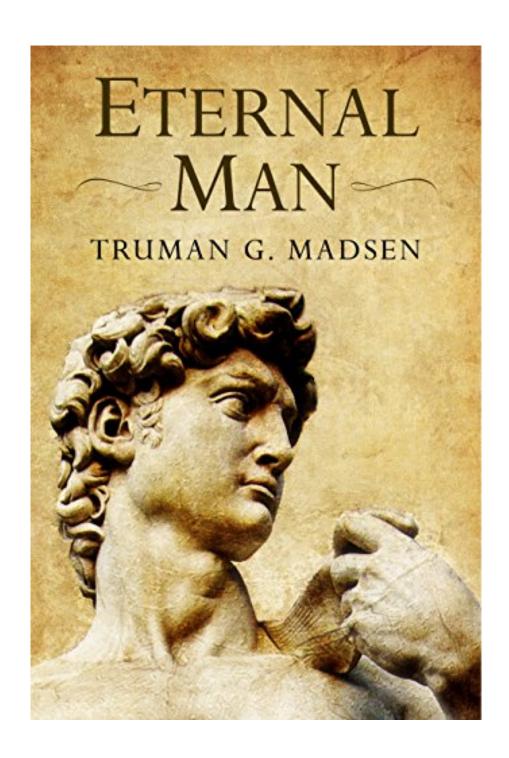


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The idea that man is an eternal individual is vital to a full understanding of the doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is as important to Latter-day Saints that there will be a "forever forward" as that there has been a "forever backward."

In Eternal Man, Truman Madsen, who was known for his grasp of philosophy and his deep conviction of the truthfulness of the restored gospel, offers profound insights about six fundamental "puzzles" in philosophy and religion. This classic work, available for the first time in many years, includes a Publisher's Preface plus essays on such questions as "Whence Cometh Man?" "Evil and Suffering," "The Spirit and the Body," and "Freedom and Fulfillment." He demonstrates how a true understanding of our nature can make life here and now more meaningful and the eternities ahead a glorious existence to be eagerly anticipated.

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A seminal book on the philosophy of man as taught ...

By Jay M. Smith

A seminal book on the philosophy of man as taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Helps one to understand and cope with the struggles of life including illness, abuse, death. Although a very short book, Madsen is able to explain the eternal natuir of man in an understandable and uplifting way. A book that needs to be read more than once.

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

Great introduction to the Mormon concept of man as an eternal individual

By Jeffrey Van Wagoner

I originally read this book about 30 years ago as the textbook in an LDS institute class. At the time I was very impressed by the content of this little book and decided to re-read it. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it again.

The book is a collection of 7 essays by Truman Madsen, about the LDS concept of man as an eternal being, which were originally published in the Instructor, the LDS church's magazine geared toward youth and young adults, starting in 1963. They were collected in book form and published in 1966. The book is only 80 pages long, but the concepts contained herein are profound and powerful. The book is geared toward LDS

college students, who were asking "How do the arguments and positions of the various `schools' of thought compare with the teachings of Joseph Smith and of the Restored Gospel?"

The first essay is titled "Whence Cometh Man???" and is a summary of the next 6 chapters and discusses the foundational LDS doctrine of the pre-existence and highlights that men and women have always existed as uncreated and indestructible intelligences and are co-eternal with God. The doctrine states that we are spiritually begotten of God, and that physical life is to obtain a physical body and prove ourselves worthy to return to God's presence.

The remaining chapters cover the following issues: 1. The Problem of Identity, which reviews the LDS position on self compared with orthodox Christianity, Existentialism, and Humanism. 2. The Paradoxes of Creation, which discusses the LDS rejection of creation "ex nihilo" and its profound impact on many philosophies. 3. The Mind-body Problem, which talks about the Mormon view that the body and spirit combined form the soul of man and how the physical resurrection and permanent union of these is one of the objects of our creation. 4. The Problem of Human Freedom, which shows how humans truly are free agents and are not simply creatures and the impact of this thought. 5. The Problem of Evil, of Suffering, which can be explained much more easily given that fact that we are eternal beings here to learn to love and be tried and strengthened, which can only happen with true free will and its consequences. 6. The Problem of Self-awareness, which reflects on those flashes of remembrance some of us have related to the divine that many poets have discussed and how this relates to our spiritual pre-existence.

I highly recommend this book to anyone desiring to understand the most fundamental philosophical differences between LDS and others. It would be great to see this book reprinted once again.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Eternal Man

By Warden Manford

Seldom does one find a small book of profound significance, prompting the reader to re-consider pondering the text over and again. Why do bad things happen to good people is addressed in a brief, intelligible manner that sinks in once and for all. We comprehend who we really are in the grand scheme of all that is possible. An acorn grows into an oak. What does man grow into? Such are the questions addressed in this slim volume.

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