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, Chapter 1:17-20) (Also, Church History, Volume 1, pg 6.) (Double brackets added to show the portion that has been omitted in the official LDS video “Ask of God: Joseph Smith's First Vision, 2017, <https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/topics/apostasy-and-restoration?lang=eng>)

\* “Religious denominations relied entirely on the dead letter of the Bible for their authority. They closed the heavens against themselves, and their interpretations of scripture without divine guidance led them into division, subdivision, and multiplication of churches, each going its own way blindly and in confusion. The power of the priesthood was lost and the true Church of Jesus Christ ceased to exist on the earth. There had been no prophet, no revelation, or divine instruction from the time of the apostles of old until the Lord again opened the heavens and sent holy messengers to restore that which had been taken away. (Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, 1:97).

\* After the Savior ascended into heaven, men changed the ordinances and doctrines that he and his Apostles had established. Because of apostasy, there was no direct revelation from God. The true church was no longer on the earth. (Gospel Principles, pg 109)

\* For many years people lived in spiritual darkness. About 1700 years after Christ, people were becoming more and more interested in knowing the truth about God and religion. Some of them could see that the gospel Jesus taught was no longer on the earth. Some recognized that there was not revelation and no true authority and that the church that Christ organized did not exist on the earth. The time had come for the Church of Jesus Christ to be restored on earth. (Gospel Principles, pg 110)

\* “As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the Lord has admonished us to be ‘ready always to give an answer to every man, for our faith in the restored gospel.’ This we owe to the inhabitants of this mortal world. For hundreds of years, following the universal apostasy, the inhabitants of the earth walked in spiritual darkness. They became divided and sub-divided. Satan had obtained such power over their thinking that the fundamental principles of the gospel ceased to exist among them” (Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions 5:xi).

### **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the ONLY True Church**

\* And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, **the only true and living church** upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually (D&C 1:30)

\* “Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth” (1 Nephi 14:10).

\* So what does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true Church? Three features—(1) fulness of doctrine, (2) power of the priesthood, and (3) testimony of Jesus Christ—explain why God has declared and why we as His servants maintain that this is the only true and living Church upon the face of the whole earth. (*Fulnes of doctrine*) When Jesus Christ was upon the earth, He taught the fulness of His doctrine, which is the plan that our Heavenly Father has outlined for the eternal progress of His children. Later, many of these gospel truths were lost through being diluted by the principles or philosophies then prevailing in the world where Christianity was preached and through the manipulations of political leaders. We call this loss of the fulness of truth the Apostasy. . . Because so much had been lost in the Apostasy, it was necessary that the Lord restore the fulness of His doctrine. That began with what we call Joseph Smith’s First Vision. The second and absolutely essential characteristic of the “only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” is priesthood authority.

The third reason why we are the only true Church is that we have the revealed truth about the nature of God and our relationship to Him, and we therefore have a unique testimony of Jesus Christ. Significantly, our belief in the nature of God is what distinguishes us from the formal creeds of most Christian denominations. (Spelling maintained from original.) (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, address delivered on June 25, 2010, at a seminar for new mission presidents.) (<https://www.lds.org/youth/article/only-true-living-church?lang=eng>)

### **Other Christians are Not Real Christians**

\* “The people called Christians are shrouded in ignorance, and read the Scriptures with darkened understandings” (Brigham Young, 2<sup>nd</sup> President, October 8, 1859, Journal of Discourses 7:333).

\* “What does the Christian world know about God? Nothing; yet these very men assume the right and power to tell others what they shall not believe in. Why so far as the things of God

are concerned, they are the veriest of fools; they know neither God nor the things of God” (John Taylor, Third President, May 6, 1870, Journal of Discourses 13:225).

\*“...for I contend that the Latter-day Saints are the only good and true Christians, that I know anything about in the world. There are a good many people who profess to be Christians, but they are not founded on the foundation that Jesus Christ himself has laid” (Joseph F. Smith, 6<sup>th</sup> President, November 2, 1891, [Stake conference message], Collected Discourses, 2:305. Ellipses mine).

## **The Authority & Power of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**

### **Aaronic Priesthood**

\* We still continued the work of translation, when in the ensuing month (May, 1829), we on a certain day went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord respecting baptism for the remission of sins, that we found mentioned in the translation of the plates. While we were thus employed, praying and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying:

Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the Gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.

(History of the Church, vol. 1, pg 39) (D&C 13)

\* The priesthood is the power and authority of God. By his priesthood power the heavens and the earth were created... (Gospel Principles, pg 81)

\* “The Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Genesis 1:26, 27, 28. He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157).

\* “If a man gets a fulness of the priesthood of God, he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord” (Joseph Smith, History of the Church 5:424).

\* We must have the priesthood authority to act in the name of God when performing the sacred ordinances of the gospel... (Gospel Principles, pg 81)

\* If a man does not have the priesthood, even though he may be sincere, the Lord will not recognize ordinances he performs (see Matthew 7:21-28). (Gospel Principles, pg 81)

\* When Christ lived on the earth, he chose his Apostles and ordained them so that they could lead his Church. He gave them the power and authority of the priesthood to act in his name. (See Mark 3:13-15; John 15:16) (Gospel Principles, pg 81-82)

\* Another reason the priesthood is needed on the earth is so we can understand the will of the Lord and carry out his purposes. (Gospel Principles, pg 82)

\* A worthy male member of the Church receives the priesthood “by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.” (Articles of Faith 1:5)

\* This is the same way men received the priesthood long ago, even in the days of Moses: “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was

Aaron” (Hebrews 5:4) Aaron received the priesthood from Moses, his priesthood leader (see Exodus 28:1). Only those who hold the priesthood can ordain others. (Gospel Principles, pg 82)

\* He offered to buy the priesthood. (See Acts 8:9-19) (Gospel Principles, pg 83)

### **Melchizedek Priesthood**

\* He said this Aaronic Priesthood had not the power of laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter; (History of the Church, vol. 1, pg 40)

\* The messenger who visited us on this occasion, and conferred this Priesthood upon us, said that his name was John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament, and that he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which Priesthood he said would in due time be conferred on us, 2 and that I should be called the first Elder of the Church, and he (Oliver Cowdery) the second. It was on the 15th day of May, 1829, that we were ordained under the hand of this messenger and baptized. (History of the Church, vol. 1, pg 41)

\* The priesthood is divided into two parts: the Melchizedek Priesthood and the Aaronic Priesthood (See D&C 107:1). The greater priesthood is the Melchizedek Priesthood...The Church in ancient days called the priesthood “the Melchizedek Priesthood” after a great high priest who lived during the time of Abraham. (See D&C 107:2-4) (Gospel Principles, pg 85)

\* The lesser priesthood is an appendage to the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is called the Aaronic Priesthood because it was conferred on Aaron and his sons throughout all their generations. (Gospel Principles, pg 85)

\* The Lord’s chosen prophet, the President of the Church, is the presiding high priest over the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 107:65-67) (Gospel Principles, pg 87)

\* Those who are ordained to the office of Apostle in the Melchizedek Priesthood are usually set apart as members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Each one is given the keys of the kingdom of God on earth, but only the senior Apostle, who is the President of the Church, actively exercises all of the keys. (Gospel Principles, pg 91)

### **Apostasy in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**

\* “Whenever there is a disposition manifested in any of the members of the Church to question the right of the President of the whole Church to direct in all things, you see manifested evidences of apostasy—of a spirit which, if encouraged, will lead to a separation from the Church and to final destruction; wherever there is a disposition to operate against any legally appointed officer of this Kingdom, no matter in what capacity he is called to act, if persisted in, it will be followed by the same results; they will ‘walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government” (Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 83.

\* “When a man begins to find fault, inquiring in regard to this, that, and the other, saying, ‘Does this or that look as though the Lord dictated it?’ you may know that that person has more or less of the spirit of apostasy” (Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 83).

### **Joseph Smith claimed to do greater works than Jesus Christ!**

God is in the still small voice. In all these affidavits, indictments, it is all of the devil—all corruption. Come on! ye prosecutors! ye false swearers! All hell, boil over! Ye burning mountains, roll down your lava! for I will come out on the top at last. I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him; but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet. (Church History, Volume 6, pg 409)

## **Biblical Doctrine**

**Jesus Christ promised He would build His Church and the gates of Hades would not prevail against it.**

**Matthew 16:16-18** Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

**Acts 2:46-47** So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

**Acts 20:28** - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

**Colossians 1:13-18** He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

**Ephesians 1:22-23** - And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

**1 Corinthians 1:2** - To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

### **The Truth of the Aaronic Priesthood**

\* Addressing the Biblical references from Gospel Principles – (NO Priesthood mentioned.)

**Exodus 28:1** - “Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron’s sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar...

**Matthew 7:21-23** - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

**Mark 3:13-15** - And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:

**John 15:16** - You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

**Hebrews 5:4** - And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.

**Acts 8:18** - And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

**\* Sons of Aaron the ONLY Ones Authorized to Hold the Aaronic Priesthood**

**Numbers 3:10** So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death.”

**Ezra 2:62** These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled.

**1 Kings 12:31** He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.

**2 Chronicles 11:13-15** And from all their territories the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel took their stand with him. For the Levites left their common-lands and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the Lord. Then he appointed for himself priests for the high places, for the demons, and the calf idols which he had made.

**The Truth of the Melchizedek Priesthood**

\* Addressing the Biblical references from “Gospel Principles”

**Genesis 14:18-20** Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. <sup>19</sup>And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; <sup>20</sup>And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.

\* Every Biblical Reference to the Melchizedek Priesthood

**Psalms 110:4** - The Lord has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” (Jesus Christ)

**Hebrews 5:5-6** - So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.” As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek”; (Jesus Christ)

**Hebrews 5:9-10** - And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,” (Jesus Christ)

**Hebrews 6:19–20** - This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, **20** where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

**Hebrews 7:1–4** - For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, **2** to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” **3** without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. **4** Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. (Jesus Christ)

**Hebrews 7:23–28** -Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. **24** But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. **25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. **26** For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; **27** who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. **28** For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. (Jesus Christ)

### **True Power & Authority of the Church of Jesus Christ**

**Luke 9:1–2** - Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. **2** He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

**Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spoke to them (Disciples), saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

**Mark 16:15-16** And He said to them (Disciples), “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

**Luke 24:46-49** - Then He said to them (Disciples), “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, <sup>47</sup>and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>And you are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

**John 20:21** So Jesus said to them (Disciples) again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

**Acts 1:8** But you (Disciples) shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

**Acts 2:4** And they (Disciples) were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**Titus 1:1–5** - Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, **2** in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, **3** but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; **4** To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. **5** For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—

**Titus 2:11-15** - For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men... Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

### **Followers of Jesus Christ are Encouraged to Ask Questions**

**Acts 15:1–2** - And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” **2** Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

**Acts 17:10–11** - Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. **11** These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

**1 Thessalonians 5:19–21** - Do not quench the Spirit. **20** Do not despise prophecies. **21** Test all things; hold fast what is good.

**1 John 4:1** - Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

**1 Corinthians 14:29** - Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

### **Jesus Christ is The Almighty One – Not Joseph Smith**

**Isaiah 9:6–7** - For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

**Philippians 2:9–11** - Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, **11** and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**1 Timothy 6:14–15** - ... until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, **15** which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

**Revelation 1:8** - “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”