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THE DIVINE NATURE OF GOD: A STUDY OF WHAT HAS
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APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

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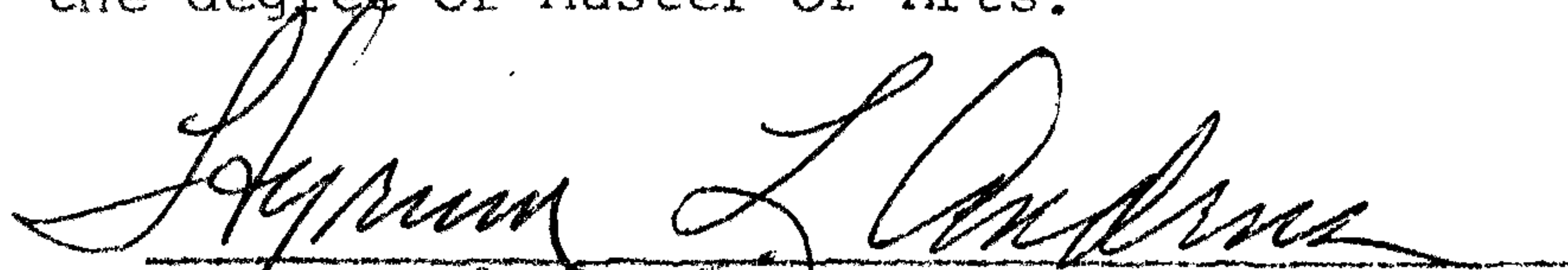
A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Church History and Doctrine
Brigham Young University

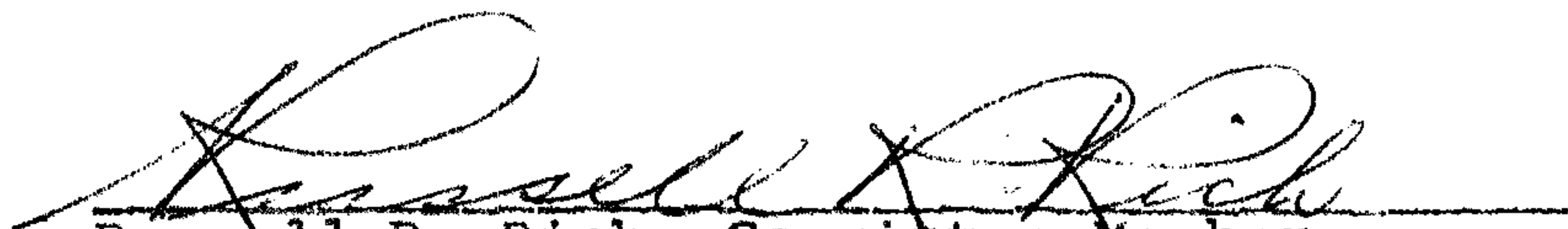
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Lester Young Moody


April 1973

This thesis, by Lester Y. Moody, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Church History and Doctrine of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.


Hyrum L. Andrus, Committee Chairman


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Dec 4, 1972
Date


Lamar C. Berrett, Department Chairman

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

PROBLEM AND JUSTIFICATION

Scholars of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have often discussed and written about the corporeal nature of God. The most prominent reasons for this continued and consistent attention seem to be: (1) The Latter-day Saint understanding of the corporeal nature of God is quite different from most of the creedal concepts taught in the Christian world, and for this reason it has been stressed by the Saints. (2) A popular statement by Joseph Smith focuses attention on this aspect of deity. It states: "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit."¹ (3) The idea, taught by Joseph Smith in the King Follet discourse² and also expressed in the following couplet by

¹The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 130:22, hereafter cited as D&C.

²Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), VI, 305, hereafter cited as HC.

Lorenzo Snow, has been popularized. Lorenzo Snow wrote:

"As man now is, God once was: As God now is, man may be."³

The result is that much has been said about the corporeal nature of God, whereas little mention has been made of other important aspects of his being.

Joseph Smith was speaking of the divine nature of God when he said:

God almighty Himself dwells in eternal fire; flesh and blood cannot go there, for all corruption is devoured by fire. "Our God is a consuming fire."⁴

Again:

. . . the glory which the Father and Son have, is because they are just and holy beings; and that if they were lacking in one attribute or perfection which they have, the glory which they have, never could be enjoyed by them; for it requires them to be precisely what they are in order to enjoy it.⁵

The terms used in the above quotations and others such as spirit, power, love, justice and goodness refer in this study to the "divine nature of God." The need to understand the divine nature of God was implied by the

³Eliza R. Snow Smith, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company, 1884), 46.

⁴HC, VI, 366.

⁵Lectures of Faith, As found in the Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835), No. VII, pp. 69-70, hereafter cited as L. of F. These lectures are sometimes described as the Lectures on Faith, for example N. B. Lundwall's pamphlet is entitled A Compilation Containing the Lectures ON Faith, Salt Lake City, N. D. However, in the original cited above, these lectures are referred to as the Lectures of Faith, which is the designation used in this thesis.

Prophet Joseph Smith when he said: "It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God."⁶ The same importance of understanding the character and attributes of God is stressed in the Lectures of Faith, which state: "Without a correct idea of the character of God, man could not exercise faith unto life and salvation; . . . Nor could he without an acquaintance with God's attributes lay hold of eternal life."⁷

DELIMITATIONS IN THE CONCEPT OF THE DIVINE NATURE

In any study of the nature of God, one must recognize the limitations inherent within the finite and temporal nature of man which limit his comprehension of the power, glory and knowledge of God. Nevertheless, it is important for man to learn about the divine nature of God. Orson Pratt said of God:

We worship him because of his glory, greatness goodness, justice, mercy, knowledge and wisdom. We worship him, because he has the power to govern and control the universe, and because he has commanded us so to do, . . . but can we form an idea of the intelligence that he possesses? We have but a very limited idea of that. He comprehends all things, all things are before him, all things are about him, and he is the great and supreme Governor of all the works of his hands.⁸

⁶HC, VI, 305.

⁷L. of F., No. IV, p. 51.

⁸Orson Pratt, address delivered at Salt Lake City, March 14, 1875, Journal of Discourses, reporter David W. Evans, XVII, (London, England, 1875), 324.

It follows that any understanding of God that man may gain is dependent upon God as the revelator of his own nature. The Book of Mormon Prophet Jacob said:

Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God.⁹

Men who are prophets and apostles have had a special relationship with God, and it is from their experiences and knowledge that this thesis draws its information. However, it should be kept in mind that these men have had limitations placed on them as to what they were allowed to understand about God. To Moses the Lord said:

Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth.¹⁰

The apostles and prophets have also had restrictions placed on them as to what they could reveal to men about God. The Prophet Alma wrote:

It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men,

⁹The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Jacob 4:8 hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

¹⁰The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Moses 1:5, hereafter cited as P. of G. P., followed by the reference within.

according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.¹¹

In spite of the limitations on what finite man may understand or be able to teach concerning the nature of God, there is a limited understanding of God that has been revealed for the understanding of men. In speaking of that which a man can understand about God, Charles W. Penrose said:

Now I do not pretend to say that there is anybody living who fully and entirely comprehends God; but there are many people living who have some definite ideas concerning His ways, concerning His will; and what they understand they are at liberty to declare and to try and make other people understand, particularly if they are called upon by the Lord, and authorized by Him so to do Now, this for want of knowing better. Men in these times, like men in former days, have tried to find out God and the things of God by human wisdom and learning, and they have failed: for "man by searching," the Scripture says, "cannot find out God." But God can manifest Himself to man: and if God chooses to make Himself manifest to His children they can measurably comprehend Him. But in their mortal state, in this state of probation in which we live, mankind cannot fully grasp Deity to comprehend Him as He is in His majesty, and might, and power and glory; but, as I said, they can measurably comprehend God when He

¹¹B. of M., Alma 12:9-10; On this subject, the Prophet Nephi wrote: "And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away upon exceeding high mountains. And mine eyes have beheld great things, yea, even too great for man; therefore, I was bidden that I should not write them." B. of M., 2 Nephi 4:25.

manifests Himself to them, and they can understand Him to the extent that He manifests Himself to them.¹²

Early in the 19th century, Joseph Smith was chosen by God to be his spokesman,¹³ and as such God revealed to Joseph many things pertaining to his nature, character and appearance.¹⁴ It was from this revealed understanding that Joseph taught some of the fundamental truths about God at the funeral sermon of King Follett.

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible,--I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form--like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another.

. . . It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with Him as one man converses with another, and that He was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ Himself did.¹⁵

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught further that "God has a body of flesh and bone,"¹⁶ and that this body is a

¹²Charles W. Penrose, address delivered at Salt Lake City, November 16, 1884, Journal of Discourses, reporter Arthur Winter, XXVI (London, England, 1886), 18-19.

¹³See D&C 28:2-3; 43:2-4; 90:1-3; 107:91-92.

¹⁴See P. of G. P., J.S. 2:17-19, 24-25; D&C 76:11-14, 19-23.

¹⁵HC, VI, 305.

¹⁶See D&C 130:22. Luke 24:36-40.

"spiritual and glorified body."¹⁷

Another important aspect of the nature of God is the power of eternal lives,¹⁸ whereby an Eternal Father and Mother continue to increase in posterity through out eternity. The first Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, consisting of Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund said: "Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body to undergo an experience in mortality."¹⁹

¹⁷See D&C 88:27-29; B. of M., Alma 11:45.

¹⁸See Chapter 3, pp. 38-40; see also Chapter 7, pp. 80-81.

¹⁹"The Origin of Man," A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency of the Church, quoted in James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, V, (Salt Lake City, Bookcraft Inc., 1971), 205 (Italics by the writer). Brigham Young said after quoting Genesis 1:26-27: "I believe that the declaration made in these two scriptures is literally true. God has made His children like Himself to stand erect, and has endowed them with intelligence and power and dominion over all His works, and given them the same attributes which He Himself possesses. He created man, as we create our children; for there is no other process of creation in heaven, on the earth, in the earth, or under the earth, or in all the eternities, that is, that were, or that ever will be." Brigham Young, address delivered at Salt Lake City, June 18, 1865, Journal of Discourses, reporter G. D. Watt, XI (London, England, 1867), 122. See also Joseph Fielding Smith, Man: His Origin and Destiny, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954, p. 351. Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1958, pp. 467-468. Milton R. Hunter, The Gospel Through the Ages, Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, Inc., 1945, pp. 98-100, 118-120. Written and published under the direction of the General Priesthood Committee of the Council of the Twelve of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Melchizedek Priesthood manual 1946.

This important relationship of a Father and Mother in Heaven and the equally important corporeal nature of God are not emphasized in this thesis, but are mentioned as part of an understanding of God which must not be lost sight of when other topics pertaining to God's divine nature are discussed.

THE DIVINE NATURE

The divine nature of God as understood in this thesis will include his attributes, qualities, endowments, character, power and the perfections attached thereto and will exclude primary consideration of his corporeal nature. Admittedly, the term divine nature may be considered by some people to have a broader interpretation than that suggested and hence inclusive of the form or corporeal nature. Thus the choice not to include the corporeal nature within the divine nature may be arbitrary. However, partial justification for the limitation here suggested may be indicated by the only scriptural use of the term:

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.²⁰

²⁰2 Peter 1:2-4 (Italics by the writer).

Like Peter, George Q. Cannon also uses the term divine nature to refer to the attributes, endowments and character of God. He says:

His reason for placing us here was to develop our divine natures. If we were not surrounded by darkness, we could not develop. We must taste the bitter in order to relish the sweet, that our spirits might be purified and that we might exercise our free agency.²¹

Again:

We are the children of God, and as His children there is no attribute we ascribe to Him that we do not possess, though they may be dormant or in embryo.²²

Elder James E. Talmage indicates that it is through the divine nature of the Father that man is potentially a

²¹George Q. Cannon, Address delivered in Salt Lake City, February 1, 1891, quoted in Millennial Star, LIII, (March 30, 1891), 195 (Italics by the writer). Brigham H. Roberts of the First Council of Seventy wrote of the divine nature in The Seventy's Course in Theology: "It was part of the mission of the Church to manifest this Immanent God, as well as God the Father. He came to reveal the whole of the divine nature." Brigham H. Roberts, Seventy's Course in Theology, Fifth Year, "Divine Immanence and The Holy Ghost," (Salt Lake City, Deseret News Co., 1912) V, p. 12. He also said: "One divine nature then is the conclusion; but a divine nature in manifold persons, many, though indeed one, because harmonized into unity of purpose, and will; one divine spirit, rising from one divine nature--though participated in by many; a spirit rising from all intelligences who have attained to the divine nature and unity in all and through all, manifesting God in his splendor and glory, as creating, sustaining, and guiding power in the universe both Immanent and personal." Ibid., p. 18.

Elder Roberts suggests that the following scriptures speak of the divine nature: Tim. 3:16; Col. 2:9; 1:19; Heb. 1:3; John 1:9; Acts 17:22-28; Psalm 139. Ibid., p. 12. He also gives the following scriptures as indicative of the "Role of the Divine Nature:" D&C 29:30-34; Mosiah 15:4; Heb. 1:3; I Cor. 8:6. Ibid., p. 14.

²²George Q. Cannon, Address delivered in Nottingham, England, October 4, 1863, quoted in Millennial Star, XXV, (November 14, 1863), 721-722.

God. He says:

As a child of God, man partakes of the divine nature of his Father. Within him lie germs of infinite development. Potentially, he is a Godlike being. Therefore he may rise eternally toward the likeness of his Father in Heaven. Upward, divine, unending, is man's high destiny.²³

In this study such specific attributes as truth and love, or such specific endowments as spirit and glory, will be analyzed in their relation to the divine nature. It is anticipated that through the process of doing this a better understanding of the divine nature as taught by the apostles and prophets will be achieved.

SOURCES OF DATA

The major sources of data for this thesis are the standard works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which include the Holy Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price. These volumes are accepted by members of the Latter-day Saints Church as scripture and binding upon them as the word of God. Use will also be made of discourses and writings of the apostles and prophets of the Church, which are found in the History of the Church, the Journal of Discourses, Conference Reports, Millennial Star, Times and Seasons, The

²³James E. Talmage, What Is Man? (Salt Lake City, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 1. A broadcast by the Columbia Broadcasting System on Church of the Air, October 4, 1936, now in pamphlet form.

Improvement Era, and other Church-related publications.

Other sources for this thesis will include letters, speeches, lectures and official pronouncements of these apostles and prophets.

Chapter 2

INDWELLING AND ONENESS

Apostles and prophets have made no distinction between the divine nature of God the Eternal Father, God the Son, Jesus Christ and God the Holy Ghost. The reason lies in their oneness. They are one in mind, one in spirit, one in power--that is, they are one in their divine nature. Yet they are separate and distinct personages. Of their oneness, Jesus said.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost.

And thus will the Father bear record of me, and the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me; for the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost are one.¹

The oneness of the members of the Godhead is emphasized in Latter-day Saint sources. They are said to be one in glory,² one in judgment,³ one in happiness,⁴ one in

¹The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 3 Nephi 11:35-36, hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

²Lectures of Faith, as found in the Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Latter Day Saints (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835) No. V, pp. 53-54, No. VII, p. 69, hereafter cited as L. of F.

³B. of M., Alma 11:43-44.

⁴B. of M., Mormon 7:7.

joy,⁵ one in love,⁶ one in mind,⁷ one in spirit,⁸ one in truth,⁹ and one in power, might and dominion.¹⁰ Charles W. Penrose suggests that this oneness includes the fact that they are one "in all things." He says:

As the Father had taken His upward course in worlds before this, so Jesus Christ followed in his footsteps in every respect; therefore he is entitled to sit down at the right hand of God in the heavens, to sit on his throne and be one with the Father in all things; and all the power and glory, and dominion that the Father hath he conferred also upon Jesus.¹¹

The scriptures teach that by means of their divine nature the Father and the Son dwell within each other. This principle is here called "indwelling." Jesus taught this principle of indwelling to his disciples, saying:

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake.¹²

The indwelling principle is also mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants, which states of Jesus: ". . . he

⁵B. of M., 3 Nephi 28:10.

⁶John 17:21-26; 1 John 4:8-13, 16.

⁷L. of F., No. V, pp. 53-54.

⁸Ibid.

⁹The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 130:22, hereafter cited as D&C. 93:26.

¹⁰D&C, 76:95.

¹¹Charles W. Penrose, address delivered at Salt Lake City, November 16, 1884, Journal of Discourses, reporter Arthur Winter, XXVI (London, England, 1886), 25. (Italics by the writer).

¹²John 14:10-11 (Italics by the writer).

received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was, with him, for he dwelt in him."¹³

Since the Father and the Son are separate and distinct personages, it is through the spirit (or mind), glory and power which they possess that indwelling occurs. This concept is explained in the Lectures of Faith:

. . . the Father and the Son possessing the same mind, the same wisdom, glory, power, and fullness: Filling all in all--the Son being filled with the fullness on the Mind, glory, and power, or, in other words, the Spirit, glory, and power of the Father--possessing all knowledge and glory, and the same kingdom: sitting at the right hand of power, in the express image and likeness of the Father--a Mediator for man--being filled with the fullness of the Mind of the Father, or, in other words, the Spirit of the Father: which Spirit is shed forth upon all who believe on his name and keep his commandments: and all those who keep his commandments shall grow up from grace to grace, and become heirs of the heavenly kingdom, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; possessing the same mind, being transformed into the same image or likeness, even the express image of him who fills all in all: being filled with the fullness of his glory, and become one in him, even as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one. . . . As the Son partakes of the fulness of the Father through the Spirit, so the saints are, by the same Spirit, to be partakers of the same fulness, to enjoy the same glory; for as the Father and the Son are one, so in like manner the saints are to be one in them.¹⁴

Not only does the Spirit of God indwell in man, but it indwells in the elements as well. The Prophet Joseph Smith wrote under the influence of revelation: "The elements are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the taber-

¹³D&C 93:17 (Italics by the writer).

¹⁴L. of F., No. V, pp. 53-54.

nacle of God."¹⁵

Even though there is no differentiation made between Father, Son and Holy Ghost in so far as their divine nature is concerned, one should recognize some possible limitations in the glory of the Holy Ghost when compared to the ". . . fulness of the Godhead"¹⁶ which dwells in the Father and the Son. These limitations arise because the Holy Ghost is a spirit personage whose "light and glory are not yet tabernacled"¹⁷ and who, as a spirit personage, may not be able to realize a fulness of joy. A revelation to Joseph Smith says: "The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; And when seperated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy."¹⁸ In an official proclamation designed to correct some of Orson Pratt's early teachings on the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit, the First Presidency and Twelve stressed the need for a person to possess a full organization, physical and spiritual, in order to acquire a fulness of glory. Elder Pratt has written of the substance called the Holy Spirit:

This boundless ocean of spirit possesses in every part, however minute, a will, a self-moving power,

¹⁵D&C 93:35; See also Chapter 10, Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence.

¹⁶Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3.

¹⁷HC, VI, 51.

¹⁸D&C 93:33-34.

knowledge, wisdom, love, goodness, holiness, justice, mercy, and every intellectual and moral attribute possessed by the Father and the Son. Each particle of this Holy Spirit knows, every instant, how to act upon the other materials of nature with which it is immediately associated.¹⁹

In response, the First Presidency and most of the members of the Twelve declared:

We have quoted some of the items which stand out most prominently in the publications referred to, and which strike us as being most objectionable. They are self-confounding and conflict one with another, and, to our minds, some of the statements, if pursued to their legitimate conclusion, would convey the idea that the physical and spiritual organization of a human being conferred no additional powers or benefits on the creature thus organized, but that any single atom of the "spiritual fluid," however minute, possessed every attribute that an organized being could possess. Yet it will readily be perceived, upon reflection, that attributes never can be made manifest in any world except through organized beings.²⁰

The divine personage called the Holy Ghost is nevertheless a member of the Godhead, and he is one with the Father and the Son in their manifestations of truth and power to men on this earth. His power is so great in relation to man's ability to measurably comprehend that it seems that the treatment here proposed, namely, to consider that the divine nature of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is one as it relates to man, is consistent and reasonable.

¹⁹Proclamation of the First Presidency and the Twelve, October 21, 1865, in Millennial Star, XXVII, (October 21, 1865), 661.

²⁰Ibid., p. 662.

SECTION II

THE DIVINE NATURE

Chapter 3

GLORY

The word glory apparently has many different meanings. When it is used as a common term among men, it refers to an aura of praise. But scripturally it denotes some outward and visible manifestations of the divine presence and nature.¹ In this respect, it is commonly associated with light, brightness, shining, heat and fire. It has also been manifested as a cloud. At times, the term glory appears to have been used interchangeably with love, spirit, truth, intelligence, power and goodness. The scriptures teach that God is a being of glory and that he increases in glory. It is these associations, multiple meanings of the word glory and possible synonyms, that need exploration in order to better understand the divine nature of God.

GLORY AND LIGHT

Glory is often referred to as light, or as being associated with light. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, for

¹See Exodus 33:17-23; Ezekiel 1:28; 9:3; 10:4, 18, 19, 11:23; 43:2-5; Luke 2:9; 9:32; John 1:14.

example, of the visit of Moroni as a glorified being:

Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person.²

In the Wentworth letter, Joseph Smith gave a description of the appearance of the same glorified being, stating:

On the evening of the 21st of September, A. D. 1823, while I was praying unto God, and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room, indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire; the appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded.³

In the first of the above quotations the emphasis is on the light which surrounded Moroni; it is said to be brighter than that in the rest of the room. In the second quotation the light around Moroni is spoken of as his glory. The Prophet Joseph Smith therefore uses the words light and glory interchangeably, implying that the two are perhaps the same or else very closely related. Glory and light are

²The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Joseph Smith 2:32, hereafter cited as P. of G. P., followed by the reference within.

³Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), VI, 536, hereafter cited as HC.

used in much the same way by John the Revelator in his description of the City of Zion:

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.⁴

GLORY AND INTELLIGENCE

The Prophet Joseph Smith also taught that there is a close relationship between glory and intelligence. He wrote by revelation that "The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth."⁵ Here glory is equated with intelligence, and, as shown in the previous section, with light.

The First Presidency (consisting of Heber J. Grant, Anthony W. Ivins, and Charles W. Nibley) also appear to have equated glory with intelligence when they wrote:

In humility, and with full consciousness of the responsibility involved, we bear witness to the people of the world that with the appearance of the Father and the Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the early spring of 1820, the greatest gospel dispensation of all time was ushered in, a dispensation of light, radiating from the presence of God, illuminating the minds of men, increasing intelligence and knowledge, which is the glory of God, and by the application of

⁴Revelation 21:23-25 (Italics by the writer).

⁵D&C 93:36.

which the past one hundred years have been made the Miracle Century of the ages.⁶

GLORY AND ILLUMINATION

Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon received a revelation which is popularly known as "The Vision." In giving an account of this divine manifestation they said: "And while we meditated upon these things, the Lord touched the eyes of our understandings and they were opened, and the glory of the Lord, shone round about."⁷ The same kind of testimony was given in the New Testament at the birth of Jesus Christ. Some local shepherds were tending their flocks when a heavenly messenger appeared unto them. Luke said of this event: "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."⁸

GLORY AND BRIGHTNESS

Because light is associated with glory, brightness is one of its characteristics. This characteristic is mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants in conjunction with a description of the second coming of Jesus Christ. This

⁶"A Message," for the Centennial by the First Presidency, April 6, 1930, quoted in The Improvement Era, XXXIII, (May 1930), p. 454. (Italics by the writer).

⁷D&C 76:19 (Italics by the writer).

⁸Luke 2:9 (Italics by the writer).

revelation states:

Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth.⁹

The Prophet Ezekiel described an experience which he had with the glory of God, which illustrates that the characteristic of brightness is associated with glory. He said:

Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.¹⁰

GLORY AND FIRE

Glory is also referred to at times as being associated with fire. For example, the children of Israel saw the glory of the Lord as a devouring fire. The record states: "And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel."¹¹

Because God's glory has the appearance of fire when it is manifest, fire is often used as a symbol of God.¹² It is said that Jesus will appear in the midst of fire at

⁹D&C 65:5 (Italics by the writer).

¹⁰Ezekiel 10:4.

¹¹Exodus 24:17.

¹²See Deuteronomy 4:24; Psalm 18:12-14; Ezekiel 1:4; Revelation 1:14.

his second coming,¹³ and the wrath of God is compared to fire.¹⁴ Christ is compared to fire,¹⁵ as is also the Holy Ghost.¹⁶ As glorified beings, angels are also compared to a burning fire.¹⁷

Significantly, fire from heaven fell frequently upon sacrifices which God accepted as a mark of his presence and approbation. For example when God made a covenant¹⁸ with Abraham, a fire, like that of a furnace, passed through the divided pieces of the sacrifice and consumed them.¹⁹ Fire fell upon the sacrifice which Moses offered at the dedication of the tabernacle²⁰ and upon those of Manoah,²¹ Samson's father, upon Solomon's at the dedication of the temple,²² and upon Elijah's at Mount Carmel.²³

The Prophet Joseph Smith alluded to the relationship of fire with glory when he said: "Spirits can only be revealed in flaming fire or glory."²⁴ He also said, as he spoke of the resurrection: "Although the earthly tabernacle is laid down and dissolved, they shall rise again to dwell in everlasting burnings in immortal glory."²⁵

¹³See 2 Thessalonians 1:8.

¹⁴See Psalm 18:8.

¹⁵See Malachi 3:2.

¹⁶See Matthew 3:11.

¹⁷See Psalm 104:4.

¹⁸See following footnote.

¹⁹See Genesis 15:17.

²⁰See Leviticus 9:24.

²¹See Judges 13:19-20.

²²See 2 Chronicles 7:1.

²³See 1 Kings 18:38.

²⁴HC, VI, 51.

²⁵HC, VI, 306.

GLORY AND CLOUD

The glory of God has also often been represented as a cloud. Solomon's temple, which was built for the God of Israel, was filled with a cloud of glory:

It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.

So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.²⁶

The word "sheckinah" came to be used by the Jews before Christ, and was later borrowed from them by the Christians to denote the cloud of glory which was at times manifested among the ancient Israelites.²⁷

The presence of the Sheckinah was reckoned as one of the special blessings of Israel to which they had a legal right by covenant.²⁸ It was not, however, manifested in temples built after that of Solomon.

The temple of the New Jerusalem will have a cloud of glory upon it, as described in a revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants:

²⁶2 Chronicles 5:13-14.

²⁷See Exodus 24:16; 1 Kings 8:10; Isaiah 6:1-3; See also Matthew 17:5; Luke 2:9; Acts 7:55.

²⁸See Romans 9:4.

For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house.²⁹

GLORY AND GOODNESS

The relationship between glory and goodness is such that goodness is sometimes used as a synonym for glory. For instance, the Book of Exodus records the following experience of Moses with the Lord.

And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

And he said, thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live.

And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:

And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.³⁰

Similarly, the Book of Mormon Prophet Mormon wrote of glory and goodness as being synonymous when the power of God was upon king Lamoni at his conversion by Ammon. The king had fallen to the earth as a result of the power of God. Mormon wrote:

Now, this was what Ammon desired, for he knew that king Lamoni was under the power of God; he knew that the dark veil of unbelief was being cast away from his mind, and the light which did light up his mind, which

²⁹D&C 84:5.

³⁰Exodus 33:18-23 (Italics by the writer).

was the light of the glory of God, which was a marvelous light of his goodness--yea, this light had infused such joy into his soul, the cloud of darkness having been dispelled, and that the light of everlasting life was lit up in his soul, yea, he knew that this had overcome his natural frame, and he was carried away in God.³¹

GLORY AND TRUTH

The scripture linking glory to "intelligence, or, . . . light and truth,"³² equates glory with truth. In an earlier verse of this same revelation, it appears that when one is filled with truth, one is also filled with glory. This verse states: "He that keepeth his (God's) commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things."³³

The Apostle Paul seems to have understood that glory and truth are directly related. He wrote to the Corinthians: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."³⁴ What is "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shined out of darkness" if it is not the gospel or, in other words, truth?

GLORY AND JOY

The missionary Ammon saw that the "light of the glory

³¹B. of M., Alma 19:6 (Italics by the writer).

³²D&C 93:36.

³³D&C 93:36.

³⁴2 Corinthians 4:6.

of God" was the source of joy unto King Lamoni. Even though this experience has been cited earlier in this study for another purpose, it is given again to illustrate the fact that joy results from being endowed with glory. Having described how King Lamoni fell to the earth under the power of God, Mormon said:

Now, this was what Ammon desired, for he knew that King Lamoni was under the power of God: he knew that the dark veil of unbelief was being cast away from his mind, and the light which did light up his mind, which was the light of the glory of God, which was a marvelous light of his goodness--yea, this light had infused such joy into his soul, the cloud of darkness having been dispelled, and that the light of everlasting life was lit up in his soul, yea, he knew that this had overcome his natural frame, and he was carried away in God.³⁵

B. H. Roberts probably reasoned correctly when he showed an interdependent relationship between glory and joy. He stated: "And the purpose for which man is, is that he might have 'joy' that 'joy' which in the last analysis of things, should be even as God's 'joy,' and God's glory, namely, the bringing to pass the progress, enlargement, and 'joy' of others."³⁶

GLORY AND LIFE

In the experience of King Lamoni, referred to above,

³⁵B. of M. Alma 19:6; (Italics by the writer).

³⁶Brigham H. Roberts, New Witnesses For God (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1951), III, 205. The 1895 edition of the same work is titled A New Witness For God.

Mormon wrote that "the light of the glory of God" was "the light of everlasting life" and that it was "lit up in his soul." In a revelation to Joseph Smith known as the "Olive Leaf," eternal life (God's kind of life) is said to be "even the glory of the celestial kingdom." The words of this revelation follow:

This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom.

Which glory is that of the Church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son³⁷

Farther on in the same revelation, the relationship of glory and life is expressed more explicitly: "This is the glory of God, and the sanctified; and they shall not any more see death."³⁸

GLORY AND LOVE

Love appears to be a product of the endowment of man with glory--it is a fruit of the spirit or glory of God. In his epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul wrote:

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

³⁷D&C 88:4-5.

³⁸D&C 88:116.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.³⁹

This passage of scripture seems to indicate that the riches of the Father's glory is, at least in some measure composed of love.

GLORY AND POWER

Glory is at times used as a synonym for power. The Prophet Joseph Smith said of those faithful who obtain eternal life, or, in other words, the kind of life that God has, that they shall sit in glory, which is the same as sitting enthroned in everlasting power. He said:

Here, then, is eternal life--to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.⁴⁰

The Prophet Joseph was given the record of John by revelation. Part of this record contains the witness of John that the Beloved Son received a fulness of glory and power from the Father. John said:

And I, John, bear record that he received a fullness of the glory of the Father;

And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him.⁴¹

³⁹Ephesians 3:16-19.

⁴⁰HC, VI, 306.

⁴¹D&C 93:16-17.

With the fulness of the Father's glory dwelling in him, Jesus received all power. This conclusion is also apparent in Section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants, where the power that pertains to those who have received a fulness of glory⁴² is described as follows:

The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things.⁴³

In the New Testament, John recorded the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Therein, he uses the word glory as being equivalent in meaning to power:

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead come forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.⁴⁴

Glory is also used as a vehicle of power. The Book of Mormon describes the power of glory that will be manifested during Christ's second coming. It says:

And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for the fear of the Lord

⁴²See D&C 88:5 (Italics by the writer).

⁴³D&C 88:13

⁴⁴John 11:40-44.

shall come upon them and the glory of his majesty shall smite them, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which he hath made for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the Lord shall come upon them and the majesty of his glory shall smite them, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.⁴⁵

GLORY A TRANSFIGURING AGENT

Moses gives an account of some of his experiences with God. He records the role of glory within the narration of these experiences. The Book of Moses says:

And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence. . . .

And the presence of God withdrew from Moses, that his glory was not upon Moses; and Moses was left unto himself. And as he was left unto himself, he fell unto the earth. . . .

But now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him.⁴⁶

After this experience Satan came to tempt Moses, but Moses was able to discern between the power of Satan and that of God because the glory of God did strengthen him whereas the power of Satan was as darkness unto him. Moses said of this experience:

For behold, I could not look upon God, except his glory should come upon me, and I were strengthened before him. But I can look upon thee in the natural man.

⁴⁵B. of M., 2 Nephi 12:19-21.

⁴⁶P. of G. P., Moses 1:2, 9, 11 (Italics by the writer).

Is it not so, surely?

Blessed be the name of my God, for his Spirit hath not altogether withdrawn from me, or else where is thy glory, for it is darkness unto me? And I can judge between thee and God; for God said unto me: Worship God, for him only shalt thou serve.⁴⁷

As a result, Moses did not follow after Satan, but chose to worship God. He was again strengthened by God's glory when he stood in the presence of God. The record states:

And behold, the glory of the Lord was upon Moses, so that Moses stood in the presence of God, and talked with him face to face. And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.⁴⁸

Enoch also saw God and was "clothed upon with glory."⁴⁹ In view of these examples, one may conclude that glory is a transfiguring and strengthening agent so that men can bear the presence of God.

GLORY, A QUICKENING AGENT

One of the powers attributed to glory is the quickening of the body after death. Of this power Section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants states:

For notwithstanding they die, they also shall rise again, a spiritual body.

They who are of a celestial spirit shall receive the same body which was a natural body; even ye shall receive your bodies, and your glory shall be that glory by which your bodies are quickened.

Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial

⁴⁷P. of G. P., Moses 1:14-15.

⁴⁸P. of G. P., Moses 1:31.

⁴⁹P. of G. P., Moses 7:3-4.

glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

And they who are quickened by a portion of the terrestrial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

And they who remain shall also be quickened; nevertheless, they shall return again to their own place, to enjoy that which they are willing to receive, because they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received.⁵⁰

GLORY AND SPIRIT

Glory appears at times to be used interchangeably with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, etc. Sometimes they perform the same roles or functions. In order to demonstrate the interchangeable nature of glory and spirit in fulfilling the same roles or functions, the relationship of glory and spirit should be studied with regard to some selected subjects.

Light

Glory is referred to as light, both the pure light which quickens man's intellect and the more gross light of his temporal existence.⁵¹ Spirit is also referred to as light, that refined light of a spiritual nature that is God's glory. But this is not all. In its less refined existence, spirit is the gross light of this temporal existence.⁵² Spirit and glory appear to be synonymous in

⁵⁰D&C 88:27-32.

⁵¹See Chapter 3, pp. 19-21; see also D&C 88:4-13.

⁵²See Chapter 4, p. 53; see also Chapter 5, pp. 74-75.

that they refer to both spiritual light and the gross light of our current existence.

Fire

Another indication of the fact that spirit and glory are essentially the same thing is that they both produce ocular manifestations of fire.⁵³

Joy

Spirit and glory have the same function with respect to joy. They both produce joy in man.⁵⁴

Goodness

Glory and spirit have a like relationship to goodness. Glory has been used in the sense of being equivalent to goodness⁵⁵ while the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Ghost are the sources of all goodness.⁵⁶

Sanctification

The power to sanctify is in glory and spirit.⁵⁷ Since glory and spirit are sanctifying agents, this would be another indication that they are the same thing.

⁵³See Chapter 3, pp. 23-24; see also Chapter 4, pp. 65-66.

⁵⁴See Chapter 3, pp. 27-28; see also Chapter 4, p. 64.

⁵⁵See Chapter 3, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁶See Chapter 4, pp. 50, 64.

⁵⁷See Chapter 4, pp. 64-65; see also Exodus 29:43.

Indwelling

By means of the spirit or glory of God, the Father dwells in Christ, and Christ can dwell in man.⁵⁸ Spirit and glory do not appear to be separate agents because they produce the same bonds, unity, power and mind in all in whom they dwell. Furthermore, spirit and glory emanate from the same source, namely God the Eternal Father, through Jesus Christ.

Quickening

Spirit and glory have the same function as quickening agents of the body after death.⁵⁹ Hence, they are essentially the same thing.

Intelligence

Spirit is referred to as intelligence and is the source of enlightenment.⁶⁰ Glory is also referred to as intelligence.⁶¹ Since both are referred to as intelligence, their identity seems to be linked together.

Life

Glory is associated with life, particularly eternal life, which is defined as the kind of life that God has as

⁵⁸L. of F., No. V. pp. 53-54; see also Chapter 2, pp. 14-16.

⁵⁹See Chapter 3, p. 33; see also Chapter 4, p. 67.

⁶⁰See Chapter 4, pp. 52-53, 63-64.

⁶¹See Chapter 3, pp. 21-22.

a glorified being.⁶² Spirit is the source of life in both the temporal and spiritual realms of existence. It is also the power through which eternal life is obtained, for it is the power of eternal life.⁶³ Since both spirit and glory are described as the power of eternal life, they must be closely associated.

Truth

Spirit and glory are referred to as truth.⁶⁴ Their relationship to truth is another indication of the fact that they are essentially the same thing.

Love

The riches of God's glory include love,⁶⁵ while the spirit manifests God's love throughout the earth.⁶⁶ Here again they have the same function.

Transfiguring Agents

Being endowed with glory, Moses was able to stand

⁶²Chapter 3, pp. 28-29, and Chapter 9, pp. 87-88.

⁶³See Chapter 4, p. 53, and Chapter 9, pp. 86-87

⁶⁴See Chapter 4, pp. 54-55, and Chapter 3, p. 27; see also Chapter 6, pp. 79-81.

⁶⁵See Chapter 3, pp. 29-30.

⁶⁶See Chapter 4, p. 64; see Chapter 8, pp. 92-93; see also Romans 5:5.

in the presence of God.⁶⁷ Likewise Joseph Smith indicates that he was able to stand in the presence of God because he was quickened by the Spirit of God.⁶⁸ Elder Spencer W. Kimball talked of both glory and Spirit in connection with man standing in the presence of God. He said:

To know God, one must be aware of the person and attributes, power, and glory of God the Father and God the Christ. Moses declares he ". . . saw God face to face, and he talked with him. . ." (Moses 1:2) This experience of Moses is in harmony with the scripture, which says: "For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God. Neither can any natural man abide the presence of God, neither after the carnal mind." (D&C 67: 11-12. *Italics in original*).

It must be obvious then that to endure the glory of the Father or of the glorified Christ, a mortal being must be translated or otherwise fortified. Moses, a prophet of God, held the protecting Holy Priesthood; ". . . and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence." (Moses 1:2)

Moses explained that he could endure the divine presence because ". . . the glory of God," (*idem*) was upon him.⁶⁹

Glory and Spirit therefore perform the same role as transfiguring agents.

SUMMARY

God's glory and his Holy Spirit are related and appear to be the same thing. They exhibit the same characteristics, and at times they are used as synonymous terms

⁶⁷See Chapter 3, pp. 32-33.

⁶⁸See Chapter 4, p. 66.

⁶⁹Spencer W. Kimball, ". . . For They Shall See God," address delivered at Salt Lake City, April 5, 1964, in The Improvement Era, Vol. 67 (June, 1964), 497.

for each other. At other times, they perform the same roles or functions. There are some usages of the word glory which could tend to qualify the following conclusion about glory and spirit; nevertheless, there seems to be enough correlation between the two to say that God's glory is his Holy Spirit.

CONTROL OF GLORY

The scriptures indicate that a glorified being has control over the manifestations of his glory. God told Moses that no man can behold all his glory and remain in the flesh. His words to Moses were: "Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth."⁷⁰ God, therefore had to diminish the expression of his glory in order to allow Moses to continue his work on the earth.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that spirits do not have control over their glory and if revealed, they must appear in the full manifestation of their glory. On the other hand, he also said that Angels are more advanced, and if revealed, they have power to control their light and glory. His words are: "A spirit cannot come but in glory; an angel has flesh and bones; we see not their glory."⁷¹

⁷⁰P. of G. P., Moses 1:5.

⁷¹H.C., III, 392.

Again: "Spirits can only be revealed in flaming fire and glory. Angels have advanced further, their light and glory being tabernacled; and hence they appear in bodily shape."⁷²

An example of the power that an angel has to control his glory was exhibited by the Angel Moroni when he appeared to Joseph Smith. The Prophet said:

After this communication, I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around the person of him who had been speaking to me, and it continued to do so until the room was again left dark, except just around him; when, instantly I saw, as it were, a conduit open right up into heaven, and he ascended till he entirely disappeared, and the room was left as it had been before this heavenly light had made its appearance.⁷³

The cloud of glory which led ancient Israel as they left Egypt⁷⁴ was manifested as a light to Israel and as darkness to the Egyptians. The Book of Exodus states:

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them;

And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud of darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these; so that the one came not near the other all the night.⁷⁵

Glorified beings can control the manifestations of their glory, but a spirit can not. The control of glory

⁷²HC, VI, 51

⁷³p. of G. P., Joseph Smith 2:43. For proof that the light here referred to is a synonym for glory, see this chapter pp. 19-21.

⁷⁴See Exodus 24:15-18; 40:34-38; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14; D&C 84:5.

⁷⁵Exodus 14:19-20.

resides in those whose organization is complete, that is, resurrected and spiritual beings of flesh and bone.

SOURCE OF GLORY

Glory is a fundamental part of the being of God, the Eternal Father, and is manifest from him to others. The Apostle Paul called him the "Father of glory." He said that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him."⁷⁶

Jesus Christ spoke of His second coming, saying that He would come in the "glory of his Father."⁷⁷ A revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants also indicates that the source of Christ's glory is the Father. It states:

And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father;

And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him.⁷⁸

FULNESS OF GLORY

All those who qualify for the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom and thus enter into the full felicity of the Father, which is his rest, will receive a fulness of glory. They shall have eternal life and shall be heirs

⁷⁶Ephesians 1:17.

⁷⁷Matthew 16:27.

⁷⁸D&C 93:16-17.

through Christ to all that the Father hath.⁷⁹ In the Doctrine and Covenants it is indicated that those who are sanctified by God shall enter his presence and receive a fulness of glory. It states:

Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God;

But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory.⁸⁰

Charles W. Penrose described the fulness of glory and the rest of the Father when he said:

We will comprehend everything we learned when we dwelt in the flesh; and we will be clothed upon with the spirit and power of God in its fullness, and kingdoms and power and glory eternal will be given unto us. We shall have the gift of eternal and endless increase. Our families will be with us and be the beginning of our dominion, and upon that basis we shall build forever. Our wives and our children will be ours for all eternity. Our increase shall never cease while duration rolls along and the works of God spread forth, and our posterity and kingdoms will grow and extend till they shall be as numerous as the stars, and we will enter into the rest of our Father and enjoy his presence and society for evermore. God help us to attain to the fullness of this glory, for Christ's sake.⁸¹

GOD INCREASES IN GLORY

God explained to Moses that he brought worlds into existence to bring about the immortality and eternal life

⁷⁹See D&C 84:34-40.

⁸⁰D&C 84:23-24.

⁸¹Penrose, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, 29.

of man. His words to Moses were:

And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works neither to my words.

For behold, this is my work and my glory--to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.⁸²

How is it that God is glorified in the immortality and eternal life of man? In order to answer this question it is necessary to leave it temporarily to establish some background information.

First, one must understand that when a man is endowed with immortality and eternal life, he has become a God, for he has received the type and kind of life which God himself possesses, eternal life is God's life.⁸³

Second, when a man possesses eternal life, he also has the power of eternal lives (which is the power to beget spirit children).⁸⁴ Thus, a man possessing eternal life may have posterity in the life to come.

Third, there is a relationship between glory and posterity, wherein the works of God are continued and he is glorified as the number of his posterity increases. The correlation between glory and posterity is indicated in Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which states:

Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins--from whose loins ye are,

⁸²p. of G. P., Moses 1:38-39.

⁸³See Chapter 7, pp. 87-88.

⁸⁴See Chapter 7, pp. 88-89.

namely, my servant Joseph--which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sands upon the seashore ye could not number them.

This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of the works of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself.⁸⁵

George Q. Cannon also emphasized that God's glory consists in the number of his posterity. He said:

As the Prophet says concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "to the increase of his kingdom there shall be no end." It shall go on increasing with every cycle of eternity as long as time endures. There shall be no end to the increase of his Kingdom. His glory consisted of this; and the glory of God consists in the number of his posterity; and as generation succeeds generation, until the earth is filled and glorified, other worlds will be rolled into existence upon which the posterity of God, our heavenly Father, shall increase throughout the endless ages of eternity.⁸⁶

As it has been indicated God is glorified through an increase in posterity. But why is this so? The Prophet Joseph Smith gave us the reason. He taught that posterity is the basis of all of God's kingdoms. And as God's children became exalted and the fathers of their own kingdoms, which they present to him, his domain and kingdoms are forever increasing, and so also his power and glory. To quote:

⁸⁵D&C 132:30-31. See also D&C 132:6.

⁸⁶George Q. Cannon, Address delivered in Salt Lake City, April 8, 1871, Journal of Discourses, reporter David W. Evans, XIV, (London, England, 1872), 128.

What did Jesus do? Why, I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out His kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to My Father, so that He may obtain Kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt Him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take His place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus trends in the tracks of His Father, and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all His children. It is plain beyond disputation, and you thus learn some of the first principles of the gospel, about which so much hath been said.⁸⁷

With this background it is now possible to answer the question: How is it that God is glorified in the immortality and eternal life of man? The answer seems to be that when a man has been raised up to attain the kind of life that God has (which is eternal life), he will have the powers to form his own worlds and to place his own children thereon. These kingdoms thus formed will, in the eternal future, be presented to God the Eternal Father and become part of his dominion. Thereby increasing his glory and power.

DIVINE NATURE AND GLORY

As has been pointed out earlier in this chapter, God is the source of glory.⁸⁸ Jesus Christ received a fulness of the glory and power of the Father.⁸⁹ Obedient

⁸⁷HC, VI, 306.

⁸⁸See Chapter 3, p. 41.

⁸⁹See D&C 93:4, 16-17.

men and women can also receive fulness of the glory and power of the Father, but through Jesus Christ.⁹⁰

Until Jesus Christ received a fulness of the glory of the Father, he was not fully perfected to the extent possible within his nature. It was through the endowments of the spirit, glory, light, and power which constitutes the divine nature of the Father that Christ became perfected.⁹¹

CONCLUSION

Glory as an ocular manifestation is associated with light, shining, brightness, fire and a cloud. It is at times used as a synonym for spirit, truth, light, power and intelligence. Its influence is that of joy, love and goodness. God increases in glory as his kingdoms increase. The nature of glory is so broad and encompassing that a fulness of it constitutes the divine nature of God.

⁹⁰See D&C 93:20.

⁹¹See D&C 93:12-13.

Chapter 4

SPIRIT

"God is a Spirit,"¹ said Jesus to the Samaritan woman who came to Jacob's well. Charles W. Penrose elucidated the phrase "God is a Spirit." He stated that God's personal Spirit has form and is housed in a glorified body of flesh and bone:

God is a spirit; but it does not follow that because God is a spirit, He has no form, no shape, no extent, no limit; or that He can be, as an individual, in every place at the same time, as many people imagine. . . .

Our Father and our God is an individual, a personality; He is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth; but He dwells in a tabernacle, in a body, though that body is different from our bodies, it being a spiritual body. It is quickened by spirit.²

God has a body of flesh, bone and spirit. Because God's body is quickened by spirit, it is also called a spiritual body.³ President Joseph F. Smith indicates that God is essentially spiritual, even though he has a body of flesh and bone. President Smith said:

¹John 4:24.

²Charles W. Penrose, address delivered at Salt Lake City, November 16, 1884, Journal of Discourses, reporter Arthur Winter, XXVI, 19-22.

³The resurrected body is a spiritual body. See The Doctrine and Covenants 88:27; and The Book of Mormon, Alma 11:45.

God is spiritual himself, although he has a body of flesh and bone as Christ has. Yet he is spiritual, and those who worship him must do so in spirit and truth. And when you come to separate the spiritual from the temporal, see that you do not make a mistake.⁴

Spirit is thought by some people to be immaterial, but the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes."⁵

The form of God's personal spirit is that of a human body. The brother of Jared saw the personal spirit of Jesus Christ before the great redeemer came to earth and was clothed with flesh. In this theophany, Jesus said to the brother of Jared:

Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh.⁶

This passage makes it apparent that Christ had an organized spirit in the form of his physical body. But there are other meanings for the words spirit and the Spirit of God. Spirit may also be referred to as a substance by which God acts. It is through the influence and power of

⁴Joseph F. Smith, "Nothing Temporal With God," Deseret News Weekly, XXIII, (July 16, 1884), 466.

⁵The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 131:7, hereafter cited as D&C.

⁶The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Ether 3:16 hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

his Holy Spirit that God is everywhere present, all-powerful and all-knowing.⁷ The Holy Spirit is associated with light, truth, and intelligence.⁸ It is eternal, self-acting, and self-existing.⁹

A revelation to Joseph Smith teaches that all things are spiritual in the eyes of God. This is in contrast with man's understanding; for him all things are gross and temporal. This revelation states:

For by the power of my Spirit created I them;
yea, all things both spiritual and temporal--

First spiritual, secondly temporal, which is the beginning of my work; and again, first temporal, and secondly spiritual, which is the last of my work. . . .

Speaking unto you that you may naturally understand; but unto myself my works have no end, neither beginning; but it is given unto you that ye may understand, because ye have asked it of me and are agreed.

Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, not the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.¹⁰

God is a spiritual being. All things to him are eternal and spiritual.

THE SPIRIT OR LIGHT OF CHRIST

The spirit of God which is manifest to this earth is known as the Spirit or light of Christ. Jesus Christ is the

⁷See this Chapter pp. 55-56, 62; also see Chapter 10, Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnipresence.

⁸See this chapter pp. 52-54.

⁹See D&C 88:36-38, 93:29-33, 131:7-8.

¹⁰D&C 29:31-34.

source of this spirit through the principle of divine investiture of authority.¹¹ In the Doctrine and Covenants, the relationship of the Father and Son is stated with respect to the sending forth of this spirit. Speaking of one who is properly ordained to the priesthood, it states:

Wherefore, he is possessor of all things; for all things are subject unto him, both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son.¹²

The classic statement of the light or spirit of Christ is found in the revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, known as the "Olive Leaf." Speaking of Christ, this revelation states:

He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth;

Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made.

As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made;

As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made;

And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand.

And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;

Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space--

The light which is in all things, which giveth

¹¹See "The Father and The Son--A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency," quoted in James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, V, (Salt Lake City, Bookcraft Inc., 1971), pp. 31-33.

¹²D&C 50:27.

life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things.¹³

There are five general functions and powers of the spirit or light of Christ mentioned in this revelation. They are: creation, government, life, intelligence or enlightenment, and light. An explanation of these functions and powers of the Spirit follows:

Spirit of Christ and Creation

This spirit or light of Christ is the power by which the sun, moon, stars and the earth were made.¹⁴ This spirit is the force and power of all creation, for Jesus said:
". . . by the power of my Spirit created I them; yea, all things both spiritual and temporal."¹⁵

Spirit of Christ and Government

The Spirit of Christ is the law by which all things are governed and sustained.¹⁶ Parley P. Pratt said of the governing powers of the Spirit of Christ:

This is the great, positive, controlling element of all other elements. It is omnipresent by reason of its infinitude, and it pervades all things.

It is the agent or executive, by which God organizes and puts in motion all worlds, and which, by the mandate of the Almighty, or any of his commissioned servants performs all the mighty wonders, signs and miracles ever

¹³D&C 88:6-13.

¹⁴D&C 88:7-10.

¹⁵D&C 29:31.

¹⁶D&C 88:13.

manifested in the name of the Lord, the dividing of the Sea, the removing of a mountain, the raising of the dead, or the healing of the sick.¹⁷

Spirit of Christ and Life

All life is sustained by the Spirit of Christ.¹⁸ It is the quickening influence for Jesus said: "The power of my Spirit quickeneth all things."¹⁹ Charles W. Penrose explained that every vital and life force on this earth resides in the light of Christ. He said:

. . . so the light of God, the Spirit of God, proceeding forth from the presence of God, fills the immensity of space. It is the light and the life of all things. It is the light and the life of man. It is the life of the animal creation. It is the life of the vegetable creation.²⁰

Spirit of Christ and Intelligence or En- lightenment

In the revelation known as the "Olive Leaf," quoted above, it states: ". . . the light of truth; which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ."²¹ Through the power of the light of Christ, an understanding of truth is fostered in man, which is the basis of intelligence.

Intelligence is also increased by this Spirit in

¹⁷Parley P. Pratt, Key to the Science of Theology, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1965), pp. 46-47.

¹⁸D&C 88:13.

¹⁹D&C 33:16.

²⁰Penrose, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, p. 21.

²¹D&C 88:6-7.

that it "enlighteneth the eyes" and "quickeneth the understanding."²² This latter aspect of increasing intelligence through the power of the spirit of Christ was emphasized in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith which states: "And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit."²³

The spirit or light of Christ is the light of truth and the power that enlightens and inspires, thereby enhancing intelligence.

Spirit of Christ and Light

The spirit of Christ is said to be the gross light of the sun, moon and stars.²⁴ Not only is this spirit the light of these luminaries, but it is the power of a complete spectrum of light, from the reflected light of the moon to the most pure and refined light of enlightenment and truth.²⁵ A revelation to Joseph Smith states that light comes from the spirit of Christ:

For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man

²²D&C 88:11.

²³D&C 84:46.

²⁴D&C 88:7-9, 11.

²⁵D&C 88:11; see also Pratt, Theology, pp. 46-48.

through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.²⁶

The spirit of Christ is the source of all light. Truth shines and gives light because of the Spirit. Light is at times a synonym for spirit,²⁷ and light is also spirit in the sense that light is produced by the power of the spirit of Christ.

SPIRIT OF CHRIST AND OTHER POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

Spirit and Truth

There is an equation in the quotation directly above which is of interest with respect to the relationship between the spirit and truth. It equates truth with light, and light with spirit. Hence truth is also spirit. This equation may be valid in that the Lord states to Joseph Smith:

Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness--in the wilderness, because you cannot see him--my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound.²⁸

Spirit is truth in the sense that the spirit fosters and reveals truth, and is a spirit of truth.

²⁶D&C 84:45-46.

²⁷See Chapter 5, pp. 74-75.

²⁸D&C 88:66.

Spirit of Christ and
Good

This spirit is the great guiding force of all good. For instance, the Lord told Hyrum Smith through his brother Joseph, that it is the spirit of Christ that leads men to do good. The Lord states: "I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good--yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit."²⁹ The Prophet Mormon taught that the spirit helps men to discern between good and evil. He said:

For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.³⁰

Spirit of Christ and Omni-
presence, Omnipotence
and Omniscience

Through His Spirit, God is omnipresent. The suggestion of omnipresence is made in the question posed by the Psalmist: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"³¹ The Psalm continues:

²⁹D&C 11:12.

³⁰B. of M., Moroni 7:15-16, see also Chapter 10, pp. 107-111.

³¹psalm 139:7.

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.³²

The Spirit of Christ "fills the immensity of space" and is "through all things."³³ It is in the elements and in man.³⁴ Charles W. Penrose spoke of God as an omnipresent and omnipotent being through the power of his spirit. He said:

As I have previously explained, God is not everywhere present personally, but He is omnipresent in the power of that spirit--the Holy Spirit--which animates all created things. . . .

This spirit which pervades all things, which is the light and life of all things, by which our heavenly Father operates, by which He is omnipotent, never had a beginning and never will have an end. It is the light of truth; it is the spirit of intelligence.³⁵

Though Elder Penrose does not say it, God is also omniscient through his spirit.³⁶

SUMMARY

President Joseph F. Smith summarizes succinctly some of the powers that Jesus Christ controls through his spirit.

³²Psalm 139:8-12.

³³D&C 88:6, 12-13.

³⁴D&C 93:35, see also D&C 88:46-50.

³⁵Penrose, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, 23.

³⁶See Chapter 10, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence.

He said:

It is by the power of God that all things are made that have been made. It is by the power of Christ that all things are governed and kept in place that are governed and kept in place in the universe. It is the power which proceeds from the presence of the Son of God throughout all the works of his hands, that giveth light, energy, understanding, knowledge, and a degree of intelligence to all the children of men, strictly in accordance with the words in the Book of Job: "There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." It is this inspiration from God, proceeding throughout all his creations, that enlighteneth the children of men; and it is nothing more or less than the spirit of Christ, that enlighteneth the mind, that quickeneth the understanding, and that prompteth the children of men to do that which is good and to eschew that which is evil; which quickens the conscience of man and gives him intelligence to judge between good and evil, light and darkness, right and wrong.³⁷

HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead. He is a personage of spirit, whereas the Father and Son are organized spirits tabernacled in flesh and bone.³⁸ These three personages constitute the Godhead and are separate and distinct individuals. The Prophet Joseph Smith said on this subject:

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a

³⁷Joseph F. Smith, Address delivered in Salt Lake City, March 16, 1902, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives," The Improvement Era, XI, (March, 1908), 380.

³⁸The Holy Ghost has a body of spirit like unto the body of Jesus Christ before he came to this earth. See Chapter 4, p. 48.

distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.³⁹

The Holy Ghost is one with the Father and the Son in the sense that his power, spirit, and influence came from the Father to the Son, and from Son to the Holy Ghost. In the use of this power, influence, and spirit, all the acts of the Holy Ghost are in harmony with the mind and will of the Father and the Son. These principles are expressed in the scriptures. For example, Jesus said that the Holy Ghost was poured out through him upon men. To the Nephites he said:

And after that ye were blessed then fulfilleth the Father the covenant which he made with Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed--unto the pouring out of the Holy Ghost through me upon the Gentiles, which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all unto the scattering of my people, O house of Israel.⁴⁰

Jesus taught that the Holy Ghost takes of the truth that is centered in him, which he received of the Father, and shows it to men. He said:

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.⁴¹

³⁹HC, VI, 474.

⁴⁰B. of M., 3 Nephi 20:27 (Italics by the writer).

⁴¹John 16:13-15; (Italics by the writer). See also D&C 21:9.

In several scriptural references, the spirit and influence of the Holy Ghost are referred to as the spirit of Jesus Christ. For instance, Jesus said:

And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.⁴²

A baptized member of the Church of Jesus Christ receives the gift of the Holy Ghost to be with him. On the other hand, Jesus Christ indicates that it is his spirit that is to be with the baptized member. The difference in these two statements is more apparent than real. The spirit of Jesus Christ is the same as the spirit, power, and influence of the Holy Ghost in the sense that the Holy Ghost receives his power, influence and spirit from Christ. Thus, when Jesus said that "his Spirit would be with you," this is indeed the truth because the Holy Ghost manifests the spirit of Christ.

In a revelation to Joseph Smith, Christ designated his spirit as the power of the Holy Ghost. Speaking to Edward Partridge, he said:

And I will lay my hand upon you by the hand of my servant Sidney Rigdon, and you shall receive my Spirit, the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which shall teach you the peaceable things of the kingdom.⁴³

⁴²B. of M., 3 Nephi 18:11; (Italics by the writer). See also B. of M., Mosiah 18:10; Moroni 4:3; 5:2; D&C 20:77-79.

⁴³D&C 36:2; (Italics by the writer).

It would seem proper to refer to the power of the Holy Ghost as the spirit of Christ in the sense that the Holy Ghost receives his power and influence from Jesus Christ.

The Holy Ghost has a special role under the direction of Father and Son, which is to develop a fuller expression of their spirit in the lives of men. Thus Joseph F. Smith makes the following distinction between the light or spirit of Christ as a general influence which brings men to the Father⁴⁴ and the Holy Ghost's special role as a tutor of the faithful. He said:

The question is often asked, Is there any difference between the Spirit of the Lord and the Holy Ghost? The terms are frequently used synonymously. We often say the Spirit of God when we mean the Holy Ghost; we likewise say the Holy Ghost when we mean the Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost is a personage in the Godhead, and is not that which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. It is the Spirit of God which proceeds through Christ to the world, that enlightens every man that comes into the world, and that strives with the children of men, and will continue to strive with them, until it brings them to a knowledge of the truth and the possession of the greater light and testimony of the Holy Ghost.⁴⁵

In his role as a special tutor of the faithful, under the direction of Father and Son, the Holy Ghost is the way of "higher intelligence," according to Joseph F. Smith.

By means of this Spirit every man is enlightened, the wicked as well as the good, the intelligent and

⁴⁴See D&C 84:46-48.

⁴⁵Smith, "Redeemer," Deseret News Weekly, XI, pp. 381-382.

the ignorant, the high and the low, each in accordance with his capacity to receive the light; and this Spirit or influence which emanates from God may be said to constitute man's consciousness, and will never cease to strive with man, until man is brought to the possession of the higher intelligence which can only come through faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift or the presentation of the Holy Ghost by one having authority.⁴⁶

The Holy Ghost, as a spirit personage, gives men a greater manifestation of the spirit, influence, and power of Jesus Christ than that which they generally receive through the broad dispersement of the light or spirit of Christ to all men.

HOLY GHOST FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

The Father and Son have delegated special roles and functions to the Holy Ghost. There follows an enumeration and explanation of some of these responsibilities and powers.

⁴⁶Joseph F. Smith, "Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, Comforter," The Improvement Era, XII, (March, 1909), p. 391. The Prophet Nephi also portrays the Holy Ghost as a tutor of those who truly seek God. He said: ". . . I, Nephi was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men. . . ."

"For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well as in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round." (B. of M., 1 Nephi 10:17, 19).

Holy Ghost Bears Witness of Father and Son

Jesus Christ said that the Holy Ghost has a special calling to bear witness of the Father and the Son:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost.

And thus will the Father bear record of me, and the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me; for the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost are one.⁴⁷

Holy Ghost and Omni- presence

The Holy Ghost has great power as a member of the Godhead. In fact he is omnipresent. Joseph F. Smith explained that the Holy Ghost is not everywhere present as an organized spirit, but that his ubiquity is a factor of his power and influence. He said:

The Holy Ghost as a personage of Spirit can no more be omnipresent in person than can the Father or the Son, but by his intelligence, his knowledge, his power and influence, over and through the laws of nature, he is and can be omnipresent throughout all the works of God.⁴⁸

Holy Ghost and Truth and Knowledge

In 1 John, it is said of the Holy Ghost, ". . . the Spirit is truth."⁴⁹ Jesus Christ indicated that the mission

⁴⁷B. of M., 3 Nephi 11:35-36; see also Verse 32.

⁴⁸Smith, "Holy Ghost," The Improvement Era, XII, 390. See also Chapter 10, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence.

⁴⁹1 John 5:6.

of the Holy Ghost was to develop a fulness of truth in man: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."⁵⁰ He is a revelator and as such "he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance."⁵¹ It is said in the Doctrine and Covenants that the Holy Ghost "knoweth all things."⁵²

Holy Ghost and Intelligence

The Holy Ghost has power to communicate the knowledge and understanding of heaven to men. Joseph Smith taught that as the Holy Ghost dispenses this truth and light, he is the source of pure intelligence. He said:

A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.⁵³

Brigham Young also spoke of the Holy Ghost, saying that he had the power to enlighten men and that he is the Spirit of intelligence:

If you could just humble yourselves until your eyes should be enlightened by the Spirit of God, by

⁵⁰John 16:13. See also 1 John 5:6.

⁵¹John 14:26.

⁵²D&C 42:17.

⁵³HC III, 381.

the spirit of intelligence, you may understand things the world cannot see.⁵⁴

Presumably, the spirit of intelligence, the Spirit of God here referred to, is the Holy Ghost because the higher manifestation of the Spirit of Christ is described in this context.

Holy Ghost and the Fruits of the Spirit

It is through the Holy Ghost that men experience and receive many of the refining and joyous influences of God. For example, Paul said: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance."⁵⁵ In this same vein, Paul told the Romans that the Holy Ghost has power to convey the beautiful feelings of love and hope that come from God: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."⁵⁶

Holy Ghost and Sanctifi- cation

Also according to Paul, the Holy Ghost has the power to sanctify:

⁵⁴Brigham Young, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, August 8, 1852, Journal of Discourses, reporter G. D. Watt, III, (London, England, 1856), 89.

⁵⁵Galatians 5:22-23.

⁵⁶Romans 15:13.

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;⁵⁷

Holy Ghost and Fire

The reception of the Holy Ghost is at times accompanied by the manifestation of fire. The Prophet Nephi and his brother Lehi had such an experience, as described in the Book of Mormon:

And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi were encircled about as if by fire, even insomuch that they durst not lay their hands upon them for fear lest they should be burned. Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi were not burned; and they were as standing in the midst of fire and were not burned.

And when they saw that they were encircled about, with a pillar of fire, and that it burned them not, their hearts did take courage. . . .

And it came to pass that when they cast their eyes about, and saw that the cloud of darkness was dispersed from overshadowing them, behold, they saw that they were encircled about, yea every soul, by a pillar of fire.

And Nephi and Lehi were in the midst of them; yea, they were encircled about; yea, they were as if in the midst of a flaming fire, yet it did harm them not, neither did it take hold upon the walls of the prison; and they were filled with the joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

And behold, the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words.⁵⁸

During his visit to the American continent, as described in the Book of Mormon, Jesus Christ commented on

⁵⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:13; D&C 84:33.

⁵⁸B. of M., Helaman 5:23-24, 43-45.

the experience of Nephi and Lehi with the Lamanites. He said:

And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.⁵⁹

SPIRIT A TRANSFIGURING AGENT

It is by the spirit that men are able to bear the presence of God. In a revelation to Joseph Smith, the Lord said: "For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God."⁶⁰ Joseph said in another revelation known as "The Vision," which is contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, that "through the power and manifestation of the Spirit, while in the flesh, they may be able to bear his presence in the world of glory."⁶¹

SUMMARY

The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead. He is an organized personage of spirit and acts under the direction of the Father and the Son. His influence and powers center in the Father and come to him through Jesus Christ. His special role is to develop the spirit, influence, intelligence and power of Jesus Christ in men, particularly those

⁵⁹B. of M., 3 Nephi 9:20.

⁶⁰D&C 67:11.

⁶¹D&C 76:118.

men who are baptized or who make a special effort to learn of the Son's gospel. In the sense that he is responsible to develop the higher truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the lives of men, he is said to be a greater light than that light which emanates from Christ to all men.

The Holy Ghost is a Spirit of truth, love, goodness, joy, intelligence and power. He radiates these influences and attributes to all those who aspire to the sons of Christ. He also acts as an agent to protect or transfigure men that they can stand in the presence of God.

SPIRIT A QUICKENING AGENT

Sometimes it is not apparent whether the Holy Ghost is acting in his role as an agent for the Father and Son or whether Father and Son are acting directly by their own power and spirit. A case in point is the power which quickens a body after death. For example the Apostle Paul said to the Romans:

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.⁶²

DIVINE NATURE AND SPIRIT

In view of the many powers inherent in God through his spirit, among which are creation, life, government, and the dispersement of his attributes such as justice, goodness,

⁶²Romans 8:11.

love, joy and the perfecting influence of that spirit upon his children, it appears that God's Holy Spirit is his divine nature.

CONCLUSION

The powers known to us as the spirit or light of Christ originate in God the Eternal Father. They center in Jesus Christ for this earth. Jesus Christ obtained a fullness of the Father's mind or spirit, glory and power and is one with the Father. The third member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost, is one with the Father and the Son and bears witness of them. He is a "special light" and source of "higher intelligence" unto men who qualify themselves for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that they might be transformed into the image of Christ.

It is not surprising that there is at times confusion between the power and influence manifested by the Holy Ghost and the power and influence of Jesus Christ known as the Spirit or light of Christ in that the power of the Holy Ghost and the light or Spirit of Christ both come from the same person, Jesus Christ. Thus the difference between them can be only a matter of degree or sphere of action.

The spirit of God is his divine nature. It is his power. It manifests the attributes of his character throughout the world. It is God moving in his glory, and it is referred to as intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.

Chapter 5

LIGHT

The scriptures refer to God as a being of light. For example, 1 John states: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."¹ The Prophet Joseph Smith also alluded to the fact that light is fundamental to the nature of God when he wrote to James Arlington Bennet: "Without controversy, that friendship which intelligent beings would accept as sincere must arise from love, and that love grow out of virtue, which is as much a part of religion as light is a part of Jehovah."²

LIGHT IS TABERNACLED

Light is an inherent part of the being of God; His body is filled with light. He dispenses this light to man that man may also be filled with light and become as God. On this subject a revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants states:

¹1 John 1:5 (Italics by the writer).

²Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), VI, 73 (Italics by the writer). Hereafter cited as HC.

That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.³

Another revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants states the importance of being filled with light: ". . . And that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things."⁴ It would appear that a body filled with light is like unto God, for that body "comprehendeth all things." Not only is God filled with light, but this light appears to be tabernacled, such as in the case of angels. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "Angels have advanced further, their light and glory being tabernacled; and hence they appear in bodily shape."⁵

LIGHT MANIFESTED

Upon occasion, God has favored certain men with a personal theophany in which they have seen his light or glory. Some of these men have written of their experiences. Joseph Smith described this light as a "pillar of light"⁶ and a "cloud of light"⁷ but "of a far purer and more

³The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956) 50:24, hereafter cited as D&C.

⁴D&C 88:67.

⁵HC, VI, 51.

⁶The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Joseph Smith 2:15, hereafter cited as P. of G. P., followed by the reference within.

⁷P. of G. P., Joseph Smith 2:68.

glorious appearance and brightness"⁸ than the sun. The Apostle Paul wrote of the appearance of a bright light, stating that this light was ". . . above the brightness of the sun."⁹ In his epistle to Timothy, Paul also said of the light surrounding the resurrected Christ "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."¹⁰ No natural man can approach this light unless transfigured or strengthened.¹¹

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

In the scriptures, Jesus Christ is often called the 'light of the world,' or in other words the influence of all good, truth and enlightenment. For example, the Apostle John wrote of Christ: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."¹² The Prophet Joseph Smith also described Jesus Christ as "the light and life of the world; a light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not."¹³

The reception or rejection of this light is the basis of man's judgment. The Doctrine and Covenants states:

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from

⁸HC, VI, 536.

⁹Acts 26:13.

¹⁰1 Timothy 6:16.

¹¹See Chapter 3 pp. 32-33, 37-38; see also Chapter 4, p. 66.

¹²John 1:9; D&C 93:2.

¹³D&C 39:2.

the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation.¹⁴

The Prophet Moroni also wrote that men could judge by the light of Christ:

And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.¹⁵

It is through the light of Christ that men are brought to the "Father," and to the "covenant" of the gospel.¹⁶ Jesus taught this same message when he said of himself: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."¹⁷

LIGHT AND TRUTH

The relationship between truth and light is stated in the following revelation: "For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light and Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ."¹⁸ When the spirit of Christ radiates truth, that truth shines. It is light that brings an understanding of truth.¹⁹

¹⁴D&C 93:31-32.

¹⁵B. of M., Moroni 7:18.

¹⁶D&C 84:44-48.

¹⁷John 8:12.

¹⁸D&C 88:45.

¹⁹See D&C 88:7, 67.

LIGHT AND INTELLIGENCE

In earlier chapters, it was pointed out that spirit and glory are at times used interchangeably with light.²⁰ They are also associated with intelligence.²¹ Perhaps then, light may have the same correlation to intelligence. The relationship between light and intelligence is stated in this quotation from the Doctrine and Covenants: "And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things."²² Here light is associated with "comprehending all things;" intelligence also has something to do with "comprehending all things," for intelligence is a blending of light and truth,²³ which is the power of understanding.²⁴

Furthermore the context of many references in the scriptures, where the role of Jesus Christ is portrayed as the "light and life of men,"²⁵ seems to indicate that light is the power of enlightenment and intelligence.

²⁰See Chapter 3, pp. 19-21, 34-35; see also Chapter 4, p. 53.

²¹See Chapter 3, pp. 21-22, 36; see also Chapter 4, pp. 52-53, 63-64.

²²D&C 88:67.

²³See D&C 93:36.

²⁴See for example HC III, 380-381, see also John A. Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, III, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1951), pp. 69-73.

²⁵See John 1:4, 7, 9; 5:35; 8:12; 9:5; B. of M., 3 Nephi 9:18; 11:11; Ether 3:14; D&C 12:9; 39:2; 45:7.

LIGHT AND SPIRIT

In Chapter Four on spirit,²⁶ there is a discussion on spirit and light in which it is indicated that "light is spirit."²⁷ Orson Pratt also indicated that light is substantially the same as spirit. He said:

There are a great many things that we can learn independently of these direct revelations; but still we need the help of the Lord, in some measure, in our researches, to learn anything: we need the influence of the Spirit of God to quicken the light that is within us, for light cleaves to light, and the Spirit of God is light, and it cleaves unto the light that enters into the composition of the spirit of man.²⁸

Benjamin F. Johnson, a close personal friend of the Prophet Joseph Smith, reported that Joseph taught

. . . that light and life and spirit were one; that all light and heat are the "Glory of God," which is His power, that fills the "immensity of space," and is the life of all things, and permeates with latent life, and heat, every particle of which all worlds are composed; that light or spirit, and matter, are the two first great primary principles of the universe, or of Being; that they are self-existent, co-existent, indestructible, and eternal, and from these two elements both our spirits and our bodies were formulated.²⁹

Light is at times a synonym for spirit and often

²⁶See Chapter 4, pp. 53-54.

²⁷D&C 84:45.

²⁸Orson Pratt, Address delivered in Salt Lake City March 14, 1875, Journal of Discourses, reporter David W. Evans, XVII, (London, England, 1875), 327.

²⁹Benjamin F. Johnson, "An Interesting Letter," written to Elder George S. Gibbs, composed between April 1930 and October 1903, copy located in Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, p. 7.

refers to the light of Christ, which is the spirit of Christ.³⁰

LIGHT AND GLORY

In an earlier chapter, it was shown that light and glory are at times used interchangeably.³¹ In addition, it seems of interest to note that, during the overt manifestations of God's glory and light both glory and light have been described (1) as a cloud, (2) as exceedingly bright, and (3) as beyond the power of a natural man to withstand.³²

DIVINE NATURE AND LIGHT

Light appears to be like spirit and glory in that light is used as a synonym for them and performs some of the same roles and functions. Those endowed with a fulness of light have received a fulness of the divine nature of the Father.³³

CONCLUSION

Light is referred to as intelligence, glory, and

³⁰In addition to what has been written in this section, see D&C 88:5-13; particularly verse 13; see also B. of M., Moroni 7:18.

³¹See Chapter 3, pp. 19-21, 34-35.

³²See Chapter 3, pp. 22-26, 32-34; Chapter 5, pp. 70-71.

³³See this Chapter, pp. 69-70.

spirit and exhibits many of the characteristics and powers associated with them. It is a fundamental part of God's composition. His body is filled with light. The scripture states: "God is light." Light is part of God's divine nature.³⁴

³⁴1 John 1:5.

SECTION III

BASIC FEATURES OF THE DIVINE NATURE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BASIC FEATURES OF
THE DIVINE NATURE

In this section, some selected characteristics and attributes of God are described. They are truth, life, love and goodness. These attributes and characteristics are basic features of the divine nature, for it can be readily understood that in the absence of a fulness of spirit, glory and light it is not possible to be perfect in goodness and love, to control the life powers of the universe, or to know all truth. It is through God's divine nature that his love and goodness are dispersed, that truth is disseminated, and that life is sustained.

Chapter 6

TRUTH

TRUTH DEFINED

The Apostle John tells of the prayer of Jesus at the Last Supper. In this prayer Jesus said of the powers that reside in the Eternal Father: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."¹ God, through the power of his spirit, which is the spirit of truth, sanctifies his disciples. In addition, his words or decrees are truth, because as God speaks, the destiny of earths and their creatures unfolds. All of God's words and decrees have been fulfilled, are now being fulfilled, or will be fulfilled. Thus the words of God may be said to be tantamount to being his acts past, present and future, which are truth as defined in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith: "And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come."²

SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Jesus Christ is the source of all truth for this

¹John 17:17.

²The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 93:24, hereafter cited as D&C.

earth, whether of a secular or a spiritual nature. Thus, it is that Jesus is said to be the "Spirit of truth."³ The Brother of Jared understood that Christ was the source of all truth, for he was commanded to write: "I Jesus Christ am the Father, I am the light, and the life, and the truth of the world."⁴

Many people will readily admit that Jesus is the power and influence of spiritual truths or, at least, that he has had extraordinary influence as a moral teacher, but they would deny that he has anything to do with physical or secular truth. Joseph F. Smith, however, indicates that Jesus Christ, in conjunction with other members of the God-head, is the fountain of all truth, including the so-called secular truths:

The Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as one God, are the fountain of truth. From this fountain all the ancient learned philosophers have received their inspiration and wisdom--from it they have received all their knowledge. If we find truth in broken fragments through the ages, it may be set down as an incontrovertible fact that it originated at the fountain, and was given to philosophers, inventors, patriots, reformers, and prophets by the inspiration of God. It came from him through his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, in the first place, and from no other source. It is eternal.

Christ, therefore, being the fountain of truth, is no imitator. He taught the truth first; it was his before it was given to man.⁵

³D&C 93:9, 26.

⁴The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Ether 4:12, hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

⁵Joseph F. Smith, "The Fountain of Truth," The Improvement Era, X, (June 1907), p. 629.

Part of the earthly mission of Jesus of Nazareth was to "bear witness unto the truth,"⁶ particularly of those truths which constitute his gospel. It is through the gospel that man can attain to a fulness of the truth,⁷ even as Jesus himself has received "a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth."⁸

SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Since this subject was covered in an earlier chapter,⁹ the following is a short summary. The Holy Ghost and the spirit or light of Christ are both referred to as truth; that is, they carry truth, they give truth, and their influence is that of truth.

TRUTH AND GLORY

King Benjamin, a Nephite prophet, seems to indicate in an address to his people that, as a man is filled with love and knowledge of the precepts of justice and truth, he is also filled with knowledge of the glory of God:

And behold, I say unto you that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him

⁶John 18:37.

⁷See D&C 93:27-28.

⁸D&C 93:26.

⁹See Chapter 4, pp. 54, 62-63.

that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true.¹⁰

The relationship of glory and truth which is suggested by King Benjamin is stated more clearly in the Doctrine and Covenants. For there the idea is expressed that when a man keeps the commandments, he receives truth and light. And as his knowledge of truth and light increases, so also will his knowledge of God's glory increase until he is glorified through truth. The Doctrine and Covenants states: "He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things."¹¹

Glory is in fact a combination of truth and light. This is clearly indicated in a later verse of the revelation just quoted: "The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth."¹²

LIGHT OF TRUTH

There are in the scriptures at least two usages of the phrase "light of truth." One of these usages appears in Section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants, where the phrase "light of truth" appears to be substantially the same as the spirit or light of Christ:

¹⁰B. of M., Mosiah 4:12.

¹¹D&C 93:28.

¹²D&C 93:36; see also Chapter 3, p. 27 on the same subject.

He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth;

Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made.¹³

A second usage of the phrase "light of truth" found in the scriptures appears to be synonymous with man's primal intelligence (that substance, ego, or spirit which was not created, which has always existed and which is co-eternal with God). A revelation on this subject states "Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be."¹⁴

CONCLUSION

In this section it has been shown that God is a God of truth. He is "glorified in truth." All truth in the world comes from Jesus Christ and is distributed by the Spirit or light of Christ and the Holy Ghost. The phrase "the light of truth" is used interchangeably with

¹³D&C 88:6-7.

¹⁴D&C 93:29; see also D&C 93:23. B. H. Roberts wrote about the phrase "light of truth" as being the same as the primal intelligence. He said: "the phrase 'The light of truth' is given in one of the revelations as the equivalent for an 'intelligence' here discussed; by which is meant to be understood, as I think, that intelligent entities perceive the truth, are conscious of the truth, they knew that which is, hence 'the light of truth,' 'intelligence.'" Brigham H. Roberts, The Seventy's Course of Theology, 2nd year "Outline History of the Dispensations of the Gospel," (Salt Lake City: Skelton Publishing Co., 1908), p. 9.

the spirit or light of Christ and with the primal intelligence of man. Truth shines. Truth is eternal. Truth is "knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come."¹⁵

¹⁵D&C 93:24.

Chapter 7

LIFE

LIFE OF THE WORLD

Jesus Christ testified of the powers of life that dwelt in him when he said: "I am the life of the world,"¹ the "bread of life,"² and the "living water."³ As Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ said that he was the "fountain of living waters"⁴ and the "fountain of life."⁵ All powers of life, physical and spiritual, dwell within Jesus Christ and, through him, all men are to be partakers thereof. John Taylor explains:

One thing, as we read, is that the Father gave Him power to have life in Himself; "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" and further, He had power, when all mankind had lost their life, to restore life to them again; and hence He is the Resurrection and the Life, which power no other man possesses.⁶

Jesus Christ is the power of life over death

¹The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Ether 4:12, hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

²John 6:35.

³John 7:38.

⁴Jeremiah 2:13.

⁵Psalm 36:9.

⁶John Taylor, The Mediation and Atonement, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company 1882), pp. 135-136. See also John 5:26.

through the resurrection. He is also the power of life over spiritual death, which is caused by sin. Paul wrote to the Romans as follows about the power of Jesus Christ over sin and death: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."⁷

Jesus Christ is the life of all temporal existence through the spirit of Christ. A revelation to Joseph Smith states that the spirit of Christ is that "which giveth life to all things."⁸

Thus, the powers of life centered in Jesus Christ include the resurrection of the body, the life of all temporal existence, and those spiritual powers of life that culminate in eternal life.

LIFE AND SPIRIT

The subject of life and spirit has been more extensively treated in Chapter Four⁹ but, to summarize, the Spirit of Christ is the power" which giveth life to all things."¹⁰ The Holy Ghost is generally associated with the powers of life leading to eternal life.¹¹ Nevertheless

⁷Romans 8:2.

⁸The Doctrine and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 88:13, hereafter cited as D&C.

⁹See Chapter 4, pp. 52, 67.

¹⁰D&C 88:13.

¹¹See D&C 88:4; John 7:38-39.

all spirit, influence and power, including those of the Holy Ghost, are under the direction and control of Jesus Christ.¹² Thus, he is the author, through the spirit, of all the powers of life which are sent forth by the will of the Father.

ETERNAL LIFE OR EVERLASTING LIFE

Eternal life and everlasting life are used interchangeably in the scriptures. For example, the Apostle John makes no distinction in meaning between them when he says:

Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.¹³

Jesus Christ is the source of eternal or everlasting life for men. He said, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."¹⁴ In his prayer at the last supper, Jesus again emphasized to his disciples that he gives eternal life and that it consists in knowing him:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know

¹²See D&C 50:27. See also Chapter 4, pp. 57-61.

¹³John 3:15-16. (Italics by the writer).

¹⁴John 10:28.

thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.¹⁵

What is eternal life? It is the type and kind of life that God possesses as a spiritual and glorified being. President Heber J. Grant said, "Eternal life is God's life."¹⁶ The scriptures equate eternal life with those attributes and powers of life associated with celestial glory. For example, the Lord said to Adam;

Even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory.¹⁷

To Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed that when men receive the Comforter, they have the promise of "eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom."¹⁸ Thus, eternal life is to have a fulness of glory, spirit and light, or, in other words, to have all the privileges, powers and perfections of the divine nature of God.

ETERNAL LIVES

The meaning of eternal life must be distinguished

¹⁵John 17:2-3.

¹⁶Heber J. Grant, "Had Adam Been Through the Experience of Mortality on Another Sphere Before He Came Here?" February 26, 1931, quoted in Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, V, 290.

¹⁷The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Moses 6:59, hereafter cited as P. of G. P.

¹⁸D&C 88:4.

from the meaning of "eternal lives." Eternal lives has to do with possessing eternal life and being married under the new and everlasting covenant of marriage so as to beget children after the resurrection. Thus, eternal lives is the power to beget children after the resurrection. Both eternal life and eternal lives are aspects of those powers of life inherent in the fulness of the spirit and glory or divine nature of God.

CONCLUSION

The Father has given all powers of life to his Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, Jesus has life within himself. He is the power of life, through his spirit, of all temporal things. He is also the power of the resurrection and of eternal life.

¹⁸See D&C 132:19-24; Taylor, The Mediation and Atonement, p. 141.

Chapter 8

LOVE

GOD IS LOVE

"Love is one of the chief characteristics of Deity,"¹ said Joseph Smith. The Lectures of Faith state that God "is love."² Likewise in 1 John, the thought that God is love, is also indicated. "He that loveth not knoweth not God," John declared, "for God is love."³

LOVE OF GOD

The scriptures indicate that God loves his children. They stress that the offering of the beloved Son as a sacrifice for sin was a particularly significant act of love by the Father. For example, the Apostle John says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."⁴ And also 1 John states: "Herein is

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), IV, p. 227, hereafter cited as HC.

²Lectures of Faith, as found in the Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835) No. III, p. 39.

³1 John 4:8.

⁴John 3:16.

love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."⁵ The Prophet Jacob taught that the offering up of Isaac by Abraham was a similitude of the offering up of the "Beloved Son"⁶ by God.⁷

John A. Widtsoe offered the reason why God provided the atonement and why he does his many other beneficent acts:

Love is the attribute that prompts God to give help to all beings inferior to himself. The purpose of God's love is to lift his children perhaps through endless ages, toward his own likeness. Such love is the highest manifestation of intelligence.⁸

Joseph F. Smith taught that the love of God is not limited to those that serve him but extends to all his children:

But in the teachings of Christ there is a fuller embodiment of revelation in the word Father, and the application which he makes of the Fatherhood of God invests his life with supreme tenderness and beauty, As an example: In the old scripture, we are told, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Psalms 103:13); but by the interpretation of Jesus, the love of God as Father extends beyond these limitations even to those who are unthankful and evil.⁹

⁵1 John 4:10.

⁶Matthew 17:5.

⁷B. of M., Jacob 4:5.

⁸John A. Widtsoe, Joseph Smith-Seeker After Truth-Prophet of God, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1951), p. 154. See also HC, VI, 312.

⁹Joseph F. Smith, "Fountain of Truth," The Improvement Era, X, (June 1907), p. 628.

LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ submitted to the will of the Father in the pre-earth life to be the redeemer of mankind.¹⁰ President Joseph F. Smith expressed Christ's action this way: "He no doubt possessed a foreknowledge of all the vicissitudes through which he would have to pass in the mortal tabernacle."¹¹ Jesus willingly suffered¹² and laid down his life.¹³ According to Orson Pratt the atonement was prompted by pure love: "The atonement was something given through the pure love of God to fallen man, without any act of good works on the part of man."¹⁴ Such love can only be understood by those who according to an address of the First Presidency,

Rise higher and higher in the scale of intelligence until they can 'comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.'¹⁵

LOVE AND SPIRIT

The Apostle Paul wrote: "But the fruit of the

¹⁰See P. of G. P., Moses 4:2.

¹¹Joseph F. Smith, "Spirit Memories," The Contributor, IV, (December 1882), p. 114.

¹²See D&C 19:18-19.

¹³See John 10:17-18; 15:13.

¹⁴Orson Pratt, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, September 19, 1880, Journal of Discourses, reporter John Irvine, XXI, (London, England, 1881), 313.

¹⁵HC, IV, 186; see also Ephesians 3:17-19.

Spirit is love."¹⁶ He also said that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."¹⁷ Nephi testified of the effect of this love which is conveyed by the spirit. He said: "I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love."¹⁸ And again he said: "He hath filled me with his love, even unto the consuming of my flesh."¹⁹

The mutual feelings of true love dwell among the Father, Son, and true believer, through the spirit. The scripture states: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."²⁰

LOVE AND JOY

The Apostle Paul taught that joy comes from being likeminded with Jesus through love.²¹ Love is said by the Prophet Nephi to be joyous to the soul and the most desirable of all the attributes of God.

And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me: Look! And I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty

¹⁶Galations 5:22.

¹⁷Romans 5:5.

¹⁸The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 2 Nephi 1:15.

¹⁹B. of M., 2 Nephi 4:21.

²⁰1 John 4:16.

²¹Philippians 2:1-2.

thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow. . . .

. . . Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?

And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things.

And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most joyous to the soul.²²

CONCLUSION

Love is perfect in God and is an inherent attribute of his being. The scripture states, "God is love."²³ Love is universally given to all the children of God. For those who obey the commandments, there are given greater intelligence and greater perception of the love of God until they are perfected in him. It is for man one of the most desirable of all the attributes of God.

²²B. of M., 1 Nephi 11:8, 21-23.

²³1 John 4:8, 16.

Chapter 9

GOODNESS

The apostles and prophets have taught that God is good and that he is the source and influence of all good in this world. In addition they have taught that he is not responsible for evil.

GOD IS GOOD

The account of Moses's second visit to Mount Sinai as contained in the Book of Exodus indicates that God himself said to Moses that he is abundant in goodness:

And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.¹

In the Lectures of Faith, the scripture just quoted and others is summarized as follows:

From the foregoing testimonies, we learn the following things respecting the character of God

. . . .
He is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and that he was so from everlasting, and will be to everlasting.²

¹Exodus 34:5-6.

²Lectures of Faith, As found in the Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835) No. III, p. 38. Hereafter cited as L. of F.

The psalmist has also indicated that a basic characteristic of God is his goodness: "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."³

Jesus Christ recognized the perfect goodness of God inherent in the Eternal Father when he said: "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God."⁴

GOD IS THE SOURCE AND INFLUENCE OF ALL GOOD

God is the source and influence of all good in this world. For example, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that "God is the great source and fountain from whence proceeds all good."⁵ Again he said: "If there was anything great or good in the world, it came from God."⁶

Similarly, the Prophet Moroni emphasized that all good comes from Jesus Christ:

And whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do good is of me; for good cometh of none save it be of me. I am the same that leadeth men to all good; he that will not believe my words will not believe me--that I am;

³Psalm 100:5; see also Psalm 106:1.

⁴Luke 18:19; see also Matthew 19:17.

⁵Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), II, 12, 13.

⁶Joseph Smith, "The Government of God," The Times and Seasons, III, (July 25, 1842), p. 856.

and he that will not believe me will not believe the Father who sent me. For behold, I am the Father, I am the light, and the life, and the truth of the world.⁷

GOODNESS, SPIRIT AND GLORY

The influence of goodness is sent forth by God's Spirit or glory.⁸

GOOD AND EVIL

This subject has been discussed in another chapter.⁹

CONCLUSION

God is perfect in goodness.¹⁰ He is the influence of all good in this world and this influence is always in opposition to evil. God delights in goodness, for he is infinitely good.

⁷The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Ether 4:12, hereafter cited as B. of M., followed by the reference within.

⁸See Chapter 4, p. 55; Chapter 3, pp. 26-27

⁹See Chapter 10, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence, pp. 107-111.

¹⁰L. of F., No. V, p. 52, 55.

SECTION IV

RESULTS OF THE DIVINE NATURE

Chapter 10

OMNIPOTENCE, OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE

The apostles and prophets have taught that by means of his divine nature, God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. The following statement from the Lectures of Faith is representative in a general way of their teachings:

We here observe that God is the only supreme governor, and independent being in whom all fullness and perfection dwells; who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient; without beginning of days or end of life; and that in him every good gift, and every good principle dwells; and that he is the Father of lights; In him the principle of faith dwells independently; and he is the object in whom the faith of all other rational and accountable beings centers, for life and salvation.¹

OMNIPOTENCE

The Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, are omnipotent. So great is their power that George Q. Cannon said: "There is no power that human beings can conceive of which he [God] does not possess."² For example, they

¹Lectures of Faith, as found in the Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835) No. II, p. 12, hereafter cited as L. of F.

²George Q. Cannon, address delivered at Salt Lake City, October 5, 1879, Journal of Discourses, reporter Geo. F. Gibbs, XXI, (London, England, 1881), 76.

are the power by which all things are created. A statement of their all-encompassing creative powers is given in the Lectures of Faith, which states:

There are two personages who constitute the great, matchless, governing and supreme power over all things-- by whom all things were created and made, that are created and made, whether visible or invisible: whether in heaven, on earth, or in the earth, under the earth, or throughout the immensity of space-- They are the Father and the Son.³

The Son has been invested with the powers of the Father and in the expression of these powers is the "Father" of creation.⁴ Moses learned that the acts of creation by the Son extend beyond this earth and the things thereof, for God said to Moses:

And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten

But only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I unto you. For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.⁵

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the creation was, not ex nihilo, that is from nothing, but that "the elements are eternal."⁶ He also said: "There is no such

³L. of F., No. V, pp. 52-53; see also B. of M., 3 Nephi 9:15; D&C. 29:31.

⁴"The Father and the Son--A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency," cited in Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, V, p. 27.

⁵The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Moses 1:33, 35.

⁶D&C 93:33.

thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes."⁷ Hence the creation may properly be said to have been an organization from elements which were already in existence. John Taylor wrote of the powers that God has to organize worlds and the myriad forms of life:

"He spake, and the waters were gathered together, and the dry land appeared." And in the creation of the fish, the fowls, the beasts, the creeping things, and man, it was done in the councils of God. The word was, Let us do this, and it was done. It would seem, then, that that government is perfect in its operations, for all the mandates of God are carried out with the greatest exactitude and perfection. God spake, chaos heard, and the world was formed.⁸

The acts of creation by God shall never cease: his dominion, power and glory shall increase forever. As Joseph F. Smith said:

Now if God is a man, a glorious perfected man-- that is, perfect in all his glorious attributes, and infinite in power, there never will come a time when God the Father will not have power to extend His dominion and His Glory. He is the maker of Heaven and the Earth, on which we dwell, for He made this earth by his word and by his power. How did he make it? He called the elements that are invisible to our eyes. He formed the earth on which we dwell, and has formed millions of worlds, and they are peopled with his children, for there is no end to his dominions and the worlds he has created cannot be numbered unto man.⁹

⁷D&C 131:7; see also verse 8.

⁸John Taylor, The Government of God, (Liverpool, England: Publisher, S. W. Richards, 1852), p. 2.

⁹Joseph F. Smith, Conference talk given December 20, 1914, found in Box Elder News, January 28, 1915, quoted in Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, IV, 329.

In addition to the creative powers of God, just described, God is the governing and sustaining power of all existence. The Prophet Nephi described these powers:

For behold, the dust of the earth moveth hither and thither, to the dividing asunder, at the command of our great and everlasting God.

Yea, behold at his voice do the hills and the mountains tremble and quake.

And by the power of his voice they are broken up, and become smooth, yea, even like unto a valley.

Yea, by the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake;

Yea, by the power of his voice, do the foundations rock, even to the very center.

Yea, and if he say unto the earth--Move--it is moved.

Yea, if he say unto the earth--Thou shalt go back that it lengthen out the day for many hours--it is done;

And thus, according to his word the earth goeth back, and it appeareth unto man that the sun standeth still; yea, and behold, this is so; for surely it is the earth that moveth and not the sun.

And behold, also, if he say unto the waters of the great deep--Be thou dried up--it is done.

Behold, if he say unto this mountain--Be thou raised up, and come over and fall upon that city, that it be buried up--behold it is done.¹⁰

God is also omnipotent in the sense that all the quickening powers of life in this temporal existence come from him. On the subject of the life-giving powers which God possesses, George Q. Cannon said: "In Him we move; in Him we have our being. He can extinguish life; He can create life; He can perpetuate life."¹¹

¹⁰The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956) Helaman, 12:8-17; see also 3 Nephi 9; D&C 88:6-13.

¹¹George Q. Cannon, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, October 5, 1879, Journal of Discourses, reporter Geo. F. Gibbs, XXI, (London, England, 1881), p. 76.

John Taylor described some of the powers possessed by Jesus Christ which makes him omnipotent. These include the powers of all life, light, truth and intelligence:

The world was made by Him, and without Him, was not anything made that was made, and, therefore, having made all things He has given to all things a law; and hence those laws which we have briefly alluded to, are the productions of His comprehensive, intelligent, and infinite mind: He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Fountain of all life, of all light, of all truth, of all intelligence, of all existence. He is also the sustainer of all life and all light in all created beings; in Him all animal life of every form has its being.¹²

The apostles and prophets have taught that the power of God is centered in his priesthood. For example, George Q. Cannon explained that the creative powers are inherent in the priesthood. He said: "Our Eternal Father is the creator of all things through the power of the everlasting Priesthood--that Priesthood which has been bestowed upon and exercised by the servants of God in our day."¹³ John Taylor emphasized that the priesthood is the power of God. He wrote:

In fact, the power manifested by the Priesthood is simply the power of God, for He is the head of the Priesthood, with Jesus as our President and great High Priest; and it is upon this principle that all the works of God have been accomplished, whether on the earth or in the heavens; and any manifestation of power through the Priesthood on the earth is simply a delegated power from the Priesthood in the heavens, and the

¹²Taylor, The Mediation and Atonement, p. 167.

¹³George Q. Cannon, Address delivered at Syracuse, Davis Co., August 22, 1897, reporter Arthur Winter, found in The Deseret Weekly, LV, (September 4, 1897), p. 354.

more the Priesthood on the earth becomes assimilated with and subject to the Priesthood in the heavens the more of this power shall we possess.¹⁴

Apparently the priesthood is the divine system through which the divine nature or spirit is manifest. For, as described in some detail in Chapter IV,¹⁵ it is by the power of the spirit (1) that the creation occurred, (2) that all things are governed and sustained, (3) that intelligence and enlightenment are given to men, (4) that light is manifest and (5) that life exists. It is of more than passing interest that Charles W. Penrose indicated that God is omnipotent through his Spirit.

This spirit which pervades all things, which is the light and life of all things, by which our heavenly Father operates, by which He is omnipotent, never had a beginning and never will have an end. It is the light of truth; it is the spirit of intelligence.¹⁶

Because of the greatness of Christ's power through his participation in the divine nature of the Father, many of the apostles and prophets have indicated that he is omnipotent. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Christ "has all power."¹⁷ King Benjamin taught in his great discourse that Christ is omnipotent, stating,

¹⁴Taylor, The Mediation and Atonement, p. 88; see also D&C 121:36.

¹⁵See Chapter IV; also D&C 88:6-11; 29:31; 121:36-37, 45-46; L. of F., No. V, pp. 53-54.

¹⁶Penrose, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, p. 23 (Italics by the writer).

¹⁷D&C 61:1; 93:17.

For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.¹⁸

OMNIPOTENCE AND LAW

What should one understand by the statement that God "has all power" and that he is "omnipotent"? Does this mean that God is a law unto himself; that is to say, that he is not bound to obey law? Apparently not, for the apostles and prophets taught that there is a consistent relationship between law and the omnipotence of God. The Prophet John Taylor wrote that God obeys law even though he is the giver and sustainer of law:

God is unchangeable, so are also his laws, in all their forms, and in all their applications, and being Himself the essence of law, the giver of law, the sustainer of law, all of those laws are eternal in all their operations, in all bodies and matter, and throughout all space. It would be impossible for Him to violate law, because in so doing He would strike at His own dignity, power, principles, glory, exaltation and existence.¹⁹

George Q. Cannon also emphasized that God adheres to law:

Now, it may be said, why did not God prevent man and woman from taking this course? Because, as I have

¹⁸B. of M., Mosiah 3:5; see also Mosiah 3:17-18; 5:2, 15.

¹⁹Taylor, The Mediation and Atonement, p. 168.

said before, it was right that they should exercise their agency. God--shall I say could not? Do I detract from His majesty and His glory by placing a limit on His power? I will say that God would not, because it would be in violation of His own laws; it would be in violation of those eternal laws which our God Himself recognizes, for Him to have interfered and deprived man and woman of their agency.²⁰

Likewise, Brigham Young taught that God obeys law, for if he were not to do so, he would cease to be God: "The volition of the creature is free; this is the law of their existence and the Lord cannot violate his own law; were he to do that, he would cease to be God."²¹

SUMMARY

It would appear from the foregoing discussion that God is not a creator of ultimate verities, but a revealer of law²² to his creatures. God is omnipotent in that he has all the power that there is to have, but through law and by law, and not by being beyond or above law. Nevertheless, God's power is not static but increasing as he continues to progress in worlds and dominions.

²⁰George Q. Cannon, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, September 28, 1884, Journal of Discourses, reporter John Irvine, XXVI, (London, England, 1886), p. 189.

²¹Brigham Young, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, August 19, 1866, Journal of Discourses, reporter G. D. Watt, XI, (London, England, 1867), p. 272.

²²In addition to what has already been written this idea is also implied in D&C 130:20-21; 88:34-35; 8:10; 84:39-40; 93:29, 33; L. of F., No. III, p. 42; Isaiah 59:21.

OMNIPOTENCE AND EVIL

For many people the problem of evil has been a serious stumbling block for belief in God.²³ The depth of human suffering and misery, and the inclination of men toward evil, has caused some to ask--Why cannot God, who is omnipotent, prevent these catastrophes in human experience? They reason that if God is good and if he loves his children, he would wish to abolish evil. Since he is all-powerful, he should be able to abolish evil. But evil exists. Some therefore ask, "How can God be both good and loving and at the same time be omnipotent?"

The apostles and prophets have taught that man, not God, is responsible for evil and suffering in this life.²⁴ God, without doubt, could remove the evil occasioned by man. But he does not, for this would destroy the agency of man and rob him of the necessary experience with evil to grow and develop by overcoming it. For instance the First Presidency (consisting of Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose) wrote:

While we do not charge the Almighty with causing the evils of any kind that afflict humanity, and which we regard as the fruits of disobedience to His holy laws, we recognize the fact that He is over all and that He will eventually control everything to bring about His own almighty plans. The agency of man is not interfered with by Divine Providence. If men were not left free to choose the good and refuse the evil, or vice versa, there would be no righteousness or even

²³See Appendix I.

²⁴See the following quotation and footnote 25 of this chapter.

reason in bringing them to judgement. In consequence of the power of volition they become responsible beings, and therefore will receive the results of their own doings. They will be rewarded or punished according to their works, when the books are opened and they are judged out of the things written therein.

God, doubtless, could avert war, prevent crime, destroy poverty, chase away darkness, overcome error and make all things bright, beautiful and joyful. But this would involve the destruction of a vital and fundamental attribute in man--the right of agency. It is for the benefit of His sons and daughters that they become acquainted with evil as well as good, with darkness as well as light, with evil as well as good, with darkness as well as light, with error as well as truth, and with the results of the infraction of eternal laws.²⁵

God is not responsible for evil. On the contrary, he taught Adam, as recorded in the Book of Moses, that his power (through the Holy Ghost) is based on the application of principles in opposition to evil, namely, on mercy, justice, judgment and truth. Speaking of the Holy Spirit, the Lord explained that it has "all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice and judgment."²⁶

Some people have supposed that since God is all-powerful, he created evil or at least has the power to do away with all evil. However the apostles and prophets have taught that evil was not created by God but that it has always existed as an eternal opposite to good. For example, George Q. Cannon held the view that evil is as eternal as good:

²⁵"A Christmas Greeting From The First Presidency," Deseret News, Magazine Section, (December 19, 1914) p. 3.

²⁶p. of G. P., Moses 6:61 (Italics by the writer).

It seems as though evil is as eternal as good, error as eternal as truth, and therefore He wants us to know this power. I do not know what the Father has in store for us to the full extent; but I suppose that evil will always exist, and though we shall be emancipated from the power and dominion of evil, it will be by keeping the commandments of God.²⁷

The eternal influence of evil as an opposite to good may be illustrated by what the oracles of God have taught about the fall of Satan and a third part of the hosts of heaven. They have taught that God sustained agency in the pre-earth state. Thus, Satan could choose good or evil. His rebellion and evil designs are spoken of in a revelation to Joseph Smith, which states:

And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil--for, behold, the devil was before Adam for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency.²⁸

The fact that both evil and good are eternal and in opposition to each other has given rise to the concept of eternal opposites, that is good versus evil, and also other opposites such as joy versus sorrow, and light versus darkness. The Prophet Lehi was cognizant of the principle of eternal opposites. He said:

For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, my first-born in the wilderness, righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things must needs

²⁷George Q. Cannon, Address delivered at Nephi, Utah November 2, 1895, The Deseret Weekly, reporter, Arthur Winter, LI, (December 14, 1895), p. 802.

²⁸D&C 29:36-37; see also P. of G. P. Moses 4:1-4.

be a compound in one; wherefore, if it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having no life neither death, nor corruption nor incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility.

And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away.²⁹

In view of the foregoing belief that God is not responsible for evil, some are disturbed by the implications in the following passage of scripture from the Prophet Isaiah: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."³⁰ It appears, however, that the Lord is not referring to moral evil which disobedient men cause, but to that kind of evil which was mentioned by Jeremiah when he said of the wicked: "If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings."³¹ Likewise the Apostle James repudiates the idea that God is the source of evil that tempts men: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth

²⁹B. of M., 2 Nephi 2:11, 13.

³⁰Isaiah 45:7.

³¹Jeremiah 26:3.

he any man."³²

SUMMARY-OMNIPOTENCE AND EVIL

God did not create evil-doing. His influence is always contrary to evil. Evil has always existed in opposition to good and is the unhappy consequence of the misuse of agency. Since agency has always been sustained by God, evil is as eternal as good. In light of these facts it may be concluded that God is all-powerful in that his power is sufficient for all men who are willing to rise above the power of evil. He is not all-powerful in that he does away with all evil, but in the sense that he is not subject to evil, and he has power through his divine nature to raise those who obey his will so that they will not be subject to evil.

CONCLUSION

God is said to be omnipotent. He does not, however, have power to create something out of nothing. He did not create the elements, nor law, nor good, and he certainly did not create evil. Power results from organization, and since God is the great organizer of life and subordinates all life to himself in truth and on the basis of free agency, he has all the power that there is to be

³²James 1:13.

had. The basis of this power is his intelligence and understanding of the principles of truth and law made possible by his divine nature. And it is through his divine nature that all of his acts are accomplished.

OMNISCIENCE

The scriptures indicate that God knows all things.³³ For example, the Prophet Nephi states: "O how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it."³⁴ Similarly, Joseph Smith taught that God's knowledge is a source of power. "In knowledge there is power. God has more power than all other beings, because he has greater knowledge; and hence he knows how to subject all other beings to Him."³⁵ The key to what is meant by the phrase "knoweth all things" was indicated by the Prophet Joseph when he said:

The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the plan of salvation, before it rolled into existence, or ever "the morning stars sang together" for joy; the past, the present, and the future were and are, with Him, one eternal "now," He knew of the fall of Adam, the iniquities of the antediluvians, of the depth of iniquity that would be connected with the human family, their weaknesses and strength, their power and glory, apostasies, their crimes, their righteousness and iniquity; He comprehended the fall of man, and his redemption; He knows the plan of salvation and pointed

³³See D&C 93:28; 42:17; John 14:26; Acts 15:18.

³⁴B. of M., 2 Nephi 9:20.

³⁵HC, V, 340.

it out; He was acquainted with the situation of all nations and with their destiny; He ordered all things according to the council of His own will; He knows the situation of both the living and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God, whether in this world, or in the world to come.³⁶

God knows all things for by his divine nature, he sees and understands all things that are in his great domain, whether it be the past, the present or what will occur in the future.

The idea that God knows all things past, present and future is directly associated with the concept of God as a being of truth and as a center of the spirit of truth. A revelation states that the spirit of truth centers in Christ:

. . . truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;

And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning.

The Spirit of truth is of God. I [Jesus Christ] am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth.³⁷

Jesus Christ received a fulness of truth, which is also to say that he received a fulness of knowledge. Knowledge is an important element of intelligence. For it is the combination of truth (knowledge) and the understanding of truth (light) that comprises intelligence. Elder John A. Widtsoe defined intelligence as a "compound

³⁶HC, IV, 597.

³⁷D&C 93:24-26 (Italics are those of the writer).

of light and truth."³⁸ Joseph Smith indicated that man must acquire knowledge to traverse the path to Godlike intelligence.

The first principles of man are self-existent with God. God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. He had power to institute laws to instruct the weaker intelligences, that they may be exalted with Himself, so that they might have one glory upon another, and all that knowledge, power, glory, and intelligence, which is requisite in order to save them in the world of spirits.³⁹

It is not only the assimilation of knowledge that leads to omniscience, but the enlightening influence of the divine nature must also be present. A revelation received by the Prophet Joseph Smith indicates the importance of the divine nature in comprehending all things. It states ". . . that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things."⁴⁰ Because God is filled with light and has all knowledge, he is the most intelligent of all beings. The Lord said to Abraham of his intelligence:

These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I

³⁸John A. Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1951), III, p. 72.

³⁹HC, VI, p. 312; These same principles are indicated in the P. of G. P., Abraham 3:19-26 (Italics are those of the writer).

⁴⁰D&C 88:67.

am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.⁴¹

Through his great intelligence, God is omniscient, and his intelligence is greater than the combined intelligence of all other beings.

In order to better understand the concept of God's omniscience, the experience of Moses is enlightening. Through the power of the spirit of God, Moses beheld every particle of the earth and all the inhabitants thereof. The record states:

. . . it came to pass, as the voice was still speaking, Moses cast his eyes and beheld the earth, yea, even all of it; and there was not a particle of it which he did not behold, discerning it by the spirit of God.

And he beheld also the inhabitants thereof, and there was not a soul which he beheld not; and he discerned them by the Spirit of God; and their numbers were great, even numberless as the sand upon the sea shore.⁴²

If, under the influence of God's glory or Spirit, Moses was able to see every particle of this earth and all its inhabitants, it is easy to see how God would know even the thoughts of our hearts. As George Q. Cannon taught:

He is the God whom we worship. When we call upon him, though he may be remote from us, dwelling in his holy habitation in the midst of the eternities, the very thoughts of our hearts, the very conceptions of our minds, the feeble whisperings of our voices, they ascend to him, are carried to him, his ear comprehends them; his bowels of compassion are moved towards us his children, his all-piercing eye penetrates eternity,

41p. of G. P., Abraham 3:19.

42p. of G. P., Moses 1:27;28.

and the glance of his vision reaches us.

There is not a single thought of our hearts which he does not comprehend; there is nothing connected with us he does not know. We may hide ourselves in the bowels of the earth, but we cannot conceal ourselves from his all-piercing sight. We may climb the highest mountains or descend into the deepest valleys or we may go to the uttermost parts of the earth, but wherever we may go he is there, his power is there, his vision is there to hear and to comprehend the desires and the wishes of our hearts.⁴³

OMNISCIENCE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

The fact that God has foreknowledge was implied by Joseph Smith when he said: "The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth; . . . the past, the present, and the future were and are, with Him, one eternal 'now.'"⁴⁴ God's foreknowledge was expressed in the crucifixion of his Son. Of Christ, Luke said in the Acts of the Apostles: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."⁴⁵ George Q. Cannon said of the foreknown and foreordained crucifixion:

God by His foreknowledge understood perfectly that Adam, in the exercise of his agency, would fall. Therefore He prepared a Redeemer in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, who we are told was "a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world."⁴⁶

⁴³George Q. Cannon, Address delivered in Salt Lake City, October 5, 1871, Journal of Discourses, reporter George F. Gibbs, XXI, (London, England, 1881), 73.

⁴⁴HC, IV, 597.

⁴⁵Acts 2:23.

⁴⁶Cannon, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, p. 189.

The foreknowledge of God operates in other areas of the plan of salvation. The Prophet Alma explained that many priesthood bearers were given their roles in this life according to the foreknowledge of God:

. . . this is the manner after which they were ordained--being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceeding great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.⁴⁷

The question is at times asked, "Does not God's foreknowledge become a determining cause of the actions of men and does it not therefore deprive man of his agency?" After hearing a speech by the Prophet Joseph Smith, Matthew S. Davis reported the Prophet's views on foreknowledge and foreordination as follows: "I believe in the fall of man, as recorded in the Bible; I believe that God foreknew everything, but did not foreordain everything; I deny that foreordain and foreknow is the same thing."⁴⁸

Brigham Young and Willard Richards wrote an article entitled "Election and Reprobation" in which they denied that the agency of man is ever arbitrarily circumscribed. They wrote of the action of God: "Therefore He raised up a man, even Pharoah, who, He foreknew, would harden his heart against God of his own free will and choice, and

⁴⁷B. of M., Alma 13:3.

⁴⁸HC, III, 98 (Italics by the writer).

would withstand the Almighty in His attempt to deliver His chosen people."⁴⁹ The First Presidency (consisting of Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose) was more explicit. They denied that foreknowledge is a determining cause of what a man does or does not do in this life:

Therefore He has permitted the evils which have been brought about by the acts of His creatures, but will control their ultimate results for His own glory and the progress and exaltation of His sons and daughters, when they have learned obedience by the things they suffer. The contrasts experienced in this world of mingled sorrow and joy are educational in their nature, and will be the means of raising humanity to a full appreciation of all that is right and true and good. The foreknowledge of God does not imply His action in bringing about that which He foresees, nor make Him responsible in any degree for that which man does or refuses to do. The comprehension of this principle makes clear many questions that puzzle the uninformed as to the works and power of Deity.⁵⁰

How is it that God controls this earth and its creatures, including man, without disturbing agency? It appears from the writings of the apostles and prophets⁵¹ that he does so on the basis that all intelligent entities connected with this earth, including man, have given their assent to his plan for this earth. In addition to agreeing to God's plan, they also stress that a certain degree of agency is preserved on this earth because there are for each level of intelligence, of which man is the highest, compartments or spheres of agency in which God does not

⁴⁹HC, IV, 263.

⁵⁰"A Christmas Greeting From the First Presidency," Deseret News, Magazine Section, December 19, 1914, p. 3.

⁵¹See Taylor, Government of God, pp. 76-77.

interfere. George Q. Cannon referred to this concept of a sphere of agency when he said:

We must remember, to begin with, that God our Eternal Father has given unto each of us our agency. There is no human being born on the earth from whom God has withheld his or her agency. We have as much right to exercise our agency in our sphere as God the Eternal Father has to exercise His agency in His sphere; just as much.⁵²

Joseph Smith taught that Adam and Eve, our first parents, voluntarily subscribed to their sphere of agency:

The organization of the spiritual and heavenly worlds, and of spiritual and heavenly beings, was agreeable to the most perfect order and harmony; their limits and bounds are fixed irrevocably, and voluntarily subscribed to in their heavenly estate by themselves, and were by our first parents subscribed to upon the earth.⁵³

Adam and Eve subscribed to the conditions of their respective spheres both before coming to this earth and when upon this earth. Likewise, we may conclude that all of God's children were allowed to subscribe to the conditions of their pre-earth⁵⁴ and earthly spheres.⁵⁵ These children approved God's plan for this earth. It was for

⁵²Cannon, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, p. 189.

⁵³HC, VI, p. 51.

⁵⁴See HC, VI, p. 51 as quoted on the preceding page. And also for example, the fact that God allowed Lucifer and a third part of the hosts of heaven to exercise their agency unto condemnation. See P. of G. P., Moses 4:1-4; D&C 29:36-37; 76:25-28.

⁵⁵The scriptures indicate that man has agency on this earth. See B. of M., Helaman 14:30; 2 Nephi 2:16; P. of G. P., Moses 4:3; D&C 93:31; see also James E. Talmage, The Great Apostacy, (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909), pp. 21, 34.

them a great moment in eternity, as described by John Taylor:

Hence as the discoveries of those geniuses already referred to, were hailed with pleasure by the inhabitants of the world, on account of the benefits conferred upon men, so when God created this earth, and organized men upon it, "the morning stars sung together for joy;" they looked upon it as God looked upon it, as a work perfect, magnificent, and glorious, through which they saw their way to exaltation, glory, thrones, principalities, powers, dominions, and eternal felicity. They had the intelligence before, but now they saw a way through which to develop it. Through the world's great Architect, their Father, they discovered a plan fraught with intelligence and wisdom, reaching from eternity to eternity, pointing out a means whereby, through obedience to celestial laws, they might obtain the same power that he had.⁵⁶

Indeed, as stated in the Lectures of Faith, it is the foreknowledge of God which provides the way for man to achieve his full potential, even eternal life, which is also to say that man is assured of the highest possible degree of agency, namely that which is inherent in Godhood. To quote:

Without the knowledge of all things, God would not be able to save any portion of his creatures; for it is by reason of the knowledge which he has of all things, from the beginning to the end, that enables him to give that understanding to his creatures, by which they are made partakers of eternal life; and if it were not for the idea existing in the minds of men, that God had all knowledge, it would be impossible for them to exercise faith in him.⁵⁷

Not only man, but all life and kingdoms appear to be organized in a pattern of spheres in which there are

⁵⁶Taylor, The Government of God, pp. 78-79.

⁵⁷L. of F., No. IV, p. 47.

limits and bounds. A revelation to Joseph Smith said on the subject of limits and bounds:

All kingdoms have a law given;

And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.

And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.

All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified.

For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; mercy hath compassion on mercy and claimeth her own; justice continueth its course and claimeth its own; judgment goeth before the face of him who sitteth upon the throne and governeth and executeth all things.⁵⁸

There are order, harmony and purpose in all of God's domain. His plan will reign supreme on this earth even though some of his creatures will chafe and burn because they are not justified for exceeding the limits and bounds of their sphere.

SUMMARY

God foreknows all things. The future is for Him "one eternal now." But the foreknowledge of God is not a determining cause of future events which deprives men of their agency.

In a conjectural sense, it appears that the foreknowledge of God is based upon his transcendent intelligence and his knowledge and application of truth and law. Truth

⁵⁸D&C 88:36-40.

and law are the elements upon which the future can be predicted. They are in essence the forces that determine the future, and when such forces are shaped, decreed or understood by a purposeful God, then the future is predictable and foreknowable. God through his divine nature is able to understand all these forces and elements that make up the future, and thus he foreknows what the future must surely be.⁵⁹

ARE THERE LIMITATIONS TO THE FORE- KNOWLEDGE OF GOD?

God is always increasing his domain. His words to the Prophet Moses were: "And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words."⁶⁰ In

⁵⁹Brigham Young said on the subject: "If we believe the plain, broad statements of the Bible, we must believe that Jesus Christ is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; none are exempt. This applies to all who possess the least degree of light and intelligence, no matter how small; wherever intelligence can be found, God is the author of it. This light is inherent according to a law of eternity--according to the law of the Gods, according to the law of Him whom we serve as the only wise, true and living God to us. He is the author of this light to us. Yet our knowledge is very limited; who can tell the future, and know it as the past is known to us? It is a small thing, if we were acquainted with the principle. Were we acquainted with this principle, we could just as well read the future as the past." Brigham Young, address delivered at Salt Lake City, June 18, 1865, Journal of Discourses, reporter G. D. Watt, XI, (London, England, 1867), 123. (Italics by the writer).

⁶⁰p. of G. P., Moses 1:38.

view of the myriad earths to be created in eternity, the following question may be raised about the foreknowledge of God, "Does God know about all the endless number of worlds and all their accompanying details that are to be created throughout eternity?"

The writer has not found any statement from the apostles and prophets which deals directly with the question of any limitation in the foreknowledge of God. Any commentary would therefore be subjective and not appropriate for this thesis. It is clear, however, that the apostles and prophets have taught that God foreknows all things in this world and in all the worlds that make up his domain.

CONCLUSION

God is omniscient. By this it should be understood that he knows the past, present and future as "one eternal now" for all the worlds and their inhabitants that are in his vast domain.

OMNIPRESENCE

The teachings of the apostles and prophets indicate that God is omnipresent, not in person but through his Holy Spirit.⁶¹ For example, in the following revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jesus Christ is said to be everywhere

⁶¹This subject was also introduced in Chapter 4, pp. 55-56 where the particular emphasis was on the omnipresence of God's Holy Spirit.

present through the power of his spirit, which is known as the spirit or light of Christ. To quote:

He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth;

Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made. . . .

Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space--

The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. . . .

He comprehendeth all things, and all things are before him, and all things are round about him, and he is above all things, and in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things; and all things are by him, and of him, even God, forever and ever.⁶²

Parley P. Pratt understood that God is omnipresent by the power of his Spirit, and not by his bodily presence. He observed, "The omnipresence of God must therefore be understood in some other way than of His bodily or personal presence."⁶³ President Joseph F. Smith stated that it is

⁶²D&C 88:6-7, 12-13, 41. (Italics by the writer).

⁶³Parley P. Pratt, Key to the Science of Theology, (Liverpool, England, 1855), p. 38. B. H. Roberts said on this subject: That is the explanation, a spiritual light and power that is divine proceeds forth from the presence of God and fills the immensity of space; that is how you reconcile the personality of God with God's everywhere-ness. The spirit that becomes God immanent in the world proceeds forth from the personal presence of God, to fill the immensity of space, and becomes everywhere present. A presence from which you cannot flee, from which you cannot hide, in whose presence you must stand, whether you will or no. When you begin to grasp this truth and make it your truth, until it becomes a motive force and power within you, you begin to draw your conclusion that all must be well with

difficult for some men to realize that God through his divine nature is omnipresent:

It is hard to get man to understand that Almighty God, who possesses all knowledge, all wisdom, and all power, can extend his power, his Spirit his majesty and glory and dominion over all his creations while he himself sits upon his throne--It is hard to make them understand it, and yet that is the truth.⁶⁴

The Lord revealed to Jeremiah that he filled heaven and earth when he said: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."⁶⁵ Brigham Young taught that it is through the spirit that God fills the earth. He also taught that man is in the presence of God whether he is on the earth or in heaven. To quote:

What did one of the ancients say? "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence; if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Where is the end of His power? He is omnipotent, and fills immensity by His agents, by His influence, by

that world in which God indwells by that spirit which proceeds forth from his presence, carrying his power, and glory, and knowledge, and holiness, and love everywhere throughout existence. Brigham H. Roberts, "The Nearness of God," address delivered in Salt Lake City, March 15, 1914, reporter F. W. Otterstrom, found in a pamphlet which includes "The Kingdom of God" by Brigham Young, no date, no publisher, copy in Brigham Young University Library, also found in Discourses of Master Minds compiled by Nels B. Lundwall, (Salt Lake City, Deseret News Press, n.d.)

⁶⁴Joseph F. Smith, "Our Duty to Humanity, To God and To Country," Address delivered at Salt Lake City, April 6, 1917, The Improvement Era, XX, (May 1917), p. 652.

⁶⁵Jeremiah 23:24.

His Spirit, and by His ministers. We are in the presence of God there, as we are here.⁶⁶

Since men are always in the presence of God through his Spirit, the meaning of Christ's statement to Joseph Smith is clear: "I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst, and ye cannot see me."⁶⁷ Not only are men always in the presence of God, but as Christ said: "All things are present before mine eyes."⁶⁸ The Prophet Enoch learned that God was in touch with all his creations, for he said to Enoch, "Mine eyes can pierce them."⁶⁹

In view of the ubiquity of the Holy Spirit and the operation of that Spirit upon everything, Charles W. Penrose said:

God is not everywhere present personally, but He is omnipresent in the power of that spirit--the Holy Spirit--which animates all created things; that which is the light of the sun, and of the soul as well as the light of the eye, that which enables the inhabitants of the earth to understand and perceive the things of God.⁷⁰

⁶⁶Brigham Young, Address delivered in Salt Lake City, August 8, 1852, Journal of Discourses, reporter G. O. Watt, III, (London, England, 1856), pp. 94-95.

⁶⁷D&C 38:7.

⁶⁸D&C 38:2.

⁶⁹P. of G. P., Moses 7:36.

⁷⁰Penrose, Journal of Discourses, XXVI, p. 23.

CONCLUSION

God is omnipresent through the power of his spirit, which is his divine nature. He is in all, through all, round about all, above and below all things. There is no place which he cannot behold or in which he does not exist, and his eye can pierce all his creations.

SECTION V

CONCLUSION

Chapter 11

CONCLUSION

One of the things that this thesis has shown, is that the terms light, glory and spirit are often used to describe the influence, power and workings of God in the same roles and functions; hence they are often made synonymous in meaning. Comparisons were made between light, glory and spirit, and they in turn to many other subjects, such as truth, intelligence and goodness. The results appear to indicate that the apostles and prophets have often used the terms light, glory and spirit as if they describe the same essence and power of God.

In this thesis, the phrase "divine nature" was restricted in meaning in order to conform with its usage in 2 Peter 1:2-4.¹ In view of this interpretation of the term "divine nature," it was found that a fulness of light, glory and spirit is what constitutes the divine nature of God. However, a more liberal understanding of the term "divine nature" would include all of the aspects of the being of God, such as his spiritual body of flesh and bones.²

¹See Chapter 1, pp. 9-11.

²See Chapter 1, p. 7.

It was pointed out that the Son, Jesus Christ received a fulness of the divine nature of the Eternal Father through a principle called "indwelling." There is complete harmony between Father and Son; they are one in all things as a result of the indwelling influence of the Father.

The First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles in a doctrinal exposition explained that Christ was invested with the authority of the Father. They said: "In all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son was represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority."³ Thus it was found that Jesus Christ is the source and control of all the powers of light, glory and spirit (including those of the Holy Ghost) for this earth.

It was indicated that the attributes and characteristics of God are basic features of the divine nature. For example, it is through the influence and power of the Son's divine nature that all life is quickened and that love, truth, goodness, intelligence and justice are disseminated.

The apostles and prophets have taught that God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent as a result of his divine nature. He is omnipotent in the sense that he has all the power which there is to possess. For example, God

³"The Father and the Son--A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency," quoted in James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, V, (Salt Lake City, Bookcraft Inc., 1971), pp. 31-32.

cannot create something from nothing; that is, he did not create the earth from nothing, but rather organized the earth from eternal elements. Furthermore, they have taught that God obeys, sustains and operates through law; thereby he is the highest expression of law, and thus of power.

God's power is related to his knowledge. The Prophet Joseph Smith said: "In knowledge, there is power. God has more power than all other beings, because he has greater knowledge; and hence he knows how to subject all other beings to Him."⁴ There is not anything past, present or future within his own domain that God does not know. He is all-knowing; he is omniscient.

The apostles and prophets have taught that God has a glorified body, that he occupies space and that in a corporeal sense, he can never be in more than one place at the same time. Nevertheless, they have taught that God is omnipresent through the influence and power of his divine nature.

There are other benefits from this study, perhaps some of which are not so tangible as the findings stated above. One such would have to do with the gathering of some of the vast assortment of material on the subject of

⁴Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (2d ed. rev.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), V, 340, hereafter cited as HC.

the divine nature for use by those who would enhance their understanding of God. For it is through an understanding of the words, terms and phrases which the prophets and apostles have used to describe the divine nature that men may obtain some important insights on the path to a knowledge of God.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

There are many grave and important questions of a philosophical nature which could be raised in this thesis. Some of these questions are related to the problems of theism, love, truth and theodicy. The apostles and prophets have not been as concerned with these problems as they have been with being witnesses to that which has been revealed to them by God. Hence, they appear to have taken the position that there is no greater understanding to be derived on most questions of philosophy than that which God has revealed.

Some aspects of the problem of theodicy have been introduced in Chapter Ten of this thesis under the sub-heading "Omnipotence and Evil." The reasons for including some discussion on the subject were: (1) The apostles and prophets have often responded to public concern about the subject and (2) it was hoped that the discussion would lead to a better understanding of other topics in the thesis, namely those of goodness and omnipotence.

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THE DIVINE NATURE OF GOD: A STUDY OF WHAT HAS
BEEN SAID AND TAUGHT ABOUT THE DIVINE
NATURE OF GOD BY ANCIENT AND MODERN
APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis prominent teachings of the apostles and prophets were examined on the subject of the divine nature of God. These teachings indicate that among the elements of the divine nature of God is his Holy Spirit, his glory or the light which emanates from his person. God's glory, spirit and light were compared and analyzed to determine their relationship to each other. It was found that they perform the same roles and functions and are often used synonymously. Other aspects of the divine nature were examined, such as life, love, truth and goodness.

The terms omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence were studied in light of statements made by the apostles and prophets. They show that God is omnipotent in the sense that he has all the power that it is possible to have, and that he is omniscient in that he knows the past, present and future. Even though God has an organized, glorified and spiritual body of flesh and bone, he is nevertheless omnipresent through the ubiquity of his divine nature and is in and through all things.

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