

Maleldil [God] has decreed the floating islands to be the proper home of the king and queen of Perelandra, and he has forbidden them to dwell on the fixed land. At first thought, one would tend to associate a fixed land with absolutes, eternal truths, anchoring oneself in unchanging realities. And floating islands would connote the opposite—relativism, instability, being driven by the caprices of the moment. In the Epistle of James the doubter is described as being “like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed”...¹⁰⁶⁰ But for Lewis the emphasis is not upon stability vs. instability but upon relinquishing control and accepting what is given. When Ransom[,the hero of the story,] wonders if Maleldil had told the king how the queen’s temptation would turn out, the king answers, “He gave me no assurance. No fixed land. Always one must throw oneself into the wave.”¹⁰⁶¹

- 4-80** “The Venerable Bede (672-735 CE) was an English monk most noted for his ecclesiastical history of England. He wrote a number of works in Latin, mostly Bible commentaries that were highly valued throughout the Middle Ages.”¹⁰⁶²
- 4-81** Though many Christians disparage the doctrine of original sin, “G. K. Chesterton affirmed it with equal insistence, adding the sardonic note that it is the only doctrine of the Christian faith that is empirically provable.”¹⁰⁶³ See S. Taylor, *Broken-Mirror*, for a thoughtful discussion of original sin in LDS theology, and its relationship to Augustinian and Pelagian ideas.
- 4-82** Chesterton gives the following account of Blake’s final hours:¹⁰⁶⁴

His last sickness fell upon him very slowly, and he does not seem to have taken much notice of it. He continued perpetually his pictorial design; and as long as they were growing stronger he seems to have cared very little for the fact that he was growing weaker himself. One of the last designs he made was one of the strongest he ever made—the tremendous image of the Almighty bending forward, foreshortened in colossal perspective, to trace out the heavens with a compass. Nowhere else has he so well expressed his primary theistic ideas—that God, though infinitely gigantic, should be as solid as a giant. He had often drawn men from the life; not infrequently he had drawn his dead men from the life. Here, according to his own conception, he may be said to have drawn God from the life. When he had finished the portrait (which he made sitting up in his sick-bed) he called out cheerfully, “What shall I draw after that?” Doubtless he racked his brain for some superlative spirit or archangel which would not be a mere bathos after the other. His rolling eyes (those round lustrous eyes which one can always see roll in his painted portraits) fell on the old frail and somewhat ugly woman who had been his companion so long, and he called out, “Catherine, you have been an angel to me; I will draw you next.” Throwing aside the sketch of God measuring the universe, he began industriously to draw a portrait of his wife, a portrait which is unfortunately lost, but which must have substantially resembled the remarkable sketch which a friend drew some months afterwards; the portrait of a woman at once plain and distinguished, with a face that is supremely humorous and at once harsh and kind. Long before that portrait was drawn, long before those months had elapsed, William Blake was dead.

Whatever be the explanation, it is quite certain that Blake had more positive joy on his death-bed than any other of the sons of Adam. One has heard of men singing hymns on their death-beds, in low plaintive voices. Blake was not at all like that on his death-bed: the room shook with his singing. All his songs were in praise of God, and apparently new: all his songs were songs of innocence. Every now and then he would stop and cry out to his wife, “Not mine! Not mine!” in a sort of ecstatic explanation. He truly seemed to wait for the opening of the door of death as a child waits for the opening of the cupboard on his birthday. He genuinely and solemnly seemed to hear the hoofs of the horses of death as a baby hears on Christmas Eve the reindeer hooves of Santa Claus. He was in his last moments in that wonderful world of whiteness in which white is still a color. He would have clapped his hands at a white snowflake and sung as at the white wings of an angel at the moment when he himself turned suddenly white with death.

A little later, George Richmond included the following in a letter:

He died on Sunday night at 6 o’clock in a most glorious manner. He said he was going to that Country he had all his life wished to see and expressed himself happy, hoping for salvation through Jesus Christ. Just before he died his countenance became fair. His eyes brightened and he burst out into singing of the things he saw in heaven.¹⁰⁶⁵

1060 James 1:6.

1061 D. C. Downing, *Planets*, p. 91. See C. S. Lewis, *Perelandra*, p. 181.

1062 J. A. Tvedtnes, et al., *Traditions*, p. 213. See *Bibliography*, p. 843.

1063 Cited in A. Jacobs, *Original Sin*, p. x.

1064 G. K. Chesterton, *William Blake*, pp. 66, 69-70.

1065 Cited in P. Ackroyd, *Blake*, p. 389.