

Chapter 9

Religions & Symbolism

Parentheses added for clarity and understanding

All organized religions are endowed with symbolism. Why symbolism? For the same reason the Lord spoke in parables.

“Therefore, speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.”

(New Testament | Matthew 13:13 - 17)

Symbolism is manifest through the ordinances, ceremonies, and rituals of religious worship. It is also manifest in Priesthoods, Shamans, Buddhas, Prophets, Apostles, Bishops, Clergymen, Gods of Nature, Pastors, Rabbi's, Temples, Chapels, Churches, Synagogues, Mosques, etc. All these types and shadows [and offices] of form and structure [organized religions] have a divine purpose! That purpose is simply and profoundly to awaken our innate spiritual potential which can make us “one” with god/God! The small “god”ⁱ in all my essays symbolizes the god seed or potential in all individuals and the capital “God” is symbolic of not just the person God, but more importantly, the concept of godliness, holiness, divine nature, divine love and divine morality. If mankind does not come to see or understand this symbolism, then the symbolism found in their organized religion becomes the object of worship and its true purpose will not be completely fulfilled within the

heart and mind of that man or woman. “Seeing, they see not and hearing, they hear not” [Ezekiel 12: 2].

When this takes place, no matter the name of the religion, it leads its followers into what the scriptures call “idol worship” or its predecessor, “formalism.” For example, in ancient Israel and in Modern Israel today, there are “things,” or “places,” “made with hands” that are called “holy,” or “sacred.” In seeking these “things” or “places” or “ordinances and ceremonies” for the living or the dead, without understanding or internalizing their symbolic meaning is fulfilling “dead works” [Hebrews 6:1, 9:14, D&C 22:1-4] and its followers lose their perspective and their path into the presence of gods/Gods fulness. God has always tried to get Israel, Ancient and Modern to become individually, that “holy” and “sacred” place, **“made without hands,”** even a “temple of the living God.”

The reality of “pure and undefiled religion” [James 1:27] is to recognize that every person who has come to this earth regardless of their birthright, religion, or bloodline is a son or daughter of God, having the innate potentially, power and authority to become “again” a son or daughter of god/God by applying their “faith” and immerse themselves into “divine nature.” These are not trite words. Therefore, the real literal “work” is our immersion into “divine nature” and this is indeed the exact “work” and “will” of the Father and Christ. Words are symbols too and create images in our minds and the pure in heart come to understand this by seeking an immersion into them.

Imagine what it would be like to immerse yourself, in thought, word and deed into these scriptural phrases: **“divine nature”** [2 Peter 1:4-9]. **“Be Holy for I the Lord your God am Holy”** [Leviticus 19: 1-5]. **“Sanctify yourselves”** [Leviticus 11: 44; 20:7; 2 Chronicles 31:18; D&C 43: 11]. **“Put on the New Man”** [Ephesians 4:19-25; Colossians 3: 8-16]. **“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...”** [Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5: 9]. **“By their fruits ye shall know them”** [Matthew 7: 15-20]. **“The fulness of Christ”** [Ephesians 4: 13] **“Receive the Holy Ghost”** [John 20:21-22; Acts 1:2; Moroni 10: 5] **“Be one”** [D&C 20: 28; Mark 12: 29-33; John 17: 11, 21-22; Jacob 2:27, 5: 68; 3 Nephi 19:23; D&C 38:27]. **“Abide in me”** [John 15: 4-14; Moses 6: 34].

We are living in the days called the fulness of times, when all things will be revealed to the honest of heart, even the meaning of religious symbols, the “plain and precious things” of the gospel of Christ; yet many will “see and see not and hear and hear not,” the sacred message.

I will share a few examples of religious symbolism: ask yourself, “where is my focus, in the letter of the law or the spirit of the law?”

1. **Baptism:** When we are baptized in water, it symbolizes our desire to be immersed completely into “divine nature.” That we might become like Christ in character and attribute and become a true son or daughter of God again! I say “again” because we all became sons and daughters of God in our first estate by this very process, but have forgotten. This is the whole meaning of the spirit of Elijah, in turning the “hearts of the Fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (D&C 128: 17). The “heart” is the scriptural symbol of “divine nature.” Hence baptism always implies a complete immersion into several elements that will lead us to god/God. From a mortal perspective, the first “element” is mortal birth (the womb of water) all men and women who have been born into mortality have been completely immersed in a womb of water, thus “born of water,” fulfilling the scripture [John 3:5]. The second baptism is spiritual, to be “born of the Spirit,” [John 3:6,8] which is to be baptized in “divine nature” or “born of god/God/godliness.” Hence to be “born of God” is the scriptural symbol for being immersed into “divine nature” in thought and in the words, we use, and thus our actions should be a manifestation of pure godliness if we are truly “born of God.” Every person has the potential to do this regardless of race, religion or bloodline. “For man is spirit [we are spiritual beings]. The elements [physical and spiritual] are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; And when separated, [from godliness] man cannot receive a fulness of joy. The elements [our spirit body and physical bodies] are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the tabernacle of [god]God, even temples; and whatsoever temple is defiled [through a fallen and carnal nature], God shall destroy that temple,” [meaning, the “god/God” potential in man cannot be fulfilled when man or woman has “defiled” their temple body]. (Doctrine and Covenants | Section 93:33 - 35). Repentance & forgiveness [which is the divine attribute of *mercy* is the only way back].

2. **Authority:** Authority has become ego to some; however, it is pure godly righteousness to the honest in heart! When hands are laid on our head in all the ordinances of the gospel, it symbolizes that our heads are the sacred place where our “thoughts” are born, which actually creates our nature and character into godliness and holiness that we may become like Christ and a true son and daughter of God again. Authority does not come from priesthood or the laying on of hands, [that is pure symbolism] it only comes from holiness of character and virtue and every other divine attribute of godliness.

3. **Marriage.** When one is married, following “Gods” sacred pattern [Deuteronomy 17: 14-20; D&C 42:22-26; 49:15-17]. It becomes a sacred unbreakable covenant with “one man and one woman” ...to become equally yoked in the “faith” and “works” of “divine nature,” encouraging one another in this sacred relationship of becoming like Christ and becoming again true sons and daughters of God. When children come into this sacred union, they are taught this symbolism of what it means to “be one” with god/God. God’s plan of salvation is available to all innately. We are each accountable ourselves to awaken to these truths. Which bring us to the ultimate marriage ceremony. Christ [a man of holiness and moral virtue symbolizes] the groom and we [the people of holiness and moral virtue] are the bride. (Matthew 25:1-13... Parable of the 10 virgins).

4. **“Ye are gods”** [Psalms 82:6; John 10:22-42]. The words themselves are symbols and the thoughts which created the words are symbols. These words and thoughts create images in our minds. The realization of these symbols: “ye are gods,” is the “work” of becoming like god/God from the inside, out; fulfilling the first great commandment, to love god/God with all our might, mind and strength [Matthew 22:34-38]. It is never too late in time or eternity to transcend the symbols if we desire to enter Fathers presence and behold his face and be one with Him. Are we thankful and grateful for the “god” in each person, and in us! Do we see it and respect it and honor the god in each person, in our neighbor and ourselves? It is the hope and prayer of God that we each come to understand the fulness of that reality ourselves. This is

loving our neighbor as ourselves, fulfilling the second great commandment [Matt. 22:39-40]; This is where the two great commandments become “one” god/God within our souls.

5. “***Without hands.***” Daniels interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. “A stone cut out ***without hands***” symbolizes the ***spiritual kingdom of the church of the Firstborn*** that is gathering members of all races who are truly “born of God,” or “born again” in godliness and holiness of character. (Daniel 2:34,35; D&C 65:2-3; Lectures on Faith 1-7 is key to understanding what it means to be “born again” or “born of God”). And when Christ spoke of a “temple” “***made without hands***” (Mark 14:58) He was speaking to each of us individually if we have ears to hear. And when Paul taught of a circumcision “***made without hands,***” he too was speaking in symbolic language, in “***putting off the body of sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ***” (Colossians 2:11-23) which is godliness of character.

6. “***Ye are the temple of God***” (1 Corinthians 3:16). The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints builds temples [these are symbols] of clay [stone], iron, brass, silver and gold. To those who have eyes to see and ears to hear those temples of clay and stone and its works will be broken down and replaced with a “new” understanding of the body temple [**1 Timothy 1:4-17; Colossians 2**]. Today most people have forgotten to teach the real purpose or symbolism of the temple. It is not for the work of the dead, [“endless genealogies” and ordinances that “touch not; taste not; handle not; which are all to perish with the using”]. Temple work is for the living on both sides of the veil who have eyes to see and ears to hear! It is for baptisms by immersion into the “waters of life,” which is divine nature for the living who understand that to be immersed in water symbolizes what the Prophet Joseph Smith taught, going down into the grave [meaning, leaving our dead works of sinful natures and lusts buried forever and forever leaving them behind us and coming forth in a newness of life (born of God) while here in mortality or afterword’s for those who die a mortal death] (D&C 128: 11-18). “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? (does God require tithes or money to enter the temple? NO, but fallen man has a list of outward

obedience he follows into formalism. “He [Christ] poured out the changers’ of money...[formalism] make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise” [John 2:13-16]) or a requirement for temple worship. “***For ye are the temple of the living God***; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefor come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughter, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:16-18). Understanding symbolism is a key to becoming one with god/God. <https://www.compellingtruth.org/temple-cleanse.html>

7. “***Be Holy.***” “According to the Old Testament, things or places were holy that were set apart for a sacred purpose; the opposite of holy is therefore common or profane ([1 Sam. 21:5](#); [Ezek. 22:26](#); [42:20](#); [44:23](#); [48:13–15](#)). Similarly, a holy person meant one who held a sacred office. The Israelites were a holy people because they stood in a special relationship to Jehovah. Under the guidance of the Prophets, it was seen that what distinguished Jehovah from the gods of the heathen was His personal character. The word *holy* therefore came to refer to moral character ([Lev.11:44](#); [19:2](#); [21:8](#); [Isa. 6:3–8](#)). Israel must be holy in character because the God of Israel was holy ([Jer. 7:4–7](#); see also [Matt. 5:48](#)). The Law of Holiness ([Lev. 17–26](#)) shows how the attempt was made by means of ceremonial observances to secure this holiness of character. The attempt failed [*it always will*] because the later Jews observed the letter and neglected the spirit; [*so it is with modern day Israel*] they attached more importance to the ceremonial than to the moral; and the result was [and is] a lapse into formalism [a type of idol or image worship]. But in the writings of the [true] Prophets it is clearly laid down that ***the value of worship in the eyes of God depends upon the personal character of the worshipper***” (LDS Bible Dictionary, Holiness)
8. ***Book of Life / Tree of Life / Kingdom of God / Kingdom of Heaven, a deeper meaning:***

“If the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, then the King of heaven is also within you [through divine attributes]. If the King of heaven is within you then all that the King possess is within you also. The King's possessions include the Tree of Life, the Waters of Life, and even the Book of Life. If all these things are within us, including the record of heaven and the truth of all things - then why have so few ever found this inner Kingdom of Heaven? Is it because the Kingdom of Heaven is contained in the tiny seed which has never sprouted in our hearts? That seed has simply been a thought of glory with no heart or soul to enliven it so that it will grow and fill our entire beings! With all the potential of celestial glory embedded in our souls, we seem to look elsewhere to find heaven. We look on the outside [the letter of the law]. We judge others. We judge churches. We want them to nourish us instead of allowing the King of Glory within to cause His seed to grow. Another name for this seed is "The Word." [Ye Are Gods, Chapter 22]. https://www.fullnessofthefather.com/AnnaleeSkarin/YeAreGods/YE_ARE_GODS_CHAPTER_XXII.html

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” [John 1:1]. In other words, this applies to each one of us individually if we are to truly become like God. Think of yourselves as an eternal spiritual being, having no beginning and no end [D&C 93:23]. You are now here in mortality having this experience and your thoughts alone will create who you choose to become, no one else can do this for you. Therefore, let this be your personal experience, look inside yourself: “In the beginning was the [thought or idea]. And the thought or idea is with [godliness and holiness of character which is about the god potential/seed within, that you might become like or “one” with] God [without]. And the Word [or thought and idea] was [or became] god/God [godliness and holy as God is holy]. This is the true formula in becoming a god/God, and it is available to any who hunger and thirst for it, regardless of race, religion.

9. *“With all thy heart” and “with all thy mind.”*

The “heart” scripturally has always symbolized “divine nature,” the [pure love of (god/God) Christ]. The “mind” of mortal man has always symbolized the ego, or the fallen and carnal nature of man. The “mind” of god/God is just the opposite; it symbolizes being born of god [godliness], or literally when the mortal mind and heart have become “one” in godliness. There is no more conflict between the mind and heart but they are “one” in “holiness and virtue.” There is only harmony [peace and joy] in the mind and heart of a godly person. This is the ultimate potential achievement of mankind. It is why we came to earth! To bring our minds and hearts together, immersed in holiness, divine love, divine morality, divine nature. So, within us there is no more conflict, strife, fear, anger, frustration, depression. “Be one: and if ye are not one ye are not mine.”

“And let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me.

25 And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself.

26 For what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respecter of them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one: Be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other: Be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there—and looketh upon his sons and saith I am just?

27 Behold, this I have given unto you as a parable, and it is even as I am. I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.

(Doctrine and Covenants | Section 38:24 - 27)

Our own “hearts” and “minds” must become “one” if we are to enjoy a “face to face” experience with Christ and live in the realm of our Father in Heaven.

This essay is for informational purposes only and is the opinion of the author.

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¹ Psalms 82:6; John 10:30-39