

Section 130

Historical Background

"On Saturday, 1 April 1843, Joseph Smith traveled to Ramus, accompanied by Orson Hyde and William Clayton. Brother Clayton acted as Joseph's scribe on this trip and recorded the Prophet's remarks in his personal diary. The Prophet's party stayed the night at the home of Benjamin F. Johnson. The next morning Orson Hyde preached to the Saints, using as his texts 1 John 3:2 and John 14:23. Joseph later wrote that after the morning meeting, 'we dined with my sister Sophronia McCleary, when I told Elder Hyde that I was going to offer some corrections to his sermon this morning. He replied, 'they shall be thankfully received.' Joseph then preached to the saints at Ramus in the afternoon and evening meetings. He included among his afternoon remarks what is now Doctrine and covenants 130:1-7, and he included Doctrine and covenants 130:18-23 during his evening remarks. These selected remarks of the Prophet Joseph, as recorded by William Clayton and later copied by Willard Richards, were first published in the Deseret News on 9 July 1856. They were added to the Doctrine and Covenants as section 130 in the 1876 edition at the direction of Brigham Young." (Stephen E. Robinson, H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2001] 4:220-221)

In revealed religion, nothing could be more important than to understand the nature of God. But where on earth is a man who through personal experience can really teach us what God is like? As Solomon and Isaiah asked, "Who hath ascended up into heaven?" and "who hath seen such things?" (Prov. 30:4, Isa. 66:8) A brief review of Joseph Smith's personal experiences with God helps us to understand how he could teach us about the divine nature. In reality, it *is* the historical context for the teachings of D&C 130.

"The most important appearance of the Savior in this dispensation occurred when He and the Father came to Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820. This theophany, commonly called the first vision, revealed the separate nature of these two members of the Godhead and ushered in the dispensation of the fulness of times and the restoration of all things.

"In 1832, Jesus Christ again appeared in a vision to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Both men saw and conversed with him (D&C 76:14) and also witnessed a vision of the kingdoms to which mankind will be

assigned in the life hereafter. The Lord also appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in April 1836 in the Kirtland Temple shortly after its dedication and manifested his acceptance of this first latter-day temple (D&C 110:1-10).

"A revelation pertaining to the salvation of the dead was given to Joseph Smith in an earlier appearance of Jesus Christ and the Father in the Kirtland Temple on January 21, 1836: 'The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld...the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son' (D&C 137:1, 3). Joseph Smith said that visions were given to many in the meeting and that 'some of them saw the face of the Savior' (HC 2:382).

"Joseph Smith also recorded other occasions when Church members beheld the Savior. On March 18, 1833, he wrote of a significant meeting of the School of the Prophets: 'Many of the brethren saw a heavenly vision of the Savior, and concourses of angels, and many other things, of which each one has a record of what he saw' (HC 1:335). He wrote of a similar experience of Zebedee Coltrin (HC 2:387), and on another occasion he reported that 'the Savior made His appearance unto some' at a meeting the week after the dedication of the Kirtland Temple (HC 2:432)." (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1-4 vols., edited by Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 737)

Paul H. Dunn

Someone has said that the greatest of all discoveries is when a man discovers God. Joseph Smith made available to the world, with no exceptions, the true nature and knowledge of God, a personal and loving Father. He taught that God is our Father and that Christ is not only his Son, but also our elder brother. The Christian churches of the day said, "We believe in God," but Joseph Smith said, "I saw God and Christ and they did in reality speak to me." (*Conference Report*, April 1970, Second Day-Morning Meeting 72)

Harold B. Lee

In this dispensation, as has been the case in all previous dispensations of the gospel upon the earth, there was given through the modern prophet. Joseph Smith, the true knowledge of God and his Son, our Savior, when, as glorified personal beings who could talk with and be seen of men, they conversed with him, as though to demonstrate their

tangible reality, as the dispensation of the fulness of times was ushered in, in preparation for the second coming of the Lord to reign as Lord of lords and King of kings at the commencement of the millennium.

(*Conference Report*, April 1969, Third Day-Morning Meeting 132 - 133)

DC 130:1 When the Savior shall appear we shall see him as he is

In order to truly see *him* as he is, we must *be* as he is. That means we must be a perfected, resurrected, glorified personage to understand His perfected, resurrected, and glorified Personage. (See 1 John 3:2.)

Joseph Fielding Smith

When Christ comes, those who have kept the commandments and stand before him, will see themselves like they see him, a Son of God! They will be entitled to the blessings of sons, heirs. The Lord has promised to them the fulness of his kingdom so they can go on through the eternities. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 2: 37)

Orson Pratt

Our bodies will be glorified in the same manner as his body is; then we shall be truly in his image and likeness, for as he is immortal, having a body of flesh and bone, so we will be immortal, possessing bodies of flesh and bones. Will we ever become Gods? Let me refer you to the answer of the Savior to the Jews when accused of blasphemy because he called himself the Son of God. Says he, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If ye called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken." This clearly proves to all Bible believers that in this world, in our imperfect state, being the children of God, we are destined, if we keep his commandments, to grow in intelligence until we finally become like God our Father. By living according to every word which proceeds from the mouth of God, we shall attain to his likeness, the same as our children grow up and become like their parents; and, as children through diligence attain to the wisdom and knowledge of their parents, so may we attain to the knowledge of our Heavenly Parents, and if they be obedient to this commandment they will not only be called the sons of God, but be gods. (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 18: 292)

Charles W. Penrose

There is the great lesson, my brethren and sisters, and friends. If we want to come into the complete and perfect society of God, in His personality, to be where He is, to enjoy His company, His divine presence, His instructions, the joy that comes froth looking upon His countenance, and feeling the influence that proceeds from Him who is our life, if we want that we have to be like Him. In this respect, to be pure, even as He is pure; to keep His commandments; to walk in His ways; to do that which He desires us to do. (*Conference Report, October 1914, Afternoon Session. 38 - 39*)

DC 130:2 that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there

Orson Pratt

This earth, when glorified, is the Saints' eternal heaven. On it they expect to live, with body, parts, and holy passions; on it they expect to move and have their being; to eat, drink, converse, worship, sing, play on musical instruments, engage in joyful, innocent, social amusements, visit neighboring towns and worlds; indeed, matter and its qualities and properties are the only beings or things with which they expect to associate. (Roy W. Doxey, comp., *Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 4: 349 - 350)

Bruce R. McConkie

Life both here and hereafter is very personal and real. We know what the associations of life are in this sphere and what they will be for the faithful in the realms ahead. Godly and upright living in both realms centers in the family unit. There is no more sweet or tender or loving relationship known on earth than that which should exist between a man and his wife. And they twain should have like feelings for their children and descendants and for their parents and progenitors. With this in mind, we quote the inspired word that says: "And that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy." (D&C 130:2.) (*The Millennial Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 706)

Elaine Jack

President Spencer W. Kimball said, "Heaven is a place, but also a condition; it is home and family. It is understanding and kindness. It is interdependence and selfless activity. It is quiet, sane living; personal sacrifice, genuine hospitality, wholesome concern for others." (*Ensign*, December 1971, p. 39) In Doctrine and Covenants 130:2 the Lord tells us, "That same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there [when the Savior comes], only it will be coupled with eternal glory."

Our homes should be places where family members get along well and bring out the best in one another. Our success will largely be determined by how faithfully we focus on living the gospel in the home (*Eye to Eye, Heart to Heart* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1992], 167 - 168)

DC 130:3 The appearing of the Father and the Son, in that verse, is a personal appearance

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
...If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (John 14:18, 23)

Joseph Smith

The other Comforter spoken of is a subject of great interest, and perhaps understood by few of this generation. After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses. (quotes John 14:16-18, 21, 23)

Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time

to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions-Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 150-151)

DC 130:4 the reckoning of God's time

And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it;

And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest.

And the Lord said unto me, by the Urim and Thummim, that Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob...

And thus there shall be the reckoning of the time of one planet above another, until thou come nigh unto Kolob, which Kolob is after the reckoning of the Lord's time; which Kolob is set nigh unto the throne of God, to govern all those planets which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest. (Abr. 3:2-4, 9)

Sterling W. Sill

Each year our planet makes a 595-million-mile orbit around the sun. It always travels at the rate of 66,600 miles per hour, and it completes its journey in exactly 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes, and 9 and 54/100 seconds. The time of the completion of the 595-million-mile journey can be more accurately foretold than your trip from the living room into the dining room. ("The Strait Gate," *Ensign*, July 1980, 8)

Bruce R. McConkie

Time exists and is measured on all planets, and a knowledge of the times and laws governing the heavenly bodies is yet to come forth in this dispensation. "If there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars - All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times." (D. & C. 121:30-31.)

Some of this revelation has already taken place. For instance: We know that on Kolob, where the Lord's time prevails, a day is 1,000 years of our time. (Abra. 3:4; 2 Pet. 3:8.) Thus it is that the time element in the creation of this earth was reckoned "after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning." (Abra. 5:13.) (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 795)

DC 130:5 there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it

Joseph F. Smith

When messengers are sent to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, they are not strangers, but from the ranks of our kindred, friends, and fellow-beings and fellow-servants. The ancient prophets who died were those who came to visit their fellow creatures upon the earth. They came to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; it was such beings-holy beings if you please-who waited upon the Savior and administered to him on the Mount. The angel that visited John, when an exile, and unfolded to his vision future events in the history of man upon the earth, was one who had been here, who had toiled and suffered in common with the people of God. ... In like manner our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their relatives and friends upon the earth again, bringing from the divine Presence messages of love, of warning, or reproof and instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh. (*Gospel Doctrine*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970, pp. 435-36)

George Q. Cannon

We have no doubt of the correctness of the statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith that "there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it" (D&C 130:5); but that does not necessarily imply that they did not belong to the earth before they took a mortal body. In our opinion they belonged to this earth from the time of its creation, when they covenanted to come and take bodies thereon, at the time that the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. In just this same way was Jesus "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8.) (*Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, selected, arranged, and edited by Jerreld L. Newquist [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 54)

Delbert L. Stapley

No one, therefore, according to this declaration, visits this earth in its mortal state of existence except those assigned here. (January 10, 1962, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, 1962 10)

DC 130:9 the earth will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim

Brigham Young

When sin and iniquity are driven from the earth, and the spirits that now float in this atmosphere are driven into the place prepared for them; and when the earth is sanctified from the effects of the fall, and baptized, cleansed, and purified by fire, and returns to its paradisiacal state, and has become like a sea of glass, A Urim and Thummim; when all this is done, and the Savior has presented the earth to this Father, and it is placed in the cluster of the celestial kingdoms, and the Son, and all his faithful brethren and sisters have received the welcome plaudit-"Enter ye into the joy of your Lord," and the Savior is crowned, then and not till then, will the Saints receive their everlasting inheritances. I want you to understand this. (*Journal of Discourses*, 17:117)

Gerald N. Lund

This is the final glorious destiny of the earth, and gives added meaning to the Beatitude which says: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5) Then shall the earth cease its temporal existence and become the residence of those beings who have kept the celestial law. (*The Coming of the Lord* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971], 214)

DC 130:9 all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom... will be manifest to those who dwell on it

Joseph Fielding Smith

What a glorious condition will be brought to pass, when we, if we are worthy to obtain the celestial kingdom, may look into the earth and see the past... What a glorious time it will be when, if we are worthy, we will have revealed to us all things pertaining to lesser orders of worlds; yes even things of other celestial bodies greater than our earth. (*The Way to Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1949], 353 - 354)

DC 130:10 then the white stone mentioned... will become a Urim and Thummim... whereby things pertaining to a higher order... will be made known

The difference between the *earth* as a Urim and Thummim and the *white stone* as a Urim and Thummim is that the former can only reveal information "pertaining to an *inferior* kingdom, or all kingdoms of a *lower* order." The white stone, by contrast, reveals information related to "a *higher* order of kingdoms."

A second difference is that it is doubtful that all those with a celestial glory will receive a white stone. The language of D&C 130:10 might indicate otherwise. This is consistent with the requirement as recorded by John, that those who obtain one have "overcome the world." (John 16:33) "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. 2:17)

This raises the question, "are there heavens higher than the celestial?"

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. (2 Cor. 12:2-4)

Paul was caught up to the third heaven but apocryphal and rabbinical literature speaks of *seven* heavens. (Parry, *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, 683.) If the celestial heaven is the third heaven, then there must be several orders above the celestial.

"From time to time... Joseph Smith alluded to this vision of the glories (D&C 76). He said, 'Paul ascended into the third heavens, and he could understand the three principal rounds of Jacob's ladder-the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms, where Paul saw and heard things which were not lawful for him to utter.' But, he explained, 'Paul has seen the third heavens, and I more.' On another occasion he said of himself, 'I know one who was caught up to the seventh heaven and saw and heard things not lawful for me to utter.'" (Hyrum L. Andrus, *Joseph Smith, the Man and the Seer* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1960], 112)

The Prophet Joseph Smith saw heavens that belong to an order above the celestial. We should not be surprised that this is the case, for "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." (D&C 88:37) Have we as latter-day saints thought there would be nothing greater than the celestial kingdom? For us, there will not be. However, there are orders of heavens above the celestial. Otherwise, there would be no reason for the saints to have a Urim and Thummim that manifests things of a "higher order of kingdoms."

DC 130:11 a white stone is given to each... whereon is a new name written

Pointing to this great, celestial event is the temple endowment. Temple patrons, in essence, are foreordained in this life to receive a white stone in the next. Each patron who takes out his personal endowment is given a new name which is a key word in the temple endowment. In our temples, the white plaque upon which the new name is written is symbolic of the white stone given to the worthy.

"In the ancient world, gemstones engraved with secret names were considered talismans of personal power. The apostle Peter was thought of as a celestial gatekeeper in early Christianity because he held all the keys of the kingdom and, therefore, had the power to open or shut its gates (Matthew 16:18-19). Similarly, the white stone engraved with the correct word or name symbolizes one's personal, private key that not only reveals things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms but is also the key or 'keyword' that allows on to pass the gatekeeper at the portal and enter into the celestial kingdom." (Stephen E. Robinson, H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2001] 4:227)

DC 130:12-13 Prophecy of the American Civil War

See commentary for D&C 87.

"Joseph Smith claimed that by divine revelation, as early as 1823, he was informed that strife and warfare would characterize the future, unless intelligent preventive measures were taken. In 1828, he wrote that the 'sword of vengeance of the Almighty' was threatening to 'fall upon' the people. A revelation the following year reaffirmed the coming of judgments, if people persisted 'in the hardness of their hearts.' Early in 1831 another revelation declared even more pointedly that 'wars in your own lands' were 'nigh, even at the doors'-'not many years hence' (D&C 45). Finally, on December 25, 1832, the Prophecy on War was given, detailing the picture of the coming Civil War: It would commence with 'the rebellion of South Carolina'; it would cause 'the death and misery of many souls'; the Southern States would be 'divided against the Northern States'; and for assistance the Southern States would 'call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain.'

"Thereafter the Mormon leader made repeated reference to the Prophecy on War. The coming conflict would 'probably arise through the slave question,' he explained in 1843. Other details were clarified when he declared to a friend, 'You will live to see war between the United States and Mexico, wherein the United States will acquire much territory to add to the slaveholding States or portion of the Union, out of which will grow a war between the Northern and Southern States.' As to when the Civil War would take place, the Prophet reportedly stated 'that whosoever lived to see the two sixes come together in '66 would see the American continent deluged in blood.'" (Hyrum L. Andrus, *Anticipations of the Civil War in Mormon Thought* [Provo: BYU Extension Publications, 1966], 1)

Neal A. Maxwell

Section 87 of the Doctrine and Covenants... contains revelation given on Christmas Day, 1832, and deals most directly with the prophecy that the rebellion and the resultant Civil War in the United States would begin at South Carolina, even though the firing on Fort Sumter was then about three decades away.

Significantly, that prophesy warns of "the death and misery of many souls." The Civil War was, indeed, a bloody war, resulting in about

204,000 battle casualties plus another 225,000 military personnel who died of disease. This number actually well exceeds the American battle deaths (128,000) in World War I. In World War II, there were 396,637 battle deaths. (*Sermons Not Spoken* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985], 66)

DC 130:14-16 the time of the coming of the Son of Man

Was there ever a time when the Lord withheld the future from the Prophet Joseph Smith? Yes, but rarely. Was there ever a time when the Lord withheld doctrine from the Prophet? Not when he asked for it specifically-except in this case. The Prophet received an evasive answer-an answer that even he, as a seer, had difficulty interpreting. The Prophet's journal from the Nauvoo period is interesting because he very commonly lists the calamities of the world. Earthquakes, floods, and natural disasters, are cataloged as proof that the Second Coming is nigh. In this respect, the Prophet is just like us, waiting and watching, hoping for the respite of Millennial peace.

Joseph Smith

(August 10, 1841) A shower of meteoric stones fell at Iwan in Hungary... Letters from various parts of England and Scotland show that numbers are daily added to the Church; while shipwrecks, floods, houses and workshops falling, great and destructive fires, sudden deaths, banks breaking, men's hearts failing them for fear, shopkeepers and manufacturers failing, because no man buyeth their merchandise, many accidents on the railways, etc., betoken the coming of the Son of Man. (*History of the Church*, 4:401)

Joseph Smith

(September 8, 1841) Wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, tempests, pestilence, and great fires, connected with every kind of wickedness, distress and destruction of property are heard in almost every land and nation. (*History of the Church*, 4:415)

It seems the Prophet was unsatisfied with the answer he received. He continued to search the scriptures which use the same language in all instances, that not even the angels in heaven know "the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:13; D&C 133:11). But if no one knows the *day* or the *hour*, is it possible to know the *year*? The Prophet seemed to be thinking along these lines as he persisted in his petitions.

Joseph Smith

(March 10, 1844) I have asked of the Lord concerning His coming; and while asking the Lord, He gave a sign and said, "In the days of Noah I set a bow in the heavens as a sign and token that in any year that the bow should be seen the Lord would not come; but there should be seed time and harvest during that year: but whenever you see the bow withdrawn, it shall be a token that there shall be famine, pestilence, and great distress among the nations, and that the coming of the Messiah is not far distant.

But I will take the responsibility upon myself to prophesy in the name of the Lord, that Christ will not come this year, as Father Miller has prophesied, for we have seen the bow; and I also prophesy, in the name of the Lord, that Christ will not come in forty years; and if God ever spoke by my mouth, He will not come in that length of time. Brethren, when you go home, write it down, that it may be remembered.

Jesus Christ never did reveal to any man the *precise time* that He would come. Go and read the Scriptures, and you cannot find anything that specifies the *exact hour* He would come; and all that say so are false teachers. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 341, emphasis added)

DC 130:15 if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man

Had the Prophet lived longer, he would have turned 85 on December 23, 1890. If you had been alive in 1890, would you have expected the Second Coming any moment? Many saints did.

"Eight years earlier the Prophet had mentioned this occurrence to a gathering in Kirtland. At this meeting of 14 February 1835, the same at which the Twelve were chosen, he charged the missionaries to "go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or the coming of the Lord, which was nigh-even fifty-six years *should* wind up the scene" (*History of the Church*, 2:182). Ignoring the conditional 'if' of the inspired utterance (the Prophet obviously did not reach the specified age), some Saints in Utah anticipated the Millennium in 1891, and some even designated February 14, it being the anniversary of the Kirtland meeting. Others chose 23 December 1890, the eighty-fifth anniversary of the Prophet's birth, as the eventful day.

"The possibility that 1890 or 1891 might be the critical year tantalized some members. (A few years later they concentrated on 1900 or 1901.) Those who had expected the American Civil War of the 1860s to usher in the Millennium transferred their expectations forward when peace followed Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House.

"A decade before the new millennial deadline, and despite official cautions by Church leaders, speculation among some members was widespread. 'We have noticed in our experience,' the Deseret News editorialized on 3 August 1881, 'that when persons belonging to this Church have attempted to fix dates to prophecies, no matter how plausible their arguments and apparently correct their calculations, they have made as lamentable failures as those adventist prognosticators who have spread consternation and dismay among simple people, and deluded their own followers into folly.' General Authorities warned against the date-setting fad. 'We have had no authority given unto us,' **President George Q. Cannon** said in 1884, 'no message to designate the hour nor the day, nor even the year when the Lord would make His appearance' (*Journal of Discourses*, 26:40). Wise Latter-day Saints took this counsel, soundly based in scripture, and sought to be ready, through worthiness, no matter when the day came." (Early Saints and the Millennium," *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 45)

DC 130:18 Whatever principle of intelligence we attain... it will rise with us in the resurrection

Stephen L Richards

Now, since intelligence is co-eternal with God and is the very glory of God, it follows logically that it is the chief investiture of man. Indeed, it is man, for it is that part of his constituency that persists, that is eternal. This knowing, conceiving, illuminating principle of existence lies at the base of all our powers and potentialities. Without it there would be no virtue and no sin. It alone gives to man his free agency, the power to choose, to will, and to act, conscious of the effects of his decisions and his deeds. It accounts for the place of good and evil in the world and justifies their existence, a philosophical problem that has baffled the minds and the thinking of great scholars, of all time.

This conception of intelligence justifies the eternal quest for knowledge and it does more. It explains the necessity of acquiring knowledge for it makes knowledge essential to progression and progression in the last

analysis is salvation. It places a terrific penalty on ignorance. It lays down a new and very definite gospel doctrine that: "It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance." (D&C 131:6.) (*Conference Report*, April 1938, Afternoon Meeting 20)

Reed Smoot

The Prophet was true to his principles. He established schools and championed the cause of education. A "Mormon" writer has said: "His educational ideals passed over the threshold of time and strode down the halls of eternity. With a full appreciation of the knowledge that makes men and women capable and skilful in this life, he prized and taught others to prize, above all, the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation. How to make a living here how to solve life's everyday problems, was of course important; but how to grapple successfully with the mightier problems of the great hereafter, how to store up treasures in heaven and lay hold upon eternal life, was far more consequential. Education meant to him the leading out of all the latent potential powers of the individual, the training to perfection of every divine attribute in man, as the child of God and as a god himself, in embryo. He stood for the full and complete development of the soul, body and spirit combined-mental, physical, moral, and spiritual education-the education contemplated and inculcated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ." (*Conference Report*, October 1933, Afternoon Meeting 107)

Joseph Smith

There are a great many wise men and women too in our midst who are too wise to be taught; therefore they must die in their ignorance, and in the resurrection they will find their mistake. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 309)

Joseph Smith

The principle of knowledge is the principle of salvation. This principle can be comprehended by the faithful and diligent; and every one that does not obtain knowledge sufficient to be saved will be condemned. Salvation is nothing more nor less than to triumph over all our enemies and put them under our feet. And when we have power to put all enemies under our feet in this world, and a knowledge to triumph over all evil spirits in the world to come, then we are saved. (*History of the Church*, 5:387.)

DC 130:19 If a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life

Gordon B. Hinckley

We of this Church have been given a marvelous promise by the Lord. Said He: "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" (D&C 50:24).

What a remarkable statement that is. It is one of my favorite verses of scripture. It speaks of growth, of development, of the march that leads toward godhood. It goes hand in hand with these great declarations: "The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth" (D&C 93:36); "If a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come" (D&C 130:19); and, "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection" (D&C 130:18).

What a profound challenge is found in these marvelous statements. We must go on growing. We must continually learn. It is a divinely given mandate that we go on adding to our knowledge.

We have access to institute of religion classes, extension courses, education weeks, and many other opportunities where, as we study and match our minds with others, we will discover a tremendous reservoir of capacity within ourselves.

It is never too late to learn. I believe this with all my heart. Sister Hinckley and I are growing old. We are in our mid-80s. I am constantly amazed at what a voracious reader she is. She reads two newspapers a day, goes through magazines, is an ardent student of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, and I saw her the other evening reading a lengthy biography.

I know of no other practice which will make one more attractive in conversation than to be well-read in a variety of subjects. Said the Lord to you and to me: "Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith. ... Organize yourselves. ... Cease to be idle" (D&C 88:118-119, 124).

The best books are the scriptures. Said the Lord: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). Read the Church magazines. There are many other worthwhile things to read. Reading will sharpen your mind. It will clean up your intellect. It will improve your speech to get into the thoughts of the great men and women of the ages, including those of our own age. ("A Conversation with Single Adults," *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 62)

DC 130:19 through his diligence and obedience

The knowledge and intelligence we seek is different than the world's definition of intelligence. Spiritual knowledge and spiritual intelligence is different than secular knowledge and secular intelligence. **Elder Maxwell** explained that it "is not the usual 'IQ' kind of measurement. This 'intelligence' discerns, learns, and applies true and correct principles; it reflects a composite of knowledge and wise behavior. It combines cognition and application. This reflects the highest type of intelligence, and the blended result will rise with us in the resurrection (see D&C 130:18)." (*That Ye May Believe* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], 37)

If the knowledge we seek is spiritual, it must be obtained in a spiritual way. Yet again, the world's way of acquiring knowledge will be inadequate. The scripture says we obtain it through "diligence and obedience," not necessarily by attending classes and obtaining degrees. This is how the "uneducated" saint can surpass the wisdom of the professors of the world! They have diligently sought the Lord's will and learned to be obedient thereto.

Dallin H. Oaks

Note that intelligence is something more than knowledge. And note also the implication that knowledge is obtained by diligence and intelligence is obtained by obedience. Admittedly, the two methods are not mutually exclusive. But we come close to an important mystery of the gospel when we understand that the intelligence God desires us to obtain is much more than knowledge, and it cannot be obtained without obedience and revelation. That is the Lord's way, and it is far beyond the ways of the world. (*The Lord's Way*, pp. 42-43)

John A. Widstoe

Intelligence, then, becomes but another name for wisdom. In the language of mathematics we may say that knowledge, plus the proper

use of knowledge, equals intelligence, or wisdom. In this sense intelligence becomes the goal of the successful life. Knowledge is one of the means by which such intelligence is attained; the use of knowledge is equally as important, for it gives life and direction to knowledge. The whole matter is much like faith and repentance neither is complete without the other. When faith becomes active through repentance, man rises towards his God-like destiny. Faith itself, built upon human experience, conforming to God's will, is but a type of higher intelligence. Thus it often happens that a person of limited knowledge but who earnestly and prayerfully obeys the law, rises to a higher intelligence or wisdom, than one of vast Gospel learning who does not comply in his daily life with the requirements of the Gospel. Obedience to law is a mark of intelligence. (*Conference Report*, April 1938, Second Day-Morning Meeting 50)

Harold B. Lee

The knowledge that saves, then, is the same knowledge about which we have been speaking. It is not a knowledge of secular things that we have been talking about, but the knowledge that saves us is the knowledge of God, our Eternal Father, and His relationship to us.

The Lord has given the inspired truth that "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance" (D&C 131:6). Does this mean that one must be a college graduate or a man of letters to be saved? Not at all. Man cannot be saved in ignorance of those saving principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ [even] if he were to have all the book learning in the world. (*Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 336)

DC 130:21 when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law

Richard G. Scott

Our Eternal Father defined truth and established what is right and wrong before the creation of this earth. He also fixed the consequences of obedience and disobedience to those truths. He defended our right to choose our path in life so that we would grow, develop, and be happy, but *we do not have the right to choose the consequences of our acts*. Those who willfully, consistently disobey His commandments will inevitably learn that truth. Joseph Smith was inspired to record, "When

we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated." (D&C 130:21.)

Please understand, no one has the privilege to choose what is right. God reserved that prerogative to Himself. Our agency does allow us to choose among alternate paths, but then we are bound to the consequence God has decreed. Later, if we don't like where the path takes us, the only out is through repentance.

Our Heavenly Father gave us truth, some as statements of cause and effect. We call them commandments. They guide our life to happiness. He knew that Satan would try to persuade some to live without fixed standards in life so that decisions would be based on current circumstances, what appears convenient, or what provides the greatest personal return. In this way, Satan removes the power of truth from one's life so he can take that soul captive. ("Healing Your Damaged Life," *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 61)

Wilford Woodruff

The God of heaven, who created this earth and placed his children upon it, gave unto them a law whereby they might be exalted and saved in a kingdom of glory. For there is a law given unto all kingdoms, and all things are governed by law throughout the whole universe. Whatever law anyone keeps, he is preserved by that law, and he receives whatever reward that law guarantees unto him. It is the will of God that all his children should obey the highest law, that they may receive the highest glory that is ordained for all immortal beings. But God has given all his children an agency, to choose what law they will keep. (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946, p. 10)

N. Eldon Tanner

"I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.)

The laws of nature are inflexible and rigid and right. Through ignorance or deliberate intent, if you touch a hot stove, you are going to be burned; or if you touch a high voltage wire, you will suffer the consequences. If you say, I am going to defy gravity and jump off a high building or a high precipice, you might say halfway down, "All is going well."

...How... important that we take time to train our children to do what is right, and ourselves as children of God, to do what is right, and to be sure we are where we should be when we should be, doing the things we should be doing in keeping the commandments of God, being obedient in every way. As we do this, we can gain eternal life. How true this is! ("Obedience," *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 93-94)

N. Eldon Tanner

The word of the Lord is so clear to us, and his laws so plainly designed for our happiness, that it is difficult to understand why some people feel their own judgment is superior, and disregard God's laws and bring upon themselves misery and unhappiness by so doing. (*Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 82)

Hartman Rector Jr.

God tells us he cannot deny his words. Quite obviously, he is much more pleased with us when we keep his commandments, and he delights to bless us when we do. But if we do not keep his commandments, he will chasten us. It does not mean that he doesn't love us, any more than when parents discipline children. In fact, it is because he does love us that he chastens us that we might learn obedience (see Heb. 12:6; D&C 95:1). ("Endure to the End in Charity," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 26)

Brigham Young

There are blessings that the Lord proffers to his people. Has he any conditions? This is the question. The blessings that the Lord wishes to bestow upon his people in the latter days... Are they given to us whether we want them or not? whether we will enjoy them or not? or whether we will profit by them or not? How is this, Latter-day Saints? Is this the way the Lord does? You and I understand this. Every blessing the Lord proffers to his people is on conditions. These conditions are: "Obey my law, keep my commandments, walk in my ordinances, observe my statutes, love mercy, preserve the law that I have given to you inviolate, keep yourselves pure in the law, and then you are entitled to these blessings, and not until then." Now, is this not the fact? I leave it to you...

You may obtain these blessings by keeping in mind and observing the principles, doctrine, and the laws and statutes that are delivered to the people of God for their edification, for their perfection, for their comfort and consolation, to prepare them for entering into the celestial kingdom. If any profess to live in the observance of these principles, and do not enjoy the spirit of revelation, they deceive themselves. No person deceives the Lord. Every individual that lives according to the laws that the Lord has given to his people, and has received the blessings that he has in store for the faithful, should be able to know the things of God from the things which are not of God, the light from the darkness, that which comes from heaven and that which comes from somewhere else. This is the satisfaction and the consolation that the Latter-day Saints enjoy by living their religion; this is the knowledge which every one who thus lives possesses. (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 16: 163)

DC 130:22-23 True Nature of the Godhead

Marion G. Romney

The Prophet said that "the Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's" (D&C 130:22). He also declared that "if ... God ... was to make himself visible, ... you would see him like a man in form-like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man" (*TPJS*, p. 345).

Such teachings seemed blasphemous in the days of Joseph Smith. It will help us to appreciate their impact if we remember that the Athanasian Creed was then, and so far as I know still is, the generally accepted concept of God held by the so-called Christian world. It reads:

"We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor

three uncreate, but one uncreate and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty; and yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God" (*History of the Church*, 1:85).

The clear and simple truth concerning God revealed through and taught by the Prophet was certainly a great contrast to this mystifying confusion. ("Jesus-Savior and Redeemer," *New Era*, Apr. 1984, 33-34)

Joseph Smith

Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is a strange God anyhow-three in one, and one in three! It is a curious organization. "Father, I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou hast given me." "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are." All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism. It would make the biggest God in all the world. He would be a wonderfully big God-he would be a giant or a monster. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 372)

Joseph Smith

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 distinct personage and a Spirit and these three constitute three distinct personages, and three Gods. If this is not in accordance with the New Testament, lo and behold! we have three Gods anyhow, and they are plural and who can contradict it? (*History of the Church*, 4:474)

Brigham Young

Now, a few words of counsel to the children. Do you feel, children, that you can remain patient and endure my talk a little longer? I think you can... You are taught to worship the Lord, so are the children of the Christian world. They have their Sunday schools, and churches and meeting-houses, and their ministers and teachers who instruct the children. You go to them and ask them if they know anything about that Holy Being whom they worship, and whom they call God. Not that the

comprehension of children is equal to that of the aged philosopher, but still you have some understanding. Children, when you ask the ministers of Christendom whom they worship, they will tell you, "Oh, we worship God?" Who is that God? Can you tell us where he lives? The answer is, "No." Can you tell us anything about his character? He is a personage without any body at all; he has neither body nor parts, he has no head, he has no ears, he has no eyes to see, he has no nose to smell, no mouth to speak, no arms to handle anything, nor a body to which these arms can be attached; he has no legs, he therefore cannot walk; and finally they say, to sum him up to our entire satisfaction, he is a personage without body, parts or passions.

Now, little children, can you conceive what kind of a being this is? You say, "It's nothing at all." That is just what it is; it is a myth; it is nothing to look at, nothing to adore, nothing to worship, nothing to admire, nothing to appeal to for help. He has no arms to either handle us or our enemies; he has no legs, he can neither walk to them nor to us; he has no eyes to behold their follies or ours. And this is the god that the Christian world worship, and teach their children to worship.

Now, children, remember this. We teach you that our Father in heaven is a personage of tabernacle, just as much as I am who stand before you to-day, and he has all the parts and passions of a perfect man, and his body is composed of flesh and bones, but not of blood. He, therefore, has eyes to see, and his eyes are upon all the works of his hands; he has ears, which are open to hear the prayers of little children, and he loves you, and knows you, for you are all his offspring; and his knowledge of you is so minute that, to use the language of the ancients, not a hair of your head falls to the ground unnoticed. This is the kind of God we worship. Children, call upon him in your childhood and youth, for from such as you he has said he will not turn away. (*Journal of Discourses*, 19: 64-65)

DC 130:22 The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's

This doctrine sets modern Christianity on its head! A religion that can't tell you the truth about God is worthless. **Joseph Smith** explained that "in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God unto life and salvation," he must accept the idea that he exists, and secondly he must have "a correct idea of his character, perfections, and attributes." (*Lectures on Faith*, 3:2-5)

"The doctrine that God the Father and God the Son are embodied persons, humanlike in form, has rich implications for both philosophical anthropology and theology, and it is one of the most distinctive teachings of the Restoration. While believers find the doctrine elevating and inspiring, critics have challenged it as being non-Christian and philosophically incoherent. I believe the critics are mistaken on both counts." (David L. Paulsen, *BYU Studies*, vol. 35 (1995), Number 3--1996)

"Let me say, however, that our recognition of God as a tangible, personal being gives us a tremendous advantage over the world. When we pray we have a great psychological advantage over most people. We actually know to whom we are praying. Some modern philosophers and theologians may and do ridicule our concept of an 'anthropomorphic' God, but we have every reason to be proud of it because it is based on revealed truth." (Sidney B. Sperry, "An Evaluation of Joseph Smith and his Teachings, *Joseph Smith Memorial Sermons*, 32.)

Joseph Smith

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! . . . 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. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 345)

Thomas S. Monson

God Himself is a soul, composed of a spirit and of a body of flesh and bones, as tangible as man's. He is a resurrected, glorified, exalted, omniscient, omnipotent person and is omnipresent in spirit and power and influence, the ruler of the heavens and the earth and all things therein. The spirits of all men are literally His "begotten sons and daughters." (D&C 76:24.) ("An Invitation to Exaltation," *Ensign*, July 1984, 69)

DC 130:22 the Son also

What does Christianity teach of the resurrected Christ? Ask them!

Does he have a body? They say no.

Was he resurrected? Yes, of course.

Did he eat fish and honeycomb with the disciples? Yes.

Was he in spirit form when He did that? No.

Then how is it that he was resurrected with a perfected tangible body, yet now dwells in the heavens as a Spirit? I am not sure.

We will have to answer this last question for them. He must have been travelling from earth to heaven after his ascension, when he happened upon a celestial garbage can. Divesting himself of his perfect body, like someone takes off a suit, he must have thrown his perfect body away, so as not to offend his Father when he showed up in heaven as a spirit.

How does this sound? Ridiculous? Well, how ridiculous is it to believe He transformed himself into a Spirit when there is not even the smallest scrap of scriptural evidence that He did so? You can answer that for yourself.

M. Russell Ballard

We believe that Jesus did not and in the future will not discard His resurrected body. God the Father and His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, are glorified, exalted, resurrected beings, and from the moment of the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith, we have known their true nature. ("Building Bridges of Understanding," *Ensign*, June 1998, 68)

Joseph Smith

There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. The great majority of mankind do not comprehend anything... If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 343)

DC 130:23 the Holy Ghost... may descend upon him and not tarry with him

This verse is misunderstood and frequently erroneously quoted. What does it mean that the Holy Ghost may descend upon a man and not tarry with him? To answer this question, we have to remember what Joseph Smith is explaining. He is explaining the doctrine of John 14-that the scripture speaks of a Second Comforter who would come to the righteous, "If a man love me,

he will keep my words... and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23)

So if the Father and the Son visit a righteous man, they must do it in person. It is a "personal appearance" (v. 3). In contrast, the Holy Ghost can visit a righteous man without doing it in person because he is a Spirit. The Holy Ghost doesn't have to "make his abode" with the righteous man; He doesn't have to "tarry with him;" He doesn't have to make a "personal appearance." The Holy Ghost may descend upon him and not tarry with him. In other words, an individual can be filled with the Holy Ghost from a distance. Key to this is that "the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us."

LeGrand Richards

Since the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit in the form of man (see 1 Nephi 11:11) and hence confined in his personage to a limited space, the question is often asked: How can he be a Comforter to all who have received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, scattered as they may be, among all nations of men?

The following illustration may help to explain how this may be possible. The sun is millions of miles away from the earth; it is a body of specific dimensions; yet, when its morning rays stream through our windows, we remark, "The sun is in our room." A similar statement might also be made by a person thousands of miles away. Yet it is obvious that neither is correct, for the sun remains millions of miles away. Only the influence that it radiates is in our room. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1950], 117)

James E. Faust

The comforting Spirit of the Holy Ghost can abide with us twenty-four hours a day: when we work, when we play, when we rest. Its strengthening influence can be with us year in and year out. That sustaining influence can be with us in joy and sorrow, when we rejoice as well as when we grieve.

I believe the Spirit of the Holy Ghost is the greatest guarantor of inward peace in our unstable world. It can be more mind-expanding and can make us have a better sense of well-being than any chemical or other earthly substance. It will calm nerves; it will breathe peace to our souls.

This Comforter can be with us as we seek to improve. It can function as a source of revelation to warn us of impending danger and also help keep us from making mistakes. It can enhance our natural senses so that we can see more clearly, hear more keenly, and remember what we should remember. It is a way of maximizing our happiness. ("The Gift of the Holy Ghost-A Sure Compass," *Ensign*, Apr. 1996, 5)