

“I AM THAT I AM”

Truth Does Not Need to be Defended it just needs to be realized and lived! So, when I write or share with you, symbolism through words, ideas and perhaps a different perspective it is never to tear down or destroy what is already here [Religion in all its forms], but to inform and enlighten; always, hopefully drawing one closer to the truth revealed through symbols and ultimately in you, where true transformation takes place! Should my words or someone else’s words offend or make you feel uncomfortable, never take it personally. “Be still” and know that God’s integrity and virtue does not change but stays constant and true, regardless of what religion one belongs to, or what opinion one has. When we become offended, it is our own ego that is hurt, not truth. Truth stands on its own foundation of virtue and holiness and is never diminished! Truth is in and through all things, (including ourselves Moses 6: 61) it is up to us individually to discover that truth and manifest it. My purpose and desire here is to *awaken* and enter the “*Holy of Holies*” within our own body temple, which can never be destroyed, torn down, molested or made impure. Never forget that, “Ye are the temple of the living God” [2 Cor 6: 16]. It is the only temple “made without hands” [Mark 14: 58] that can enter Fathers kingdom in a purified and sanctified state.

When Moses came off Mt Saini, he learned this truth; but Israel as a whole “hardened their hearts” and wanted a temple “made with hands” and that is what they got, [so it is today] and when asked by the Israelites what God’s name was, he said: “I AM THAT I AM.” There is a personal mystery in comprehending and understanding the name of god/God [John 10:34]. That process is learning how to become like Him in attribute and character, it is discovering the “god in you” [John 5: 42; 1 Corinthians 6: 20; 2 Corinthians 9: 14; 1 Peter 3: 5] so that you may experience God outside yourself one day “face to face,” not in “death” but in *life!* [Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:11; D&C 50:11].

When Christ came and fulfilled the will of His Father, he learned this same truth: “I AM THAT I AM.” He said: “I AM the bread...and water of life” “I AM the way, the truth and the life.” The “I AM” is symbolized here to teach us the importance of the “fruits of the Spirit,” “divine nature” and how Christ became the Christ through this process! The question has been asked, “What manner of men ought ye to be? [Christ said] Even as I AM.”

When the Prophet Joseph Smith came out of the sacred grove and the restoration process, he learned the same truths as Moses and Christ did and said “I AM THAT I AM” using these words: **“God is a self-existing being, man exists upon the same principle”** and “it is the first principle of the gospel to know and understand the true character of God” and “if man does not understand the character of God, he does not understand himself” [Words of Joseph Smith pgs. 340-361]. He went on to say: “The glory which the Father and the 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:** and if the Savior gives this glory to any others, he must do it in the very way set forth in his prayer to his Father: by making them **one** with him, as he and the Father are **one**. These teachings of the Savior clearly show unto us the nature of salvation; and what he proposed unto the human family when he proposed to save them—That he proposed to make them like unto himself; [“I AM THAT I AM”] and he was like the Father, the great prototype of all saved beings: And for **any** portion of the human family to be assimilated into their likeness is to be saved; and to be unlike them is to be destroyed [damned]: and on this hinge turns the door of salvation. Who cannot see, then, that salvation is the **effect** of faith, for as we have previously observed, all the heavenly beings work by this principle; and it is because they are able so to do that they are saved: **for nothing but this could save them**. And this is the lesson which the God of heaven, by the mouth of all his **holy prophets**, has been endeavoring to teach to the world” [Lectures on Faith 7: 15-17].

The “I AM THAT I AM” is not about knowing God [the devils know about God and what good has it done them]. We must do more than to just know about God, we must **“become”** like god/God from the inside out, and that is when we really begin to understand god/God; and the true temple He is pointing us to!

Another symbol of this “truth” is the “light of Christ” that is in every soul [D&C 88: 7]. What is this “truth” we are talking about? We are talking about living a certain kind of truth, a mystery that only we can partake of within our self. “Truth” is **becoming** a manifestation of perfect love [1John 4:18]. “Truth” is an action word, not a noun as the dictionary would have you believe. Knowledge of truth [is the noun] and it is not enough, we must **become it** to truly understand the “I AM THAT I AM!” This is accomplished by immersing oneself in the **fruits of the**

Spirit [divine nature] in thought, word and deed. This is loving god/God with all our heart, might, mind and strength and loving our neighbor as our self! It is the straight and narrow way that leads back to “life” [not death] with Father [Matthew 7: 14]. It is the Alpha and Omega of godliness and holiness, even for god/God himself. If all the ordinances, ceremonies, temples and synagogues, churches and cathedrals and priesthoods of God could speak they would testify of this one eternal “truth.” **We are each the “I AM THAT I AM” if we accept our divine birthright!** It is the only “new and everlasting covenant” [D&C 22] that is within us all if we accept it. This is what symbolism teaches and how it works in our lives, (the parables of Christ teach this lesson) if our eyes and ears are open to receive it. Our own “ego” is the nemesis of this truth and ***we must learn to let our ego go if we are to fulfill our greatest potential*** by becoming “one” with god/God. Truth is the divine, the holy and the virtuous; even the very “kingdom of god/God” within ourselves waiting to emerge if we **become** the “I AM THAT I AM.” When this understanding comes, we will then see ourselves as we “really are” [Jacob 4: 13] and the good news of the gospel will make perfect sense, because salvation really is made available to ***every man, woman and child*** that comes to earth. It is not formalized religion that dictates who will be saved with Father... it is the ***“effects of faith”*** alone that performs this miracle of sanctification and purification of the heart, mind and soul! It is the same eternal path that Christ and Father took.

“But Israel, [symbolic of modern Israel today] which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? [Why?] Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law [the letter of the law (dead works)]. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone (New Testament | Romans 9:31 - 32). The “spirit of the law” [2 Corinthians 3: 3-6] is the “I AM THAT I AM” found innately in us all if we learn to **become** the “I AM” love, “I AM” joy, “I AM” peace, “I AM” virtue, “I AM” honest and so on with every other divine attribute of godliness and holiness of character [Galatians 5:22-26]. It is the ***“only way”*** to become “one” with god/God [Isaiah 57:14-15* and John 17*] and claim our **inheritance!**

This “I AM” journey takes constant effort to perfect! It takes faith, hope and charity! It takes personal prayer, lots of it. We have to want it every moment of every day! This is the ***“only way”*** perfection comes [IV Mathew 5:48]. And it is possible here in mortality or the Lord would not have said it: ***“Ye are therefore commanded to be perfect,*** even as your Father who is in heave is perfect.” If we understand the context of this scripture (the verses before 48), that perfection is about learning how to immerse ourself in godly love and to pray for our enemies and bless them that curse us. “I AM THAT I AM” is the formula for perfection!

Everyone has the potential to say “I AM...” and then live the life that fulfills it 😊 even here in mortality, where “all things are possible to him that believeth” [Mark 9:23].

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See other essays on the website by Kenneth Card

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