

The Atonement of Jesus Christ
Week Three – September 27, 2023
God’s Plan from the Beginning
Notes and Quotes

D&C 51:15

Joseph Smith, Jr., *Teach. of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 354

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 has 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.

(Cf. Alma 12:28-34; 13:1-19; D&C 93:18-20; 132:11-12, 19-20; Abraham 3:18-23)

Abraham 3:22-23

Elder B.H. Roberts, "Immortality of Man," *Improvement Era* 13 (April 1907): 401-423.

There is in that complex thing we call man, an intelligent entity, uncreated, self-existent, indestructible, he—for that entity is a person; because as we shall see, he is possessed of powers that go with personality only, hence that entity is "he," not "it"—he is eternal as God is co-existent, in fact, with God; of the same kind of substance or essence with deity; though confessedly inferior in degree of intelligence and power to God. One must needs think that the name of this eternal entity—what God calls him—conveys to the mind some idea of his nature. He is called an "intelligence" and this I believe is descriptive of him ... the entity must be "self-conscious" and "others-conscious," that is, he must have the power to distinguish himself from other things—the "me" from the "not me." He must have the power of deliberation, by which he sets over one thing against another; with power also to form a judgment that this or that is a better thing or state than this or that. Also, there goes with this idea of intelligence a power of choosing one thing instead of another; one state rather than another. These powers are inseparably connected with any idea that may be formed as an intelligence.

Abraham 3:22-23

Marion G. Romney, "The Worth of Souls," *General Conference*, October 1978

In origin, man is a son of God. The spirits of men "are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (D&C 76:24). Through that birth process, self-existing intelligence was organized into individual spirit

Sidney B. Sperry, *Doctrine and Covenants Compendium*, p. 477.

Of one thing we can be sure – our great Celestial parents brought forth our pre-existent spirits, combining intelligence (which cannot be created nor made, (D&C 93:29) and spirit matter (see 131:7-8) in such a way as to produce the "intelligences" spoken of by Father Abraham. The exact form or nature of "intelligence, or the light of truth" (vs.29) prior to man's pre-existent birth has not been disclosed to us by the Scriptures...

D&C 93:29

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 4: 127.

Some of our writers have endeavored to explain what an intelligence is, but to do so is futile, for we have never been given any insight into this matter beyond what the Lord has fragmentarily revealed. We know, however, that there is something called intelligence which always existed. It is the real eternal part of man, which was not created nor made. This intelligence combined with the spirit constitutes a spiritual identity or individual.

D&C 138:53-56

Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrines of the Restoration: Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie*, pp 340-41.

Schooling is nothing new to us here. We went to school in preexistence. There were occasions when Adam taught the classes, and when Abraham taught the classes, and when Joseph Smith did. And the classes were so numerous and so extensive that the whole house of Israel—that group of spirits who were foreordained to become Israelites—were teachers; and they taught classes. And the witness of truth was borne and we were given the opportunity to advance and progress. When the time came for us to come down to mortality, we ended a course of instruction that had been going on for an infinitely long period of time and commenced a new course of instruction—a mortal course. In effect, this mortal course is the final examination for all of the life that we lived through in this infinite premortal period." Thus, after having learned gospel truths in the preexistence, gospel instruction in mortality is but a remembering of that which we knew prior to birth—we brought with us an appetite for gospel truths from the premortal sphere.

(Cf. Job 38:1-7; Jeremiah 1:5; Alma 13:1-7; Abraham 3:2-26.)

Abraham 3:22

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p 12.

Our knowledge of persons and things before we came here, combined with the divinity awakened within our souls through obedience to the gospel, powerfully affects, in my opinion, all our likes and dislikes, and guides our preferences in the course of this life, provided we give careful heed to the admonitions of the Spirit.

All those salient truths which come home so forcibly to the head and heart seem but the awakening of the memories of the spirit. Can we know anything here that we did not know before we came?

Are not the means of knowledge in the first estate equal to those of this? I think that the spirit, before and after this probation, possesses greater facilities, aye, manifold greater, for the acquisition of knowledge, than while manacled and shut up in the prison-house of mortality.

Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols., 4: 216.

I want to tell you, each and every one of you, that you are well acquainted with God our heavenly Father, or the great Elohim. You are all well acquainted with Him, for there is not a soul of you but what has lived in His house and dwelt with Him year after year; and yet you are seeking to become acquainted with Him, when the fact is, you have merely forgotten what you did know.

President David O. McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay*, pp. 228-30.

From this revelation [Abraham 3:23], we may infer two things: first, that there were among those spirits [in the premortal life] different degrees of intelligence, varying grades of achievement, retarded and advanced spiritual attainment; second, that there were no national distinctions among those spirits such as Americans, Europeans, Asiatics, Australians, etc. Such "bounds of habitation" would have to be "determined" when the spirits entered their earthly existence or second estate Our place in this world would then be determined by our own advancement or condition in the premortal state, just as our place in our future existence will be determined by what we do here in mortality. When, therefore, the Creator said to Abraham, and to others of his attainment, "You I will make my rulers," there could exist no feeling of envy or jealousy among the million other spirits, for those who were "good and great" were but receiving their just reward.

D&C 93:36

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 58.

“There is a difference between knowledge and pure intelligence. Satan possesses knowledge, far more than we have, but he has not intelligence or he would render obedience to the principles of truth and right. I know men who have knowledge, who understand the principles of the gospel, perhaps as well as you do, who are brilliant, but who lack the essential qualification of pure intelligence. They will not accept and render obedience thereto. Pure intelligence comprises not only knowledge, but the power to properly apply that knowledge.”

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 290

To carry forward his purposes among men and nations, the Lord foreordained chosen spirit children in the pre-existence and assigned them to come to earth at particular times and places so that they might aid in the furthering of the will. These pre-existent appointments made ‘according to the foreknowledge of God the Father’, simply designated certain individuals to perform missions which the Lord in his wisdom knew they had the talents and capacities to do.

Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, November 1990, 73.

You are one of God’s noble and great spirits, held in reserve to come to earth at this time. In your pre-mortal life you were appointed to help prepare the world for the great gathering of souls that will precede the Lord’s second coming. You are one of the covenant people. You are an heir to the promise that all the earth will be blessed by the seed of Abraham and that God’s covenant with Abraham will be fulfilled through his lineage in these latter days.

John A. Widtsoe, *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, October 1934, 189

In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a certain agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan, conceived by him. We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we became parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but measurably, saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became not then merely the Father’s work but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the plan of salvation. Brothers and sisters, in our pre-existent state, we literally made a covenant with the Lord to provide the temple ordinances for those who would not have the chance to do it for themselves during their mortal sojourn on earth. Doing Family History work is the Lord’s way of extending the plan of salvation to our kindred dead.

Abraham 3:22-23

Orson Pratt, "The Pre-existence of Man," *The Seer* 1 (April 1853): 54-56.

“If all the two-thirds who kept their first estate were equally valiant in the war, and equally faithful, why should some of them be called and chosen in their spiritual state to hold responsible stations and offices in this world, while others were not? If there were none of those spirits who sinned, why were the Apostles, when they existed in their previous state, chosen to be blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?" All these passages seem to convey an idea, that there were callings, choosings, ordinances, promises, predestinations, elections, and appointments, made before the world began.”

Mosiah 15:1-5

1st Presidency, “A Doctrinal Exposition” (1916); cited in *Articles of Faith*, 470-71.

In all his dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority. This is true of Christ in His preexistent, ante mortal, or unembodied state, in the which He was known as Jehovah; also during His embodiment in the flesh; and during his labors as a disembodied spirit in the realm of the dead.... Thus the Father placed His name upon the Son; and Jesus Christ spoke and ministered in and through the Father’s name; and so far as power, authority, and Godship are concerned His words and acts were and are those of the Father.

(Cf. Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 19:9-10)

The Great Plan of God –

To Be Ordered, Organized, or At One With Him

Moses 1:39 Purpose of God’s Plan

Dallin H. Oaks, “Godhead and the Plan,” *GC*, April 2017

D&C 51:15 Organized according to Law

Joseph Smith, Jr., *TPJS*, 354 To instruct the weaker intelligences

D&C 93:27-37 Intelligences could obtain light and truth

An intelligence is Light OF Truth which attains greater intelligence by being obedient to Light AND Truth. Statements on Intelligence from Marion G. Romney, Sydney B. Sperry, Joseph Fielding Smith

John 1:1-4 Christ is God’s word from beginning

Christ becomes God’s Word by obedience to his laws. D&C 93:7-9, 27-28

Abraham 3:19-28 Christ is more intelligent than all

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 58. Difference in pure intelligence

Moses 4:1-4 Satan rebels, Christ submits becoming one

“I” trouble verses “Thy Will.” Satan’s mission statement. Desired the Power and position of God, not the character and attributes that make God

Revelation 12:7-11 Satan accuses us of being incapable

We overcome Lucifer by the blood of Christ and our testimonies of Him

Alma 13:1-19 Ordered after the Son of God

Those who choose to follow Christ become priest after His order, which is to organized by God’s laws to bring to pass the eternal life of man

JST Genesis 14:25-40 Melchizedek follows order of Enoch

The Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God is to submit to God’s will, sacrifice self to help others “obtain heaven,” or become at one with God. See also D&C 76:57

D&C 107:2-4 Priesthood name changed to Melchizedek

The last high priest to accomplish the Order after the Son of God; to help all within his stewardship to obtain heaven and become one with God.

D&C 84:19-23 Priesthood Ordinances *order us as God*

The power of godliness is manifested in us as we are ordered or organized as God is ordered; obedient, self-sacrificing, living gospel standards, being one with our spouse, consecrating ourselves to helping others to progress toward exaltation. Thus ordered, we can dwell with God and join him fully in his work to bring to pass the eternal life of man.