

Spirit Babies

The treatment of this subject is meant for those of advanced religious thought and of a certainty in possession of the Gift of the Holy Ghost. The following information would likely be considered to be delving into “the mysteries” of Mormonism and is discouraged by Mormon Church leadership. This paper is indeed not intended for doctrinal beginners. The advice of church leadership to leave the mysteries alone is not because mere mortals cannot comprehend them, but rather because the work of the church is to introduce people to the gate by which they can embark on the straight and narrow path and assist them to walk that path, which leads back to the presence of God. On that path are many who are at different stages of their growth and development in the gospel and they must be handled carefully to not harm those with new and fragile testimonies. Also, there is a general lack of clear understanding of this and other subjects, consequently, more questions can be raised than answers.

Although these teachings apply primarily to Mormon thought and doctrine, they impinge on many other religions and traditions. Subjects related tangentially must be treated more fully in other works. The first definition undertaken is that of the word “God.” God is the most general term one encounters and when correctly applied refers to any and all exalted beings who have some level of jurisdiction within a creative cycle or eternal round. The name can refer to one specific exalted being or can be used as a general identifier, as all righteous Gods are in agreement. Consequently, the ruling Gods can speak for one another in the first person.

The prevailing belief regarding spiritual children or offspring must be thoroughly investigated. Mormons are taught the concept of eternal progression. They are also taught that families (earthly family ties and structure) are forever, or at least can be so. Another teaching is that they can, if they perform well enough, receive an exaltation in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom and become members in a quorum of Gods and joint heirs with Christ of all the Father has for them. These exalted beings will be under Adam who is under the Lord Christ who becomes God the Father at the conclusion

of this creative cycle when the earth is redeemed and glorified. Also, that as exalted beings they will have eternal increase and eternal lives. This increase is obviously not money, but wealth in ongoing progeny. These generalized ideas lead some to illogically conclude and believe that with exaltation and at least one, if not many exalted wives they will be bearing spiritual offspring while in heaven to prepare for the next creative cycle of which our Christ will be the Father of that next created earthly estate. Taking all these ideas into account and the need to imagine an explanation about what exalted people might be doing between earthly creations, we get the following ideas.

*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p.751 SPIRIT CHILDREN
In a future eternity, spirit children will be born to exalted, perfected glorified couples for whom the family unit continues. The very glory of exalted beings is to have "a fullness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever." (D. & C. 132:19-25, 29-32; 131:1-4.)*

The preferred wording of such a statement should have been, "glorified parents" instead of "glorified couples." Regardless of brother McConkie's opinion, plural marriage remains part of the fullness of the gospel restored to the earth by Joseph Smith even though the membership of the church rightfully voted to no longer participate in that practice and no longer keep it as a church tenet, according to the church's governing law of common consent. One holding the Priesthood of God however, does not have such an option, but must obey every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God according the oath and covenant of the Priesthood and not just the will of the membership or leadership of the church. It should also be noted that brother McConkie's scriptural references do not directly support his conclusion or statement even though he is abstractly on the right track in that part of their glory is ongoing seed or offspring and family. Furthermore, all statements that reference scripture herein should be carefully scrutinized by the reader to determine their context and applicability to the referenced material and the veracity of the interpreted conclusion based on those references.

The only part of the foregoing generally accepted, if publically unspoken, scenario that gives rise to confusion and contradiction is the conclusion, which relates to the idea of procreation of spiritual offspring. In contradiction to the above quotation many, if not

most, believe and are taught that we all, as spiritual children, are the literal offspring of God the Father of this creation.

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.653-654

There is a God in Heaven who is the sovereign power of the universe, and we are His literal offspring.

Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.2, GOD THE FATHER

The Father, Elohim, is called the Father because he is the literal father of the spirits of mortals (Heb. 12:9).

First of all, it logically can't be both ways. Either we are literally the offspring of exalted parents, once of this earth, or we are the literal offspring of God the eternal Father alone. Also, God the Father only claims one being to be literally His **Only** Begotten Son. If all the exalted beings are not making spirit children, what then is an eternal family and eternal increase? To add complexity, for some, to this notion, Joseph Smith taught clearly that the spirit of man is as eternal as God or as Joseph actually stated, "co-equal" with God, and is not created in any fashion, meaning that your spirit is eternal and has existed the same as God's having no beginning and no end. He makes the explicit statement that all things created must have an end and states it as an eternal principle of truth.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Six 1843-44 p.351

I have another subject to dwell upon, which is calculated to exalt man; but it is impossible for me to say much on this subject. I shall therefore just touch upon it, for time will not permit me to say all. It is associated with the subject of the resurrection of the dead, -- namely, the soul -- the mind of man -- the immortal spirit. Where did it come from? All learned men and doctors of divinity say that God created it in the beginning; but it is not so: the very idea lessens man in my estimation. I do not believe the doctrine; I know better. Hear it, all ye ends of the world; for God has told me so; and if you don't

believe me, it will not make the truth without effect. I will make a man appear a fool before I get through; if he does not believe it. I am going to tell of things more noble.

We say that God himself is a self-existent being. Who told you so? It is correct enough; but how did it get into you heads? Who told you that man did not exist in like manner upon the same principles? Man does exist upon the same principles. God made a tabernacle and put a spirit into it, and it became a living soul. (Refers to the old Bible.) How does it read in the Hebrew? It does not say in the Hebrew that God created the spirit of man. It says "God made man out of the earth and put into him Adam's spirit, and so became a living body."

The mind or the intelligence which man possesses is co-equal with God himself. I know that my testimony is true; hence, when I talk to these mourners, what have they lost? Their relatives and friends are only separated from their bodies for a short season: their spirits which existed with God have left the tabernacle of clay only for a little moment, as it were; and they now exist in a place where they converse together the same as we do on the earth.

I am dwelling on the immortality of the spirit of man. Is it logical to say that the intelligence of spirits is immortal, and yet that it had a beginning? The intelligence of spirits had not beginning, neither will it have an end. That is good logic. That which has a beginning may have an end. There never was a time when there were not spirits; for they are co-equal [co-eternal] with our Father in heaven.

I want to reason more on the spirit of man; for I am dwelling on the body and spirit of man -- on the subject of the dead. I take my ring from my finger and liken it unto the mind of man -- the immortal part, because it has no beginning. Suppose you cut it in two; then it has a beginning and an end; but join it again, and it continues one eternal round. So with the spirit of man. As the Lord liveth, if it had a beginning, it will have an end. All the fools and learned and wise men from the beginning of creation, who say that the spirit of man had a beginning, prove that it must have an end; and if that doctrine is true, then the doctrine of annihilation would be true. But if I am right, I might with boldness proclaim from the house-tops that God never had the power to create the spirit of man at all. God himself could not create himself.

Intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it. All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement.

Joseph uses the terms “intelligence” and “spirit” interchangeably, but some insist that raw intelligence is different from a spirit being and “intelligences” must be provided a spirit body, so to them, the idea of heavenly offspring seems once again logical. This, of course, still does not speak to the other contradictions and tries to change what Joseph actually taught. Joseph’s sermon on the spirit of man was intended to clarify some references made to intelligences in the Book of Abraham and to correct the emergence of this faulty notion of heavenly created babies of spirit in his day and afterward.

Abraham 3:19-23

19 And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.

20 The Lord thy God sent his angel to deliver thee from the hands of the priest of Elkenah.

21 I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to declare unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.

22 Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

23 And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

The following is an example of the ongoing erroneous believe Joseph was trying to dispel with his sermon, which exists today but started in Joseph’s day.

Journal of Discourses, Vol.15, p.247, Orson Pratt, December 15, 1872

If we were born in heaven before this world was made, the question might arise as to the nature of that birth. Was it by command that the spiritual substance, scattered through

*space, was miraculously brought together, and organized into a spiritual form, and called a spirit? Is that the way that Jesus, the firstborn of every creature, was brought into existence? Oh no; we were all born there after the same manner that we are here, that is to say, every person that had an existence before he came here had a literal father and literal mother, a personal father and a personal mother; hence the Apostle Paul, in speaking to the heathen at Ephesus, says, "We are his offspring." Now I look upon every man and woman that have ever come here on this globe, or that ever will come, as having a father and mother in the heavens by whom **their spirits were brought into existence.** But how long they resided in the heavens before they came here is not revealed.*

Some imagine that instead of physical intimacy to create spiritual offspring a sort of magically antiseptic process of impregnation must exist where maybe a command is given and bingo, an exalted wife is miraculously pregnant and just as magically, delivers a spirit infant. This was not the belief held by early prominent members of the church including some of those of the highest stature and standing in the church, and who were taught directly by Joseph himself, such as Brigham Young and other notables.

Many modern Mormon believers in the fundamental teachings of some early saints, such as brother Pratt, believe conception and birth in the heavenly realms are accomplished the same as here on earth.

Some may say "Aha" Joseph did teach of spiritual offspring in the following way.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Six 1843-44 p.300

Except a man and his wife enter into an everlasting covenant and be married for eternity, while in this probation, by the power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, they will cease to increase when they die; that is, they will not have any children after the resurrection. But those who are married by the power and authority of the priesthood in this life, and continue without committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, will continue to increase and have children in the celestial glory.

It's an honest conclusion, if misunderstood. Since procreation is strictly an earthly ordinance, one must remember that the earth was created in the presence of God and within His sphere of Glory and remained there until the Fall whereupon the Glory and presence of God withdrew and only His voice could be heard from the direction of the Garden. Some have even characterized that as the earth rolling out of the presence of God, but before that happened the earth was in a realm of celestial glory. Hence, in God's glorified, celestial presence, but on earth, children, who were members of "adam" or mankind, were born to exalted parents to begin ongoing, earthly family generations.

A further complication however, to the notion of heavenly coitus and birthing is the fact that "the mind of man is an enemy of God." Why? Because we by nature are carnal, sensual, and devilish.

Moses 5:13

13 And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish.

Mosiah 3:19

19 For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

Alma 22:13

13 And Aaron did expound unto him the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name.

The following standard definitions are adequate to make the point, but other dictionaries give greater, more explicit definitions.

carnal | 'kärnl|

adjective

relating to desires of the flesh, physical, esp. sexual, needs and activities.

sensual | 'sen sh oōəl|

adjective

of or arousing gratification of the senses and physical, esp. sexual, pleasure.

D&C 67:12

12 Neither can any natural man abide the presence of God, neither after the carnal mind.

So, is it to be believed that the very thoughts and activities, which make us God's enemy, will be our greatest reward to be practiced in heavenly kingdoms of glory in defiance to eternal laws? That belief may prove we mortals are regrettably just as described.

By way of comparative illustration to the idea of spiritually procreated children, one must consider the allusion to humans as sheep. Any student of the New Testament knows that the Jesus and His apostles called us sheep. Are we to believe we are actually sheep, or that we are somehow evolved from sheep in a way of which we are unaware? Of course not, it is clearly a metaphor. The meaning of the metaphor is the simile that we are like sheep who should follow the guidance of their loving and wise Sheppard and that the Sheppard is ever caring for the flock and their eternal well-being. Likewise, we are the metaphorical spiritual children who are begotten of God who looks upon us with loving care as though we were His actual spiritual offspring.

The question remains; to what purpose is exaltation in light of eternal lives, eternal progression, an eternal family, eternal increase, kingdoms, dominions, and principalities if not to bear the spirits of future mortals? Eternal progeny is indeed the glory of exalted beings, but procreation is strictly an earthly process and is to be conducted only on a

mortal earth. There is no copulation, pregnancy, or childbirth in the heavenly presence of Almighty God. It is unnecessary. There already exist plenty of eternal, individual and self-existent spirit beings in the expansive heavens to populate many future earths. Stop to consider the many billions of people who will ultimately have lived on this earth by the time of its conclusion, and that number represents only a third part of spirits originally slated for this creation so the number could possibly reach into the trillions of spirits. Even if the exalted were 144,000 more or less, the task would be mathematically mind-boggling in the extreme. The notion of procreating spirit children may be an attractive idea if one loves to have their mind boggled and believes in a magical heaven. Even if it were possible for the members of the exalted quorum to spiritually increase their families in such a way, their family structure would be only one generation deep per creative cycle and limited by their own personal reproductive efforts.

The truer, and far more elegant plan for an exalted being, is to seed an earthly line of progeny to self-perpetuate through time, compounding itself with every successive generation and containing the spirits already slated for this earth, who then, as complete souls all fall under the family structure, and accrue to the increase and glory of the originating progenitors, which adds glory upon glory to the supreme God of that creation and the governing Eloheim. This performance done in successive creative cycles is eternal lives for all the exalted ones.

So, what occupies the efforts of exalted beings in the heavenly realms? It can be argued that there is no time in the presence of God so, no clocks or calendars and though true, there is sequence in performances throughout eternity. So, again, what are they doing? To understand this, one must realize what is meant by the word “beget.” On earth it refers to procreation of offspring, but in the spiritual realms it means to have jurisdictional and familial claim upon one, but not to give birth. The term “begotten” likewise is the past tense of beget.

7 ¶ I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou [art] my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Acts 13:33

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Hebrews 1:5

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Four 1839-42 p.218

But while one portion of the human race is judging and condemning the other without mercy, the Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; He views them as His offspring, and without any of those contracted feelings that influence the children of men, causes "His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He holds the reins of judgment in His hands; He is a wise Lawgiver, and will judge all men, not according to the narrow, contracted notions of men, but, "according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil," or whether these deeds were done in England, America, Spain, Turkey, or India. He will judge them, "not according to what they have not, but according to what they have," those who have lived without law, will be judged without law, and those who have a law, will be judged by that law. We need not doubt the wisdom and intelligence of the Great Jehovah; He will award judgment or mercy to all nations according to their several deserts, their means of obtaining intelligence, the laws by which they are governed, the facilities afforded them of obtaining correct information, and His inscrutable designs in relation to the human family; and when the designs of God shall be made manifest, and the curtain of futurity be withdrawn, we shall all of us eventually have to confess that the Judge of all the earth has done right.

The great heavenly work of the exalted ones, assisted by others of the Celestial Kingdom of Glory, is missionary work among the spirits who inhabit the cosmic immensity, who

are yet ignorant of the great plan of salvation and spiritual progression. When, the “at large” spirits in the eternities are taught of the plan of salvation and progression and are converted, they enter into a covenant through an eternal ordinance with God and are adopted by Him as His spiritual children giving Him patriarchal jurisdiction over them and they are then slated to inhabit an upcoming earthly creation. Spirit beings are thus collected in anticipation of the next creative cycle, all overseen by a member of the Eloheim. Once the slated spirits are assembled, a Jehovah class spirit must be anointed as God the Redeemer for the new creation and so it begins again, one eternal round.

There is only adoption in the heavens since all spiritual entities are not created, but are eternal, individual, and self-existent. Only on earth does the temporal “beget” mean both, to give physical birth to, or under some circumstances to adopt as part of one’s family. At the conclusion of eternal heavenly missionary work there is a covenant to complete the operation.

Mosiah 5:7

7 And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.

In light of the immediately foregoing reference, consider the baptismal ordinance, which is the earthly covenant mentioned in Mosiah.

D&C 20:73

73 The person who is called of God and has authority from Jesus Christ to baptize, shall go down into the water with the person who has presented himself or herself for baptism, and shall say, calling him or her by name: Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

In the foregoing ordinance, by way of illustration only, one could understand the references to deity as, “God the Father,” “God the Son,” and “God the Holy Ghost,” or “God.” This earthly baptism acknowledges and verifies, now in the flesh, the original adoption in the preexistent heavens and places one under Christ within God’s adopted family structure, so the Redeemer then acquires the paternal or patriarchal right and power to intercede on behalf of His spiritual offspring to answer and fulfill the eternal and uncompromising law of perfection that exists and surrounds Almighty God, which would otherwise damn and destroy us all of the lower orders of spirits. None but another Jehovah class of God can accomplish such atonement.

Moses 6:57

57 Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.

Here on earth we are fully under the veil of darkness, but we are given examples of things heavenly to jog our spiritual intelligence as we are taught through the Holy Ghost of things more noble, virtuous and pure.

D&C 128:13

13 Consequently, the baptismal font was instituted as a similitude of the grave, and was commanded to be in a place underneath where the living are wont to assemble, to show forth the living and the dead, and that all things may have their likeness, and that they may accord one with another--that which is earthly conforming to that which is heavenly, as Paul hath declared, 1 Corinthians 15:46, 47, and 48:

Here is a small, hidden in plain sight, key of this great understanding and it is provided in understanding the linkage between the Holy Quorum of 144,000 exalted men and the missionary calling of the Seventy on earth.

D&C 107:38

38 It is the duty of the traveling high council to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, instead of any others.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Two 1834-37 p.75

If the first Seventy are all employed, and there is a call for more laborers, it will be the duty of the seven presidents of the first Seventy to call and ordain other Seventy and send them forth to labor in the vineyard, until, if needs be, they set apart seven times seventy, and even until there are one hundred and forty-four thousand thus set apart for the ministry.

John Taylor, The Gospel Kingdom, p.29

Their "Father's name," bless me! that is GOD! Well done for Mormonism; one hundred and forty four thousand GODS, among the tribes of Israel, and, two living Gods and the Holy Ghost, for this world! Such knowledge is too wonderful for men, unless they possess the spirit of Gods. It unravels the little mysteries, which, like a fog, hide the serene atmosphere of heaven, and looks from world to world, from system to system, from universe to universe, and from eternity to eternity, where, in each, and all, there is a presidency of Gods, and Gods many, and lords many; and from time to time, or from eternity to eternity, Jesus Christ shall bring in another world regulated and saved as this will be when he delivers it up to the Father; and God becomes all in all. As John the Revelator said: "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.

This paper's partial explanation of the creative cycle, Godhood and the workings of God, as far as it has been exposed, may seem to some to make God, His Works, Godhood and Godliness too common and un-mysterious. The challenge therefore is to pray God will reveal the truth of these matters and to receive personal enlightenment through the Holy Ghost, if one is able.

The work of Godhood is only righteousness and at times heartbreaking, but also joyful with a kind of joy, of which mortals have no real knowledge.

D&C 18:

13 And how great is His joy in the soul that repenteth!

14 Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people.

15 And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

16 And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!

17 Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation.

18 Ask the Father in my name, in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost, which manifesteth all things which are expedient unto the children of men.

Exaltation in the highest realms is not glamorous, titillating or thrilling, but filled with learning, teaching others and striving for perfection in all things eternal. The path to exaltation beyond salvation in the kingdom of God is not for the merely adventurous and daring Gnostics and should not be undertaken lightly or with carnal expectations. May God bless all with wisdom and the assistance to fill the measure of their creation and so gain their greatest possible reward in the heavenly realms.

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