

Removing the Lectures on Faith

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The Doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Correct doctrine and knowledge are very important. This is why the Lord commanded that a “School of the Prophets” to be organized in 1827, that the early leaders in the church might receive, understand, and teach correct doctrine to each other - *before* they began serving missions to spread this doctrine – *the doctrine of Christ*. In the Book of Mormon, as soon as the Lord Jesus came among the people gathered at Bountiful, He taught them *correct doctrine* first, calling it “**my doctrine**.” Then He taught them what He called “**my gospel**.” He then revealed that these things make up what He called “**my church**.” All together they are “**the rock**” we must build upon as His people, or we will be washed away when the rains, winds and floods come. And **THEY ARE** coming. The trials are a dividing sword to separate the wheat from the tares, truth from error, and idolatry from pure worship. We must choose.

The seven *Lectures on Faith*, became the curriculum for the School of the Prophets in February of 1833. They were prepared under the direction and approval of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He oversaw the correct doctrinal content of the Lectures on Faith, saying that they were and are, “*the leading items of the religion which we have **professed to believe***. The first part of the book [of Commandments] will be found to contain a series of lectures as delivered before a *theological class* [the School of the Prophets] in this place...embracing *the important **doctrines of salvation***” (Preface, 1835 edition).

Both the school and the seven lectures were put in place by *the command of God* (see D&C 88:127, 136-41; 90:7). The seven lectures were then put into our canon of scriptures by **a whole vote of the church** (and by individual priesthood quorums separately, one by one) prior to inclusion in the Book of Commandments (1833) and later in the Doctrine and covenants (1835). Sadly, they were removed from our canon of scripture in 1921, by a committee of six men led by James Talmage, working under the direction of church Pres. Grant. The committee removed them without a *revelation* to do so, and **without the vote of the whole church**, an action going against the Lord’s instruction, and counsel as established in D&C 26:2 (the law of “common consent”).

Subsequently the doctrine of the Godhead, that of the Holy Ghost, and essential instruction on how to receive **salvation** in this life via the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, and parting the veil to God in heaven thereafter – via **FAITH** in God - has been hidden away. We know evil and designing men removed plain (simple) and precious (sacred) things from the Bible, those precious truths or keys of knowledge spoken of in Luke 11 and other scripture that clearly define “**the way**” of salvation, of how to be fully *redeemed* in this life. Addressing the hypocritical Pharisees in His day, those who outwardly kept the law, but inwardly had hard hearts, far from Him, our Lord said:

“Woe unto you, lawyers! For ye have taken away the key of knowledge, *the fullness of the scriptures*; ye enter not in yourselves *into the kingdom*; and *those who* were entering in, ye hindered” (JST Luke 11:53).

“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in” (Matt. 23:13).

“Hear the word of Jehovah, you who are vigilant for **his word**; *your brethren who abhor you*, and exclude you because of *my name*, say, Let Jehovah manifest his glory, that we may see cause for your joy! But it is they who shall suffer shame” (Isa. 66:5).

Gileadi provides commentary on this third verse, stating: “Jehovah’s servants – “who are of a humble and contrite spirit and who are vigilant for my word” (v. 2) – *come under censure by ecclesiastical authorities who feel threatened by their zeal for Jehovah. Such self-righteous “brethren” “abhor” or “hate” their zealous counterparts and “exclude” or “thrust” [them] out” from among them*, humiliating them. In the end, however – after it has served Jehovah’s purpose of refining his servants and *testing their loyalties* – their momentary shame (Isa. 61:7) turns into their persecutors’ everlasting shame (Isa. 41:11; 65:15). The descent phase of those who are *ostracized by abusive authorities* thus resembles that of Jehovah’s servant, who they similarly “abhor” and accuse (Isa. 49:7; 50:8-9). Both, moreover, follow the pattern of Jehovah himself, who descent phase includes *prosecution by unrighteous authorities* (Isa. 53:7-9; see Avraham Gileadi, Apocalyptic Commentary of the Book of Isaiah, Hebraeus Press, pps. 422-23).

The lawyers, Rabbis, and editors were like wolves among the sheep, wolves that sought their own comfort and will, wolves that sought control and power for the sake of **gain** (see 1 Nephi 22:23). Such are part of the great and abominable church. It is my belief that the Lectures on Faith were removed from the D&C in 1921 because their instruction was and is centered on three important things not valued by leadership at the time. They are: (1) Clear doctrine on who and what God is (Father and Son), and their unique *character* and *attributes* (lectures 3 and 4). Knowledge of these special attributes help us come

to love God and have strong *faith* and *trust* in **Him**. Instruction in Lecture 5 also included what the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is – *the mind* of God; And (2) the Lectures on Faith provide clear doctrine on how to part the veil of *unbelief* through strong **faith in God**, that we might receive Him personally in this life and His promise of *eternal life* (lectures 5-6). This type of faith is further strengthened in chapters 3, 4, and 12 of the book of Ether in the Book of Mormon. Lectures of Faith 6 and 7 follow. They reveal that we must be willing to (3) **sacrifice all things** to know God and receive Him in this life and His most choice blessings. Doctrines (1), (2) and (3) are no longer taught today.

The Lectures on Faith were originally given to help early church “*elders*” seek and obtain **knowledge of God** that would *qualify them as true messengers* or “*sent ones*” of and for the Lord (see HC, vol. 2, pps. 175-76). The disciples of Christ, especially those called to be part of the Twelve were to become actual witnesses of His reality, having seen Him, having felt the *infallible proofs* of His love for them in the Atonement. They are the real “*signs and tokens*” which the temple symbolically points to – the marks of the Atonement in the Lord’s feet, hands, wrist and the spear mark in His side. In early church history, we read that the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery “*charged*” the early Twelve to obtain this sure witness. It was an essential *qualification* for them and for those called “Apostles” today. These servants were (1) “*called*” to the Lord’s work. They needed to then be (2) “*chosen*” to become a real witness of Him. They then would be (3) *empowered* and (4) *sent*. They would then become (5) *fruitful* servants. The Lord has said:

“Behold, there are many *called*, but few are **chosen**. And why are they **not chosen**? Because their *hearts* are set so much upon the *things of this world*, and aspire to the *honors of men*...” (D&C 121:34-35, the remaining verses are insightful).

The Greek word “apostle” means “*a sent one*.” All “Apostles” are to become “special” or real witnesses of Christ the Lord (see the author’s paper, “A Sent One: The Apostolic Charge”). Before this life-changing event occurs, the Disciples of Christ, you and I and them – are to first obtain the Holy Ghost – an “*endowment of power* from on high,” a gift obtained in the baptism of fire and Holy Ghost experience (a *sanctification* event). Second Nephi 31 and 32:5-6 (and other scriptures) teach us that **revelation** from God through the Holy Ghost is that *guide, comforter*, or “*iron rod*” that then takes us to the tree – the Tree of Life (God’s presence), where we experience His / their love personally.

The early definition of “the *endowment of power* from on high” was this gift and **power** of **REVELATION** from God through the Holy Ghost, necessary to guide us through the mists of darkness in this life and then to God Himself (Christ first) and His love. In Matthew we learn that *revelation* is an important “**rock**” that we must rely on, not the false teachings and doctrines of the arm of flesh (men). Too many “*seek not the welfare of Zion*,” but instead **gain** (power, money, control and more, see 2 Ne. 26:11; 1 Ne. 22:23). Peter learned firsthand that Christ was the Son of God, the Messiah that had come to save him and all of us on the earth. This *knowledge* was a **revelation** to him – by **the ROCK** Himself, Jesus Christ – the sure foundation.

“But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou are **the Christ**, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father* who is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon **this rock** [of *revelation from me as the Rock*] I will build **my church**, and *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*” (JST Matt. 16:16-19).

The Catholic Church has twisted this scripture onto relying on man, the man Peter and Popes thereafter to lead the church. The Latter-day Saints have done the same thing with “Follow the Prophet.” The iron rod isn’t any man, but instead “**the word** of God.” And it (He) takes us to the Tree. Jesus is “**the word**” - of God. He is the Father’s representative on earth, His right hand. He supplies us light, knowledge, and wisdom taking us into the Father’s presence (and that of Mother), if we will turn to Him as Mediator and Savior first. He delivers His word to us personally in **revelation**, typically via **the Holy Ghost**, and via *the written word in scripture*, which serves as a second witness for it. Addressing following weak men instead, the Prophet Joseph warned us:

“**none** are required to *tamely* and *blindly submit to a man* because he has a portion of the priesthood. We have heard men who hold the priesthood remark, that they would do anything they were told to do by those who presided over them, if they knew it was wrong; **but such obedience as this is worse than folly to us; it is slavery in the extreme; and the man who would thus willingly degrade himself should not claim a rank among intelligent beings, until he turns from his folly. A man of God...would despise the idea.** Others, in the extreme...have taught that such obedience was necessary, and that no matter what the saints were told to do by their presidents, they should do it without asking any questions. *When Elders of Israel will so far indulge in these extreme notions of obedience as to teach them to the people, it is generally because they have it in their minds to do wrong themselves*” (Joseph Smith, Millennial Star, vol.14 #38, pps. 593-95).

Seeking God's word above that of men helps us avoid deception and error. The Lord said:

“For you shall live by **every word** that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God [not man]. For the **word** of the Lord is **truth**, and whatsoever is *truth* is **light**, and whatsoever is *light* is **Spirit**, even **the Spirit of Jesus Christ**. And the *Spirit* giveth *light* to every man that cometh into the world; and the *Spirit* enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the *voice* of the *Spirit*. And every one that hearkeneth to the *voice* of the **Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father**” (D&C 84:44-47; see also Matt. 4:4; 2 Ne. 32:1-6).

“And whoso treasureth up **my word**, shall not be deceived” (JS Mat. 1:37). He added, “If ye continue in **my word**, then are ye my disciples indeed; And **ye shall know the truth**, and **the truth** shall make you free” (John 8:32).

When men seek the desires of their hearts, rather than God's will, they often get what they desire, and often this is deception within false revelation. This is the clear message of the following important scriptures; Proverbs 23:7, Isaiah 66:2-4, Ezekiel 14:1-11, 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, James 4:3, Jacob 4:14, Alma 29:4, and Mormon 9:28. *Pure* revelation from God, however, is **the iron rod** we must individually hold on to. It is God's voice and the Holy Ghost, not false voices and spirits, and men's teachings. Scripture reveals repeatedly that men who depend upon their own wisdom, and the desires of their hearts - are lead astray. We are then sent “*strong delusion*,” especially if *carinal desires* within rule us (2 Thes. 2:10-12). Deception is a favorite tool of the adversary (the father of lies), along with designing men that practice priestcraft (2 Ne. 26:29).

Our Lord is “*the stone of Israel*” (Gen. 49:24; D&C 50:44), the “*chief cornerstone*” (Eph. 2:20), the “*stone the builders refused* [rejected]” (Psalm 118:22). The same is become “*the head of the corner*” (Mat. 21:42). It is He who provides direction, counsel, light and knowledge via direct *revelation* to each of us, if we will seek Him and His will. It is like “*living waters*.” Broken, imperfect men only provide stagnant water by comparison to the living God, for they are broken cisterns. Jeremiah, speaking on behalf of the Lord, said:

“For **my people** have committed two evils; **they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters**, and hewed them out *cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water*” (Jer. 2:13). Man is that broken cistern.

Throughout their wilderness journey of forty years, the children of Israel were given everything they needed by the great Jehovah, our Lord. There was shade in the hot desert by day (the cloud), and needed light by night (the pillar of fire). Manna was given them every day as food, and the huge throng of people and animals was given living water in the desert by God too, and from a **rock** they carried with them,¹ from place to place. It was not a cliff face, or some protrusion in the landscape, but a special stone that provided needed water that provided life. Moses struck it once, taking credit for this miracle (not honoring the Lord before His people), and as a result, he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land with his people (see Num. 20:8-12). I believe it was *the stone* that father Jacob rested his head on at Peniel, when he saw the ladder extending to heaven. It symbolized our Lord and His mercy and love for His people. He alone is the “*sure foundation*” (Isa. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11; Hel. 5:12) we must build on. All sandy foundations will soon be swept away (3 Ne. 11:38-40). Christ the Lord was and *is the stone* the builders of the temple rejected in Jerusalem (the capital city). Too many today *deny, reject, and forsake* Him in favor of mortal leaders. Jesus is the *power* behind all things of note in His church. Helaman, father of the great missionaries Nephi and Lehi, taught:

“And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon **the rock of our Redeemer**, who is **Christ**, the Son of God, *that ye must build your foundation*; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storms shall beat upon you, it shall have *no power* over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of **the rock** upon which ye are built, which is a **sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall**” (Helaman 5:12).

Could it be any clearer? Why do we persist in our idolatry, our desire to raise men up as our light (2 Ne. 26:29; 3 Ne. 18:24). It is because men teach us to do so. Isaiah's primary message was the need we have to remove this great sin. It is one of the reasons God commanded us to diligently search Isaiah in 3 Nephi 23:1-3!

An Endowment of Power The gift or *endowment* of **power** from on high addressed in scripture is not the temple *endowment* as we know it today, but God's gifting or endowment of the *first comforter* – the Holy Ghost – as our guide. It is given from “*on high*” (see D&C 33:15; 3 Ne. 9:20; 12:1; 2 Ne. 31:12; 3 Ne. 11:35; JST Mat. 3:38; JST Luke 3:16; JST John 1:28; 15:26). This meaning of this phrase is especially clear in two scriptures - Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4 (see also D&C 43:15-16; 95:8-9 & 105:10-12). Direct *revelation* from God is necessary in this dark world to guide us on the straight and narrow way to real *knowledge* of the Lord (see 2 Ne. 32:5-6). In other words, “the first comforter” leads us to “the Second Comforter” – to the presence of Jesus Christ – the Tree of Life. We must then abide in Him, and He in us, if we are

to be fruit bearing branches in the Tree, with sweet fruit, “fruit meet for the Father’s kingdom” (D&C 84:58). Otherwise scripture informs us that we are good for nothing as servants and teachers, but to be cut off, cast into the fire - and burned. Such is what awaits those who will not “awake and arise” - to be born again in Christ before He returns in fiery glory at the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

The Apostolic Charge - A Sure Witness The early church elders in Kirtland were taught that this sure witness of Christ, our Savior, Redeemer, Judge, and King - was required of them. They were to obtain “*the testimony of Jesus*” needed for both salvation in this life and **empowerment** as one of His “*sent ones*.” This is the true meaning of the word “*apostle*.” Today’s requirement for an “apostle” has changed. It no longer requires one to see the living Christ, one who has felt the marks of the Atonement in His body. These are the “*infallible proofs*” of His love for us, those addressed by the **Apostle Paul** of in Acts 1. Paul was originally unconverted. He was teaching with *zeal* what he believed to be true as a trained Jewish teacher. He had “*zeal*” for the false beliefs of the learned Rabbis of his day (like many today). He had no real “*knowledge*” of the true and living God, until the Lord appeared to him, telling him that he was fighting against His church, stoning to death those that followed the Master. Paul saw the Lord that day. He was converted to Him on the road to Damascus. He became a real witness for the Lord and became a very **powerful** missionary thereafter. No longer did he have “*zeal* [of false things and their related traditions] without *knowledge*.” He obtained “*the testimony of Jesus*.” He came to *know* God, having *knowledge* of Him.

Each of us are to receive Christ and the “*infallible proofs*” ourselves. This is especially important for those who claim to be “*sent ones*” of the Lord today, Apostles of the Lord Jesus. Such are to obtain “*the testimony of Jesus*” (D&C 76:51, 98-102; 46:13-14; 88:4, 74-75; Mor. 10:8; Rev. 12:17, 19:10). Too many today assume most if not all of “the Brethren” have this witness. In the Book of Mormon, those with *the testimony of Jesus* plainly stated so (see the testimony of Lehi who said so in 1 Nephi 1:9, Nephi in 2 Nephi 11:2, Jacob in 2 Nephi 2:4; 11:3, Lamoni in Alma 19:13, Alma the younger in Alma 27:28 & Alma 36:22, Mormon in Mormon 1:15, the brother of Jared in Ether 3:14, and Moroni in Ether 12:39, along with the multitude and the Lord’s disciples in 3 Nephi). Their open statements give them *credibility*, while *building faith* in others that they *too* can follow **the way** of salvation into the Lord’s presence. With this “*knowledge*” of God (not just belief in Him), and the gift and power of the Holy Ghost as their continuing guide given earlier (in the baptism of fire and Holy Ghost event), the early church elders were to become *empowered* messengers. They could then teach with convincing **power** like Paul did.

Many believe that later church leaders at the opening of the twentieth century (especially Pres. Grant) became *uncomfortable* with the concentration the Lectures on Faith had on *the requirement* to come into the Lord’s presence in this life, that consistent with “*apostolic charge*” of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (below). Lecture of Faith 1:34, for example, nearly demands that we, and certainly our leaders become “**acquainted with him [God]; and not only commune with him and behold his glory, but be partakers of his power, and stand in his presence.**” This is clear in the “*apostolic charge*” below, where Oliver stated:

“It is necessary that you receive a testimony from heaven to yourselves; so that you can bear testimony to the truth of the Book of Mormon, and **that you have seen the face of God.** That is more than the testimony of an angel. When the proper time arrives, you shall be able to bear *this* testimony to the world. When you bear testimony **that you have seen God**, this testimony of God will never suffer to fall, but will bear you out; although many will not give heed, yet others will. You will therefore see **the necessity of getting this testimony from heaven** [the testimony of Jesus, see D&C 76:51, 75, 101; Rev. 19:10]. **Never cease striving until you have seen God face to face.** Strengthen your faith; cast off your doubts, your sins, and all your unbelief; and nothing can prevent you from coming to God. **Your ordination is not full and complete till God has laid his hand upon you.** *We require as much to qualify us as did those who have gone before us; God is the same. If the Savior in former days laid his hands upon his disciples, why not in latter days? . . . The time is coming when you will be perfectly familiar with the things of God. . . . You have our best wishes, you have our most fervent prayers, that you may be able to bear this testimony, that you have seen the face of God. Therefore call upon him in faith in mighty prayer till you prevail, for it is your **duty and your privilege to bear such a testimony** for yourselves” (History of the Church, 2:192-98).*

According to Zebedee Coltrin, “Joseph Smith explained to the School of the Prophets that to be an apostle required a visit from Christ and the Father. At one of these meetings after the organization of the school . . . a personage walked through the room from east to west, and Joseph asked if we saw him. I saw him and suppose the others did and Joseph answered that is Jesus, the Son of God, our elder brother. Afterward Joseph told us to resume our former position in prayer, which we did. Another person came through; he was surrounded as with a flame of fire. He (Brother Coltrin) experienced a sensation that it might destroy the tabernacle as it was of consuming fire of great brightness. The Prophet Joseph said this was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I saw Him . . . The Prophet Joseph said:”

“Brethren, now you are prepared to be the apostles of Jesus Christ, for you have seen both the Father and the Son and know that they exist and that they are two separate personages” (Zebedee Coltrin, Minutes, Salt Lake City School of the Prophets, October 11, 1883).

History reveals that from Pres. Grant’s administration onward, the early “*apostolic charge*” was diminished and forgotten. It was replaced with lesser things, like having a witness of the Holy Ghost, or that “the call” to represent the Lord and His work to the world as an Apostle is sufficient (see *A Sent One: The Apostolic Charge*). President of the Twelve Boyd K. Packer’s comments about his call to the Twelve (first as an assistant) is insightful in this regard. He said, “President McKay explained that one of the responsibilities of an Assistant to the Twelve was to stand with the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as a *special witness* and to bear testimony that Jesus is the Christ. What he said next overwhelmed me: “Before we proceed to set you apart, I ask you to bear your testimony to us. We want to know if you *have that witness*.” I did the best I could. I bore my testimony *the same as I might have in a fast and testimony meeting in my ward*. To my surprise, the Brethren of the Presidency seemed pleased and proceeded to confer the office upon me. That puzzled me greatly, for I had supposed that someone called to such an office would have an unusual, different, and greatly enlarged testimony and spiritual power. It puzzled me for a long time until finally I could see that I already had what was required: an abiding testimony in my heart of the Restoration of the fullness of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, that we have a Heavenly Father, and that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer...” (Elder Boyd K. Packer, “The Weak and the Simple of the Church,” Oct. 2007 Gen. Conf.).

There may have also been some *discomfort* with the definitions of the Godhead as presented in the Lectures on Faith (including definitions of the Father and the Holy Ghost). They are different today than those expressed in one faulty verse in the D&C 130, verse 22, a portion of which was written by Orson Hyde, not Joseph Smith. Research by the Joseph Smith Papers Project (BYU) reveals that this verse is not scripture in the traditional sense (not a revelation from God through Joseph Smith), but instead the incorrect teaching of Orson Hyde. It was added to our canon of scripture in 1876, 35 years after Joseph Smith placed the Lectures on Faith in the Doctrine and Covenants. Recent research reveals that the Prophet Joseph was uncomfortable with Elder Hyde’s summary of his teachings when he first heard them. Joseph corrected him in private afterwards. Sadly, Hyde’s summary has become *the defacto definition* of the Father, Son, and *Holy Ghost* in the LDS church today, pre-empting and negating other verses of scripture in our canon. It reads.

“The Father has a body of flesh and bone as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but 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” (D&C 130:22).

Nowhere in D&C 130 is there a statement by God or Joseph that this is *the* definition of the Godhead, whereas Lecture 5 does make this claim. A better, more accurate scriptural definition of the Holy Ghost is easily and quickly obtained by scanning all references for the Holy Ghost in the **Index** at the back of the D&C, pages 155-57. The D&C 130:22 verse is very different from the rest, and the only one expressing what it does. Verse 22 is a citing of Joseph’s instruction inaccurately by Elder Hyde, according to Joseph Smith’s own words in his journal (kept by Willard Richards). There (via Richards) Joseph noted a mistake in Elder Orson Hyde’s definition of the Father and the Holy Ghost. Writing for Joseph, Willard Richards stated that Elder Hyde, “again revertd to **mistake**. &c [meaning etc. – *following* -] the Father has a body of flesh & bones as tangible as mans, the Son also, but the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit.” The specific mistake in Hyde’s words is not given in this research, only that there was such a mistake (see Joseph Smith Papers Project <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/50>).

It is generally believed that the Father has a body, but one *not* tangible in the same way as mans, or we would not read that the Son differs from Him being a “*personage of tabernacle*” in Lecture on Faith 5. The Father’s body is apparently much more refined - a purer form of matter with great intensity of light and power, so much so that we would be destroyed in His presence if we were not first transfigured by Him to endure His fiery presence. Elder Hyde’s instruction on the Holy Ghost is more problematic. He and others have suggested that the Holy Ghost is an individual – *a male personage* (like the Father and Son), but without a body, that He might dwell within us. The fifth Lecture on Faith provides **an officially approved and voted on definition of what the Holy Spirit is** (and by the first prophetic leader of the Church, Joseph Smith).

Lecture 5 informs us that Holy Spirit is simply the gift or *endowment* of **access to the mind of God** – the unified mind of the Father and the Son. We are given this *endowment* when we are sanctified from all sin – in the baptism of fire and Holy Ghost event. Thus, the Holy Ghost is not a separate male personage giving us guidance, **but access to the collective mind of the Father and Son**.

It is apparent that the foundational doctrine of the Lectures on Faith, approved by the Prophet Joseph Smith, conflicted with current thinking at the time by Pres. Grant and academics like James Talmage (a former professor at the Univ. of Utah), both of whom were in positions of power at the time. It appears they and others were “uncomfortable” with; (1) The required need for an audience with God to be an “Apostle”; And (2) Attributes of the Father and Holy Ghost which didn’t square with their current definitions of them. These two things are believed to be the primary reasons why the Lectures on Faith were removed from the Doctrine and Covenants in 1921, nearly 90 years after they were approved by the Prophet Joseph Smith, other leaders, and a whole vote of the church (or “common consent” as required by the Lord in D&C 26:2). The doctrines in the Lectures on Faith were taught to our earliest church leaders in the first School of the Prophets. The official reason given today for their removal is that “*they are not revelation.*” Unfortunately, no *revelation* is given us to warrant their removal, other than the committee decision.

The earliest, official, and most correct definition of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is given us in **the Lectures on Faith**. In them we see instruction that was intended to bring the early “elders” (and those who read them) into God’s presence. The Prophet Joseph stood in the presence of the both the Father and the Son. He knew what the Godhead was. In Lecture 5 of the Lectures on Faith, we read the early clear definition of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

“There are **two personages** who constitute the great, matchless, governing and supreme power over all things. They are the Father and the Son: *the Father being a personage of spirit, glory, and power, possessing all perfection and fulness. The Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, a personage of tabernacle, made, or fashioned like unto man, or being in the form and likeness of man... And he being the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and having overcome, received a fulness of the glory of the Father—possessing the same mind with the Father, which mind is the Holy Spirit..being filled with the fulness of the Mind of the Father, or, in other words, the Spirit of the Father: which Spirit is shed forth upon all who believe on his name and keep his commandments: and all those who keep his commandments shall grow up from grace to grace, and become heirs of the heavenly kingdom, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; possessing the same mind, being transformed into the same image or likeness, even the express image of him who fills all in all: being filled with the fulness of his glory, and become one in him, even as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one*” (portion of Lecture 5, Lectures on Faith).

The Holy Spirit Lecture 5 informs us that the Father and Son are **one** via *their shared mind*, and that their unified mind is “*the Holy Spirit.*” This lecture also states that *the Holy Spirit* “bears record of the Father and the Son” (the same exact thing is said of the Holy Ghost today, see D&C 20:27; Moses 5:9). We also learn there that, God’s “Spirit” “*is shed forth upon all who believe on his name and keep his commandments.*” That is a very good definition for what we call the Holy Ghost today in many respects. As we are cleansed by fire, sanctified in receiving *the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost*, we appear to be gifted with greater access to the mind of God. God endows us personally with *access* to His mind and will and that of the Son.

The Lord Jesus has always sought that we be one with Him, as He is one with the Father (see John 5:30; 10:30; 14:10-11; 17:20-23). He said if we are not *one* as a people, we are not his (D&C 38:27). “As the Son partakes of the *fulness* of the Father through the Spirit, so the Saints are, by the same Spirit, to be partakers of the same *fulness*, for as the Father and the Son are one, so in like manner, the Saints are to be one with and in them. Through the love of the Father, the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, they are to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ” (Lecture 5, Lectures on Faith).

How the Doctrine Changed

It was in the fall of 1898, that Pres. Heber J. Grant asked former geology professor (at the Univ. of Utah) James E. Talmage to *rewrite* the Lectures on Faith and present them for approval to the First Presidency. In the process, Talmage reconstructed the doctrine of the lectures to bring definitions of the Father and the Holy Ghost in line with his current thinking as a *scholar*.² By January 1915, Apostle Charles W. Penrose had also completed a revision of Parley P. Pratt’s *Key to the Science of Theology*, further *modifying* these doctrines. Even with the modifications, the **Lectures on Faith** were eventually **removed** from the Doctrine and Covenants in **1921** by a committee consisting of six men; James E. Talmage (chair), George F. Richards, Anthony W. Ivins, Melvin J. Ballard, John A. Widstoe, and Joseph Fielding Smith. This committee provided the following reason for their removal.

“Certain lessons entitled The Lectures on Faith which were bound with Doctrine and Covenants in some of its former issues, are not included in this edition. Those lessons were prepared for use in the School of Elders. But they were *never* presented or accepted by the Church as other than theological lessons or lectures” (or in other words they are not revelation nor doctrine).

The seven lectures were clearly viewed as doctrine by Joseph Smith, other leaders, and the whole church at the time. The introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants in my scriptures (1985) state that they are “**profitable for doctrine and instruction.**” The early Saints believed that the first part of the Doctrine and Covenants was “*the doctrine* of the church,” comprised a series of seven doctrinal lectures on the subject of faith, first prepared as a course of instruction for the School of the Elders, while the second part was the “**covenants and commandments,**” given to Joseph, normally by *revelation*.

It is clear that the lectures were removed by a *committee decision*, rather than a revelation from God and the voice or vote of the church. In D&C 26:2, the Lord requires that “**all things shall be done by common consent in the church.**” The Lectures on Faith were considered the “*doctrine*” portion of the 1833 Book of Commandments and the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, whereas God’s revelations to Joseph Smith were considered the *covenants*.

Diminishing the Need for the Heavenly Gift Numerous statements by Pres. Heber J. Grant and others reveal that he was “uneasy” with spiritual matters generally. A clear focus of the seven Lectures on Faith is developing the necessary *faith* to part the veil and enter the Lord’s presence in this life, that one might receive “*the Heavenly Gift*” (Jesus Christ personally), and thus acquire “*the testimony of Jesus*” here and now. Pres. Grant’s own words reveal that he was a practical-minded businessman. He felt that **fidelity to church leaders was more important than having a sure witness of the Lord**. This attitude dominates today and can lead to *idolatry* (trust in the arm of flesh, rather than God). Pres. Grant and others appear to have been uncomfortable with various doctrines expressed in the Lectures on Faith, like the need to “*sacrifice all things*” as did the ancient “fathers” and Saints, to have an audience with God (Lectures 6-7), along with the definition of the Godhead in Lecture 5. From Grant’s administration onward, this doctrine has been diminished, including the “*apostolic charge*” of Joseph and Oliver. Today the average member of the church is unaware of this “charge” and the Lectures on Faith that supports it. Lecture 6 states that it is *this* “**knowledge persons must have**” (of God) **if they are to obtain eternal life and salvation**.

It is well documented that Pres. Grant was more interested in the business matters of the church than developing spirituality in his own life and that of the Saints. Eight years after being ordained an apostle, He stated, “I am greatly deficient in spiritual gifts” (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant*, 1880-1945, p. 5). Nine years after that, he expressed guilt over his obsessive *business* interests, stating, “I felt that I had been neglectful too much of my time to *business* affairs” (diary entry, Nov. 4, 1889). Pres. Grant’s own mother informed him of his reputation among the Saints. He recorded in his diary, “Mother called this morning and we had a long talk. I learned that it was the opinion of a great many of the Latter-day saints that I was filled with pride and that there was nothing in this [life] that I cared about so much as I did about *making money*. It was the opinion of some that the Lord should remove me out of my place as I was so worldly minded and so full of pride. I had no respect for the poor among the people” (diary entry, July 19, 1889).

Note also the words of the secretary to the First Presidency (John Nuttal). He stated, “Financial matters have more weight with...Heber J. Grant than the things of the Kingdom” (In the President’s Office: The Diaries of L. John Nuttal, 1879-1892. Edited by Jedediah Rogers, Signature Books, p. 268). Pres. Grant freely admitted that, “I have never prayed to see the Savior” (*The Diaries of Heber J. Grant*, p. 468). It was during Pres. Grant’s administration (1918-45) that many administrative changes were made in the church. Pres. Grant was the last of five Church Presidents who were polygamists (Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow – I do not believe Joseph practiced polygamy). During his administration we see that:

(1) The Lectures on Faith were removed from our canon scriptures (the D&C) in 1921, *further diminishing the faith required to part the veil to God*, and the “*apostolic charge*” to Apostles and others. Though put in by a vote of the whole church, they were later removed by a committee without a vote.

(2) Wine was removed from the Sacrament ordinance in 1906, *kneeling* was also no longer required (3 Ne. 19:6). The Savior set the example for us, instituting the Sacrament using *wine* among three groups at the Last Supper in Jerusalem (Mat. 26:26-29), at Bountiful in 3rd Nephi (3 Ne. 18 & 19), and in Joseph Smith’s Restoration (D&C 20, 27 and 89, see also Mor. 4 & 5). The Lord said, “And this shall ye *always* observe to do, *even as I have done*, even as *I have broken bread and blessed it* and given it unto you” (3 Ne. 18:6).

(3) Grant had the LDS church *incorporated in 1923*, the Twelve and others then oversaw many for-profit businesses (see <http://mormondisclosures.blogspot.com/2012/09/boogie-on-down-corporation-with-sole.html>).

(4) Grant put in place the requirement to adhere to *the word of wisdom as a requirement to enter the temple* (1933) via a “recommend” from leaders.

(5) Grant put in place the *full payment of tithing as a requirement to enter the temple*.

(6) Business interests of the church took on a more central role.

(7) Administration and committee recommendations took on a greater role than revelation. God said *revelation* from Him is the “**rock**” that keeps “*the gates of hell*” from prevailing against the kingdom of God (see JST Matt. 16:16-18).

(8) For some 22 years of Pres. Grant’s administration, ordinations did not confer priesthood. Men were ordained to offices in the church *without conferral of priesthood first*. Revelation was not cited for these eight changes.

According to Elder Ballard, the Twelve and other leaders turn to scholars at BYU and elsewhere when difficult questions arise. He stated

“When I have a question that I cannot answer, I turn to those who can help me. The Church is blessed with trained *scholars* and who have devoted a lifetime of study, who have come to know our history and the scriptures. These thoughtful men and women provide context and background so we can better understand our sacred past and our current practices” (M. Russel Ballard, Southern Utah Conference, Sept. 2015). Compare this to 2 Ne. 4:34; 2 Ne. 28:31; Jer. 17:5 & Psalm 118:8.

The Holy Ghost The *gift* or “*endowment of power from on high*” - is the gifting of the Holy Ghost in most scriptures tied to this phrase in the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants. In five of six examples given there, the phrase is not addressing our current temple endowment, but “*the gift and power of the Holy Ghost,*” given us from God “*on high.*” Two more are those tied to the endowment of the higher Melchizedek Priesthood at the Morley Farm Conference in 1831 (see below right and the paper, *Endowment of Power from on High*).

This “endowment” is the Holy Ghost	This “endowment” is the greater priesthood
Luke 24:49 & Acts 1 & 2	D&C 38:32, 38
D&C 43:15-16; 95:8-9; 97:12-18; 105:10-12	D&C 43:15-16

The clearest scripture pointing to this particular gift or “*endowment*” being the Holy Ghost - is the combination of Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4, and D&C 95:9. Their context is the Lord’s command that His disciples in the meridian of time, both “*tarry*” or remain in their current locations (Jerusalem and Kirtland respectively), until God provided them with an “*endowment of power from on high*. And in both cases it was a fulfillment of “*the promise of the Father,*” that the Lord’s disciples receive *the gift and power of the Holy Ghost*. It was to guide them in their upcoming missionary labors and their lives thereafter. It was an endowment of *real power*, not a symbolic temple ordinance alone. Having this gift is having greater *access* to the mind and will of God. Such *empowerment* occurred in Acts 2 for the ancient Saints, and at Kirtland for modern believers on March 27 of 1836. Acts 2:17 and Joel 2:28-32 speak of a future day when the Lord’s Spirit will again be “*poured out*” upon those *who seek Him and love Him*. We are in that day.

The Holy Ghost [mind of God] *knows all things* (D&C 35:19). It brings all things to our remembrance (John 14:26). It *bears record of all things*, and especially of the Father and the Son (D&C 20:26-27; Moses 6:66). It shows us *all things that we should do* to make it to the Tree of Life (2 Ne. 32:5-6). Those *empowered* by it, teach with *convincing power* (2 Ne. 33:1; Hel. 5:45-51). The word of God in scripture is also unfolded to those with access to the mind of God. Having received a portion of greater access after the baptism of water *and* fire, the Prophet Joseph Smith stated:

“Immediately on our coming up out of the water after we had been baptized, we experienced great and glorious blessings from our Heavenly Father. No sooner had I baptized Oliver Cowdery, than *the Holy Ghost fell upon him*, and he stood up and *prophesied* many things which should shortly come to pass. And again, so soon as I had been baptized by him, *I also had the spirit of prophecy*, when, standing up, *I prophesied* concerning the rise of this Church, and many other things connected with the Church, and this generation of the children of men. *We were filled with the Holy Ghost*, and rejoiced in the God of our salvation. **Our minds being now enlightened**, *we began to have the scriptures laid open to our understandings, and the true meaning and intention of their more mysterious passages revealed unto us in a manner which we never could attain to previously, nor ever before had thought of*” (Joseph Smith History 1:73-74).

Joseph later added:

“A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of *the spirit of revelation*; for instance, when you feel **pure intelligence flowing into you**, it may give you **sudden strokes of ideas**, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by *the Spirit of God*, will come to pass; and thus by learning *the Spirit of God* and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of *revelation*, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus” (Joseph Smith, HC, p. 381).

“The Holy Ghost has no other effect than **pure intelligence**. *It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham,* than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of **the literal seed of Abraham,** *it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence;* while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a *Gentile, is to purge out the old blood,* and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have **a new creation** by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence” (TPJS 149-50).

For these and other reasons the Holy Ghost is sometimes called the “*comforter*” (a “*first comforter,*” John 14:26) or “*the record of heaven*” (Moses 6:61). Latter-day Saints simply call it “*the Holy Ghost.*” Most other Christians refer to it as *the Holy Spirit* - as does Joseph Smith’s Lectures on Faith.

What is the Holy Ghost? Joseph Smith oversaw the preparation of the Lectures on Faith. In them is revealed the true nature of the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, and that is greater **access** to the *unified mind and will of God* – meaning the Father and the Son (some suggest this includes Mother as well). Some suggest that after we receive the cleansing power of the baptism of fire and Holy Ghost, that we are clothed with greater light, the light or mind of God. Such has been granted a greater portion of the “*in-dwelling*” of God in them. It is a source of great wisdom, truth, and potential **power**. The disciples of Christ in 3 Nephi understood these things, and thus it was a coveted gift among them in 3rd Nephi 3 Ne. 19:9. We read in Moses 6 about purification in water, justification by the Spirit, and sanctification by Christ’s blood (verses 58-60). Note the following verses in respect to the Holy Ghost or the Comforter.

“Therefore it is given to abide in you; **the record of heaven;** *the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power* according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment...And thus he was baptized, and **the Spirit of God** descended upon him, and thus he was *born of the Spirit,* and became *quickeneth in the inner man.* And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art *baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost.* This is **the record of the Father, and the Son,** from henceforth and forever” (Moses 6:61, 65-66).

The words “*record in heaven*” and “*access*” best defines what occurs when we are gifted or endowed with the Holy Ghost here, and that is - *the mind and will of God*. It is given by the Father **or** the Son as clearly revealed in the following scriptures (see D&C 33:15; 3 Ne. 9:20; 12:1; 2 Ne. 31:12; 3 Ne. 11:35; Ether 12:23; JST Mat. 3:38; JST Luke 3:16; JST John 1:28 & 15:26). In most cases, man does not give the Holy Ghost to other mortals, though men *chosen and qualified by God* on earth can *officially* give keys to help open a way to receive God’s mind via the laying on of hands. This is the granting of such *access* via priesthood ordination by one who already has the gift (see Mor. 3:4; D&C 20:60; 18:32). One must be called and chosen by God to do so (not other men). Scripture informs us that we can receive the Holy Ghost only after we are *justified* to receive such access, by *being purged of all sin* in the fiery process of being “*born again*” in Christ, typically called *the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost* in the Book of Mormon. In it our sins are remitted.

God authorizes special chosen servants on Earth, including His chosen “apostles” (sent ones) or “disciples” to lay hands on “*born again*” believers to receive it *from God*. These special servants are *empowered* or given the *right* (authority) to grant others **access** to *the mind of God* (the unified mind of Father and Son). These special empowered mortals have unique *authority* to do so. Most men cannot do this. Only “sent ones” (the meaning of the Greek “apostle”) or “disciples” commissioned by Christ *personally* do this. They are given this authority via Christ’s **voice** or **touch**. We see this in 3 Nephi 18:36-37, where the Lord **touch**ed each of his twelve chosen disciples one at a time for this very purpose, that they might officially help others gain *access* to the shared mind of the Son and the Father (the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit) after laying their hands on them in a symbolic ordinance. Only those with this same *access* to them are to *ordain* others to receive it (see Mor. 3:4; D&C 20:60; 18:32). The same is true of those ordaining others to priesthood offices (D&C 20:60).

Requirement to Obtain this Access Until we turn fully to God in humility, with a broken heart and contrite spirit, and are fully cleansed, our sins remitted via Christ’s Atonement (via real repentance on our part), we do **not** merit *fuller access to the mind of God* via our own *record in heaven*. D&C 121:36-46 outlines how we can obtain more *access* to the Holy Ghost – or “*the record in heaven*” - so that it will be our “*constant companion.*” It is best described by the single word “*charity,*” or having within us the pure love of Christ. Some receive the fiery baptism and the Holy Ghost right after their watery baptism. Their spirit or “*ghost*” is made *holy*. Most do so later, however, sometimes much later. Turning to

God and purity of heart is the preparation necessary to receive the “*endowment*” of **power** – greater access to *the mind and will of God*.

We see this process with Adam (Moses 6:64-66), Christ (Mat. 3:16-17; John 1:32), the Lord’s twelve disciples in the Book of Mormon (3 Ne. 19:9- 13), and that of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in early church history (JSH 1:73). They received the Holy Ghost very early on as they were more prepared in their hearts to do so. Many today, receive it much later, after they remove false traditions and teachings and come to the Lord in sincere repentance, finally being born again in Him.

Avoiding Confusion The phrase “*Holy Ghost*” appears 89 times in the New Testament, 24 times in the 4 gospels. In the Greek, the word “*Spirit*” is used instead of “*Ghost*” in **all** instances (see Matt 1:18, 12:31-32, Mark 1:8, 3:29, 13:11 Luke 1:35, 1:41, 2:25 & 26, 3:16 & 22, 4:1, 12:10 & 12, John 1:33 - note that the same root word is used in the Greek for Holy Spirit in every instance). In D&C 121:26 the Lord appears to equate the Holy Spirit with the Holy Ghost, as do our born again Christian friends. This is consistent with the language of Lecture 5. “God shall give unto you knowledge by his *Holy Spirit*, yea, by the unspeakable gift of *the Holy Ghost*.”

The terms “the Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God,” and “the Spirit” are often used interchangeably in scripture. Each may “descend” upon us, granting us access to the mind and will of God. There may be *potential* subtle differences in them. Many today define “God” as being one of three beings: *Father* (Knowledge & Understanding), *Mother* (Wisdom), and the *Son* (Charity). They may each speak to us or inspire us individually, though more typically it is Christ who does so, as our Savior, the Father of our Salvation. Some suggest *the Spirit of God* is masculine (Father [and Son in more limited situations]), where *the Holy Spirit* is feminine (Mother). In our Savior’s description of *the gifts of the Spirit* in D&C 46, He uses five different related phrases tied to the Spirit in Section 46; (1). We are to conduct our meetings by “*the Holy Spirit*” (v. 2); (2). The first four gifts of the Spirit are given by “*the Holy Ghost*” (vs. 13 & 15-16); (3). The remaining nine gifts of the Spirit are given by “*the Spirit of God*” (v. 17); (4). We are to ask “*in Spirit*” and receive “*in Spirit*” (v. 28); And (5). The later verses in Section 46 suggest that we are to ask while in “*the Spirit*” as we will be unified with *the mind and will of God* and thus “*it is done even as he asketh*” (v. 30). Finally, we are to give thanks “*in the Spirit*” (v. 32).

Individuality & Unity Christ taught us to pray to *the Father* in *His* name (Mat. 6:12-13; John 14:6; 16:23-24). After the baptism of fire, we often pray to Jesus as the Father of our Salvation, as we have become His sons and daughters. He is then our “*head*.” This is best explained in Mosiah 5, verses 7-15 (see also 3 Ne. 19:22-23). The following phrases are used to express “God” in scripture (Father, Mother, and Son) and their influence. Probable meaning is supplied thereafter.

Holy Spirit (Christ, Father, Mother)³

Spirit of God (The Father)

Spirit of Christ (influence of our Savior, promised in the Sacrament prayers – He is father of our salvation)

Holy Ghost (higher self, our record remaining in heaven, our “ghost” made holy when we are “born again.” Our cleansed and renewed higher self is than granted greater access to the unified mind of God (the Father and the Son)

Various Doctrine Some say that the Holy Ghost is an office held by different individuals over time, a male guide sent of the Lord for specific individuals. Others suggest that our greater connection to God is enhanced with greater access to our “*higher self*,” “*the I Am Presence*,” our “*ghost*,” our “*total collective record*” or “*spirit*” which has been left in heaven. It is part of our soul or intelligence left there - like a luminous robe to put on again after our return to the heavenly realm. It appears to be our “*record in heaven*,” a record of all that we are and have been; our intelligence, personality, and experiences refined over many eons of time, the greater portion of it being left behind when we come here. A lesser portion descends here to experience mortality, gain more experience, develop greater charity, learn, progress, etc., over and over through time. Each mortal experience provides more that is added upon us. We receive grace for grace in this progression. Once sufficient growth is obtained, there is no need to *go out* again (to the earth or an earth). In scripture, this concept is apparently referred to as “*to go no more out*” (see Alma 7:25, 29:17, 34:36; Hel. 3:30; 3 Ne. 28:40; Rev. 3:12; Acts 13:34 and the author’s paper by the same name). Having met the requirement for growth, some willingly return here again for charitable reasons - service, like Christ did to save us. Many believe such service adds to *our garment of light*, our soul or *collective* experience and intelligence – our “*record in heaven*.” Access to our own collected intelligence and light apparently aids us in connecting to God too. Is the “*higher self*” or “*spirit*” left in heaven our “*holy ghost*”?

End Notes

¹ **The Rock of Revelation** When we put aside the teachings of men and seek greater light, letting the holy word of God say what it says, we are taught profound truths of great worth, especially when the Spirit serves as a Urim and Thummim for us as we feast upon the written word of God.

The Rock in the Wilderness of Sinai A “stone” Christ the LORD, provided *living waters* in the deserts of Sinai for forty years for the Israelites. It was both spiritual *revelation* to them (typically through Moses), and physical water for thousands or even millions of people and their many animals. It may have been *the stone* Jacob rested his head on when he had the vision of the ladder at Peniel (Gen. 28:10-14). Jacob set it up as a marker for this special, holy place, a place he called “*Bethel*” (meaning “house of God”) or “*the gate of heaven*” (Gen. 28:17-22). It was there, where he, as the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, saw God and wrestled with Him (Gen. 32:24-30). He also saw angels ascending and descending the ladder reaching to heaven.

Jacob then anointed that special “stone” with oil (Gen. 28:18; 31:13). We know that Christ was “*the anointed one*” the Messiah that would descend to earth many years later to Save all Israel and any who would seek salvation at His hands. Sadly, most rejected Him there. He was *the stone* or foundation that the builders of great temple in Jerusalem rejected. They believed they had salvation in their temple and its rites and their many dead laws, when in reality they rejected real salvation offered by the living God, He who had come among them to teach them and save them. They relied on the deadness in the law, and their grand temple. They could have been made *alive* in Christ (see 2 Ne. 25:25-30).

We are repeating the same mistakes today, relying on men, laws, and the temple. Some speak of “the saving ordinances of the temple” today. Though useful, salvation is only of the Lord! We must **repent** and **come unto Him** to be saved. There is no other way.

Note the language of the scriptures tied to **the rock** supplying *living waters* to the Israelites in the Sinai desert. The Lord provided everything supernaturally for the children of Israel upon leaving spiritual Egypt and Babylon. Encamped at Rephidim in the Sinai desert, the people were in dire need of water. Without selecting some special rock *there* – the Lord said to Moses:

Exodus 17:6 “Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock at Horeb, and thou shalt **smite the rock**, and *there shall come water out of it*, that the people may drink.”

In Numbers 20, verses 4 and 5, we read of complaints to the Lord again, that He had brought them out of Egypt to a desert place with no water. The Lord appeared to Moses, saying:

Num. 20:7-8 “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and *speak ye unto the rock* before their eyes; and *it shall give forth his water*, and thou shalt bring forth to them **water out of the rock**: *so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.*” Note also this related verse in Psalm 105.

Psalm 105:41 “He opened **the rock**, and *the waters gushed out*; they ran in the dry places *like a river.*”

The same **rock** was smitten at both locations and would continue to be throughout the forty years of wilderness traveling. They were carrying **the rock with them**, perhaps placed in the care of the family of Joseph, the birthright son, who was chosen of father Jacob to save His people in Egypt during the seven years of famine. While traveling through the desert lands of various kings, Moses made agreements with them that he and his vast nation of people and animals would not use their precious water. He knew where His living water came from. Speaking to the king of Edom, Moses said:

Num. 20:17 “Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of *the water of the wells*: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.” They had their own water.

Not only did Moses “*speak*” to **the rock**, but they also *sang* to it. It was a “shepherd” rock to the children of Israel (Gen. 49:24).

Psalm 95:1-6 “O come, let us *sing* unto the LORD: let us make a *joyful noise* to **the rock of our salvation.**”

1 Cor. 10:4 “And [they] did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual **Rock** that followed them: and that **Rock** was Christ.”

It has been written, “*Smite the Shepherd*” (Zech. 13:7; Mat. 26:31). Christ, the shepherd **rock** of all Israel was smitten by His own people at Jerusalem, the capital city of the supposed believers. They had come to worship the law, the temple, and their leaders the Rabbi's. The living Christ, the stone of Israel was rejected and crucified by the High Priest over the people at that time. He was smitten for the sins of the people, then and today. God commanded Moses to “Smite the rock” at Horeb as a type for this future rejection, the rejection of Christ today by so many who call themselves Saints.

² **James E. Talmage** Elder Talmage was a former professor of *geology* at the University of Utah. After removing the Lectures on Faith from our canon of scriptures (via a committee he chaired, under the direction of Pres. Grant), he wrote the book *The Articles of Faith* effectively replacing it. It sold well, becoming widely accepted, negating many things taught in the Lectures on Faith. He later authored *Jesus the Christ*, considered by many Mormons to be the classic LDS treatise on the life of Christ, though it has many errors. He made a statement in it that has led to the incorrect LDS tradition that April 6th is the Lord's birthday (see *The April 6 Tradition in LDS Culture*). In the book he stated, “*We believe that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, April 6, B.C. 1.*” Researchers in the Joseph Smith Papers project believe Elder Talmage read verse 1 of D&C 20 (an introductory headnote to Joseph's revelation, written by historian John Whitmer) *as if the Lord was speaking*, revealing that He was born on this date 1,830 years before, and that the revelation was given on April 6, 1830. Research indicates that *both assumptions* by Talmage were incorrect. He based his belief on *an assumption* tied to verse 1 of D&C 20 - his *assumption* that John Whitmer's statement was made by the Lord Himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith on April 6th. Neither assumption has been proven to be correct! The revelation that follows Whitmer's introductory head note preceding it, occurred on April 10 of that year, not the 6th. Talmage's opinion about April 6 being Christ's birthday later became an LDS false tradition, one repeated over and over. Steven C. Harper, volume editor of the Joseph Smith Papers project and a BYU assistant professor of church history, stated that verse 1 of D&C 20 was simply an introductory head note written by John Whitmer, not a statement by Jesus Christ or Joseph Smith. This is evident in the recent discovery of the Book of Commandments and Revelations manuscript of D&C 20, published as part of the Joseph Smith Papers project. Later Talmage, and fellow member of the Twelve Mark E. Petersen, became

outspoken antagonists of Bishop John Koyle and his “dream mine.” Koyle was a visionary man with many prophecies that continually proved accurate. Jealousies and skepticism ensued. Talmage and Petersen would later become involved in Koyle’s excommunication.

³ *Holy Spirit, Heavenly Mother, etc.* As this paper attempts to define the Godhead as accurately as possible, I offer up the following short definition of the role of our Heavenly Mother as defined by Anonymous, which I am in agreement with. “Heavenly Mother is the life giver of the Universe. Father, creates the tabernacles and she infuses life into them. Her influence is felt throughout creation and that “vibration,” for lack of a better word, is the Holy Spirit that teaches, comforts, heals, and carries the truth of all things; a perfect balance and harmonious partnership with the Eternal Father. The Father gives his Word to us through the Holy Spirit.” For a more complete definition, see <https://pure Revelations.wordpress.com/2015/04/08/who-is-heavenly-mother/>

For related reading by the author, see the following papers:

- A Sent One: The Apostolic Charge
- Idolatry: Our #1 Sin
- The Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit
- Pentecost Endowment of the Holy Spirit
- Endowment of Power from on High
- The April 6 LDS Tradition
- A Latter-day Gazelem
- Repent and Come Unto Me

Recommended books:

- The Lectures on Faith
- The Standard Works (LDS scripture) / See Ether chapters 3, 4 and 12
- The complete Joseph Smith re-translation of the Bible, the Community of Christ (copyright holder)
- Seek Ye This Jesus*, by Robert Smith, upwardthought.blogspot.com
- How to Have Your Second Comforter*, by Anonymous (www.digitalegend.com)
- Heaven Can't Wait*, by Lewis Clementson, amazon.com
- Wait as Eagles*, by Sadhu Sundar Selvaraj, jesusministries.org