

that time may eventually prove it correct, although I confess that right now I find several of its fundamental assertions extremely problematic.<sup>2</sup> Even without these problems, though, it is still only a possibility; there are simply too many unknowns and ambiguities at this point to rank it any higher than that. Other possibilities also exist that are perfectly consistent with the text, and we would do well to start exploring them seriously. **RE**

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## Notes

1. Roper, for example, made an involved argument for the state of Coriantumr's health. Considering the limited data available to us and the caution and innumerable tests that modern physicians employ before making a diagnosis in a complex case, the diagnosis of a historical figure's health is highly speculative.

2. Along with those assertions identified in the paper under discussion, see also Andrew H. Hedges, "The Narrow Neck of Land," *Religious Educator* 9, no. 3 (2008): 151–60.

# “Where Is Thy Glory?” Moses 1, the Nature of Truth, and the Plan of Salvation

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While the first chapter of the book of Moses is often understood as introductory to the rest of the book, the chapter itself is an inclusive text centering on Moses's transformation through three separate encounters with supernatural beings. In each encounter he is taught something of the meaning of truth and experiences the power that the comprehension of truth brings. His example is particularly instructive in light of the doctrine that “truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24).

The first section of Moses 1 contains Moses's encounter with God (see vv. 1–11). Second is his confrontation with the adversary (see vv. 12–23). The third and final section records his meeting with God (see vv. 24–41). In these three encounters, Moses becomes a type for all who seek to understand things as they really are.

## The First Encounter: Moses and God

“*The glory of God was upon Moses.*” The chapter opens with Moses experiencing a change in both time and space as he is transported to an exceedingly high mountain, where we are immediately informed that the glory of God is upon Moses (see v. 2), allowing him to stand in God's presence.

Though not explicitly mentioned as such, the glory of God is a central theme in each encounter.<sup>1</sup> The term comes from the Latin *gloria*, which describes the physical manifestation of light around an

object.<sup>2</sup> The Greek word *doxa*, translated as *glory* in the New Testament, also describes the nimbus or halo of light surrounding an object or person. Similarly, the Hebrew term *Shekinah* describes the divine nimbus of light experienced in the presence of God.<sup>3</sup>

In this dispensation, the Prophet Joseph Smith describes the glory of God as “a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun” (Joseph Smith—History 1:16).<sup>4</sup> Later, at the Kirtland Temple dedication, people outside the temple witness what seems to be fire and light falling upon the building just as the Shekinah fell upon other sacred edifices in the Old Testament.<sup>5</sup>

While Shekinah describes perfectly the physical manifestations associated with the presence of God, it by itself is not the glory of God. According to Doctrine and Covenants 93:36, the glory of God is intelligence, “or, in other words, light and truth.” The inclusion of truth as part of God’s glory is understood in connection with the definition of truth provided twelve verses earlier: “Truth is a knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (v. 24). Similarly, in Jacob 4:13, we are told that truth is “things as they really are, and of things as they really will be.” In both cases, truth is defined as a sure state of being, and because of their emphasis on the reality of truth, these definitions declare that a difference exists between truth, the way things really are, and the way things seem to be. Thus, God’s glory includes both the physical light represented by the Shekinah-type experience and also truth, the conscious awareness of the way things really are, the latter being especially to Moses in this chapter.<sup>6</sup>

“*Thou art my son.*” The first truth taught by God to Moses is in verse 4 of Moses 1, God tells Moses, “Thou art my son.” This may seem to be a basic revelation, but it is the foundation upon which the other truths given to Moses are built. This declaration emphasizes the familial relationship between Moses and God and in so doing summarizes the entire plan of salvation. It speaks not only of his divine heritage but also of his potential to be like God through exaltation and as such highlights his covenantal relationship with God.

While the terms *father* and *son* often refer to genetic, biological relationships, our own modern legal system recognizes that biology is not the only manner in which one can be a son or daughter. The principle of adoption is one that recognizes these designations have nothing to do with a genetic relationship. The terms are used throughout the ancient Near East to refer to political and social relationships.<sup>7</sup> In ancient Israel they are used to describe the covenantal relationship between God and Israel.<sup>8</sup>

The Apostle Paul teaches similar doctrine in Romans 8:14, 16–17: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, . . . the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” Our designation as children of God is not determined by just our genetic lineage but by our covenantal worthiness. Being worthy of and following the Spirit determines whether or not we are his sons and daughters, which in turn signifies our right to receive, by covenant, the inheritance of God.<sup>9</sup>

By affirming that Moses is his son, God acknowledges Moses’s faithfulness and status as an heir, worthy to be in his presence. The irony of the passage is that, according to tradition, Moses was raised in the royal courts of Egypt where the concept of the divine nature of man was taught in apostate fashion is the pharaoh, was understood to be literally the son of Deity. As a result, Moses is confronted early on with the power of truth, learning of the true nature of man, something he “never had supposed” (v. 10).

“*Wherefore look!*” Another truth is found in verse 4: “Wherefore look, and I will show thee the workmanship of mine hands.” The word *wherefore* designates an important relationship to the following clause. Because Moses is God’s son, he has the right to behold the workmanship of his Father. Though the statement by the Father is literally fulfilled a few verses later as Moses sees in vision the physical limits of this earth as well as all the inhabitants that would dwell on it, visions are only one means by which revelation may be received. The larger meaning to God’s declaration and invitation is that Moses has the right to receive revelation.

This truth suggests that all God’s sons and daughters have the right to acquire truth through revelation. In fact, the exhortation to seek and acquire knowledge from God is one of the most common exhortations in the scriptures. Moreover, like the first truth, this principle also encapsulates the plan of salvation. In John 17:3 we read, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” The process by which one gains this saving knowledge is described in Doctrine and Covenants 42:61: “If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.”

Of course, this knowledge is not given without effort. Alma states that knowledge is given based both on one’s worthiness to receive it and on the manner by which one uses the knowledge: “And he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the

word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full” (Alma 12:10). The acquisition of truth thus is determined by our closeness to the Spirit. The more worthy we are of the Holy Ghost, the more likely we are to receive truth.

Yet simply being worthy of receiving revelation does not necessarily mean that one is actually receiving revelation. Thus the scriptures stress the need for us to ask and seek. To become a son or daughter of God, we must exercise our right to think and know as he does, which Moses learns to do.<sup>10</sup>

“*Thou art in the similitude.*” A third truth that Moses learns is found in verse 6: “I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten.” This truth, like the second, is founded upon the understanding that he is God’s son. It is apparent in this verse that there is a relationship between Moses’s work and Christ’s work. Christ “is and shall be the Savior for he is full of grace and truth.”<sup>11</sup> This suggests then that like Christ, Moses is to be a savior, thus one who needs to be full of grace and truth.

What exactly is meant by the phrase “grace and truth” is unknown since the original text of Moses is not available, yet similar clauses are found in the Old Testament of the King James Bible. At least five word pairs ending with *truth* can be found: mercy and truth, kindness and truth, goodness and truth, peace and truth, and faithfulness and truth.<sup>12</sup> Of these pairs, mercy and truth is the most common, referred to ten times.<sup>13</sup> The Hebrew text from which this translation is received is *hesed* and *emet*. While the common Hebrew word *emet* is understood to be the equivalent of our word *truth*, the Hebrew term *hesed* is much harder to translate. Found over fifty times in the Old Testament, it is a word that appears unique to the Hebrew language and can be translated as mercy, goodness, and kindness. What is known about *hesed* is that it seems to be related to the other unique feature of ancient Israelite religion—the covenantal relationship with God.<sup>14</sup> The term is used as a characteristic of the nature of God, specifically referring to his works in our behalf.

It is possible that “grace and truth” is equivalent to *hesed* and *emet*, suggesting that the concept of grace was understood in the Old Testament as *hesed*. If Christ does the work of the savior because he possesses both *hesed* and *emet*, then Moses learns that he must possess these same traits if he too is to work. Through his prophetic leadership, Moses is meant to be a spiritual savior. Thus, he too, must cultivate the traits of *hesed* and *emet* if he is to prepare his people to enter into

God’s rest, do all that he can to sanctify his people to see God’s face, and provide the law which is to lead to spiritual transformation.<sup>15</sup>

“*And it came to pass that Moses looked.*” Moses next is shown a vision of the earth and its inhabitants. The reasoning behind this vision is given in verse 7: “This one thing I show unto thee, Moses, my son, for thou art in the world.” This one thing is, in actuality, two scenes: (1) the world and the ends thereof and (2) all the children which are and were created. According to God, it is because of Moses’s mortality that he is shown these things, yet Moses is also reminded of his divine heritage as God reemphasizes his status as a son of God. The visionary presentation also fulfills the second and third truths, in that Moses’s sonship gives him the right to receive needed revelation, which is also a demonstration both in the transmission and in the content of God’s *hesed*.

After Moses sees this incredible vision, “he greatly marveled and wondered: . . . And as he was left unto himself, he fell unto the earth . . . for the space of many hours” (vv. 8–10). Yet the effect of the vision is much more than merely physical. As Moses himself states, “Man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed” (v. 10). This vision, and the truths that led to the presentation of the vision, has so altered the suppositions that had structured his thinking that it leads to a conscious reality he “never had supposed.” Interestingly, Moses will be shown the exact same scenes in his second encounter with God, but his perspective and understanding will have changed again. The differences between the two encounters will reflect the new understandings of the vision Moses gains through his confrontation with the adversary.

### The Second Encounter: Moses and Satan

After God’s withdrawal, Moses is confronted with the adversary, who immediately commands Moses to worship him. Moses’s response comprises the next thirteen verses. Importantly, Moses is unaware that the entity confronting him is Satan. Unsure as to who is addressing him, Moses begins his response with truths he learned earlier from God: “Who art thou? For behold, I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten; and where is thy glory, that I should worship thee?” (v. 13).

This last question becomes a rhetorical one as Moses recognizes that whatever or whoever is before him, it is clearly not God because of the being’s lack of glory: “For behold, I could not look upon God, except his glory should could upon me . . . but I can look upon thee in the natural man” (v. 14). Though Moses does not know all things, the

knowledge gained through his early experience now becomes useful when confronted with the unknown. Moreover, he is able to discern differences through the added revelatory power of the Holy Ghost: “Blessed be the name of my God, for his Spirit hath not altogether withdrawn from me, or else where is thy glory, for it is darkness unto me?” (v. 15). His perception of the darkness comes not from his physical senses but from the discernment provided by the Spirit. In other words, Moses suggests that what he sees with his eyes and what he understands may, in fact, be two different things.

This discrepancy is better understood by reviewing the second half of the encounter in verses 19–23 as Satan reveals a powerful, vengeful, and destructive persona. Though this event is often characterized as a temper tantrum on the part of the adversary, to view it this way belittles the experience.<sup>16</sup> Instead, this is a calculated presentation meant to terrify Moses into inaction: “And it came to pass that Moses began to fear exceedingly; and as he began to fear, he saw the bitterness of hell” (v. 20). Similarly, Joseph Smith describes this aspect of the adversary in his own account, where he felt to give himself up to utter destruction.<sup>17</sup> In both cases, Satan’s attack was meant to terrify the individual in the hope that they would give up their attempt to engage with God. That the ploy fails in both accounts does not take away from the efficacy of this approach. Fear is one of Satan’s most prominent and powerful tools of persuasion.<sup>18</sup>

This second persona must contrast with the earlier persona he first presented before Moses since the terrible, frightening persona comes after Moses and Satan have already engaged in communication. Satan’s demand that Moses worship him suggests that his appearance would have been awe-inspiring. Moses’s statement in verse 15, that the darkness is perceived only through the spirit and not the physical eyes, suggests that Satan had appeared in a form in which light was discernable physically. We are told elsewhere that Satan can take the form of an angel of light, counterfeiting the glory of God by surrounding himself in a mantle of light.<sup>19</sup> For those who rely on only their physical senses, they would see a being remarkably similar to other divine beings. This deception creates a pattern of response for other deceitful situations in which one reacts to the way things seem instead of the way things are.<sup>20</sup>

Satan’s desire that we not recognize truth is reflected in his desire that Moses worship him. Though the Hebrew word translated as *worship* in the Old Testament refers to the physical activity of bowing down before someone, the English word is made of the root *worth* and

the suffix *-ship*. The suffix denotes the state of an object or individual; *worth* means the value recognized for an object or person. The noun *worship*, then, is a state of worth, the reverence offered to one in a state of worth; while the verb *to worship* means to recognize the value of the individual. Certainly, worship brings about the recognition of God’s worth regarding our own salvation. He is deemed worthy because of what he is able to provide for us. Yet as we worship God, we recognize God’s own intrinsic worth, regardless of what he provides for us.

In Alma 33:3, the prophet Zenos states that worship is prayer. This describes not only the rite that is often associated with the concept of worship but also the means by which the recognition of God’s worth is realized. As we pray and enter into a personal relationship with God, we recognize both his value in our salvation and his personal worth as an individual being. Moreover, because prayer is the primary, fundamental means of receiving personal revelation, it is the primary means by which any truth, particularly the truth of one’s intrinsic worth, is given. As such, prayer becomes the principle means by which we realize that God discerns our own individual worth as well.

This is exactly what Moses suggests in verses 15 and 16 as the relationship between worship and the truth of our being is highlighted: “And I can judge between thee and God; for God said unto me: Worship God; . . . Thou art after the similitude of mine Only Begotten.” Moses recognizes that it is because he is in the similitude of Christ, a son of God, that God desires him to worship and to recognize his worth, thereby demonstrating our ability to gain and comprehend truth. The commandment to worship is directly tied to our understanding of who we really are.

At this point, Moses synthesizes the truths given earlier and extrapolates upon the causal relationship between glory and revelation. Because God’s glory has rested upon Moses, he can discern between God and Satan, and he desires further communication with God: “And again Moses said: I will not cease to call upon God, I have other things to inquire of him: for his glory has been upon me, wherefore I can judge between him and thee. Depart hence, Satan” (v. 18). It is God’s glory, particularly the truth revealed by the Holy Ghost, that gives Moses the means to see through Satan’s superficial light to the darkness beneath.<sup>21</sup>

Moses worships God by seeking him out to learn more truth and becoming more like him. Recognizing that Satan cannot do this, Moses commands him to depart. By worshipping God even while being threatened, Moses demonstrates that he not only knows truth,

but he also knows how to utilize truth and therefore how to exercise real power. In this, then, he demonstrates his divine heritage as one who knows truth and changes things by the power of truth.

### The Third Encounter: Moses and God Again

Following his confrontation with the adversary in which he learned to recognize the difference between truth and deception, Moses again experiences the glory of God: “And it came to pass that when Satan had departed from the presence of Moses, that Moses lifted up his eyes unto heaven, being filled with the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son; And calling upon the name of God, he beheld his glory again, for it was upon him” (vv. 24–25). Though Moses has experienced the glory of God before, his experience with the adversary prepares him to receive even greater truth.

“*Blessed art thou.*” God begins by declaring that Moses is blessed because he has been chosen: “Blessed art thou, Moses, for I, the Almighty, have chosen thee” (v. 25). Earlier Moses was told he could receive revelation because he was a son; now he is told that he is blessed because he is chosen. Though the term is used to describe a general state of being in the Lord’s favor, it is also used to describe those who have obtained a promise of exaltation by exhibiting the same qualities as God. The Beatitudes, for instance, outline the promises leading to exaltation based on a set of individual qualities that must be acquired.<sup>22</sup>

One such individual who obtains this blessed state by exhibiting divine qualities is Nephi, who is told: “Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou hast done; . . . And now, because thou hast done this with such unwearyingness, behold, I will bless thee forever” (Helaman 10:4–5). Andrew C. Skinner points out that this blessed state refers to Nephi’s calling and election having been made sure, receiving the promise of eternal life as a result of his personal righteousness.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, because he has exhibited divine characteristics, Nephi is given power reminiscent of God’s own: “I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word” (Helaman 10:5).

Like Nephi, Moses obtains a state of blessedness characterized by his reception of the power of God: “Blessed art thou, Moses, for I, the Almighty, have chosen thee, and thou shalt be made stronger than many waters; for they shall obey thy command as if thou wert God” (v. 25). This blessed state comes about only after the trial with the adversary when Moses proved himself and exercised the divine gifts of

revelation. His personal righteousness is demonstrated in his worthiness to receive and then to follow the Holy Ghost; thus he, like Nephi, is blessed with the power of God to control water. While Moses’s use of this power readily reminds the reader of the parting of the Red Sea,<sup>24</sup> God’s power over water is also demonstrated in the Creation of the earth, as will be explained later, thereby beginning the means by which Moses can truly understand his work.

“*Thou shalt deliver my people.*” With the power to accomplish the work assigned to him, Moses is given more detailed instructions concerning that work: “And lo, I am with thee, even unto the end of thy days; for thou shalt deliver my people from bondage, even Israel my chosen” (v. 26). Earlier, he had simply been told there was a work for him and that the work was somehow connected to the fact that he was in similitude of Christ. Now the work is explained, and he can begin to understand how his work is in similitude of Christ. To the reader, it becomes immediately apparent that it is in the work of deliverance that Moses and Christ truly reflect one another. Moses seeks to transform God’s children through deliverance from the forces of sin and uncleanness like Christ,<sup>25</sup> and, like Christ, Moses’s work continues through later dispensations.<sup>26</sup>

Associated with this work is a promise in which God declares that he will be with Moses always. Significantly, this promise is given after Moses experienced a separation from God’s presence and learned that even though the physical presence of God may have withdrawn and the glory was no longer visible, God was still present through his Spirit. Thus, the true meaning of this promise can now be fully appreciated by Moses. President Boyd K. Packer, speaking on the subject as to whether Apostles literally see God, says that the witness of the Spirit is stronger than anything witnessed physically.<sup>27</sup> As we see with Moses, physical senses can be deceived and knowledge gained from that deception is flawed. The Spirit, on the other hand, testifies of truth, revealing the way things really are, not as they seem to be. It is in this manner that Moses now comprehends God’s statement, “Lo, I am with thee” (v. 26).

One last truth is revealed to Moses within the description of his work. Like Moses, Israel too is given the designation of “chosen.” Israel comprises the sons and daughters of God with all the attendant blessings and rights. However, the biblical record suggests that Israel rarely lives up to these rights and blessings. Still, Moses must know this truth, that Israel is of “chosen” status, or has the potential of being such, to perform his work of deliverance correctly. Like Christ, who

performs the Atonement because he knows who we really are, Moses is able to deliver Israel by knowing who they really are.

*“There was not a particle of it which he did not behold.”* Following the presentation of the above truths, Moses again experiences a vision of the earth and its inhabitants, but with a significant difference: “Moses cast his eyes and beheld the earth, yea, even all of it; and there was not a particle of it which he did not behold, discerning it by the spirit of God” (v. 27). The information that Moses encounters at this point is staggering. Research shows that the human brain is capable of receiving only a limited amount of information before either getting rid of the information or ignoring the stimuli.<sup>28</sup> The human body simply cannot handle that much sensory input, thus the significance of Moses’s account: not only does he perceive the earth, but also every particle that makes up the earth while retaining his consciousness, which suggests he is not just seeing, but comprehending and internalizing this vast amount of information.

Moses is able to experience this vast amount of information by “discerning it by the spirit of God” (v. 27). We have already seen that the Holy Ghost plays an important role in the reception of truth, now it is shown here to be the means by which Moses is able to experience the very way in which God sees truth. Moses’s capacity to learn and understand has increased, as well as the physical stamina needed to experience such revelations. Unlike before, Moses is able to retain his consciousness, though greater knowledge is given. His increased capacity allows him to comprehend an amount of information that only God can comprehend. In other words, Moses, having been told that he would have power like God, is now given the opportunity not to just know but also to think and discern as God does. He is given insight not only to the knowledge but also to the very manner in which a divine being perceives and comprehends the cosmos. In so doing, Moses gains the power of such a being.

The relationships between knowledge, salvation, and godhood are best described by Joseph Smith who tells us that “in knowledge there is power.”<sup>29</sup> Elsewhere he tells us that “a man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge.”<sup>30</sup> Finally, Joseph Smith teaches that “God has more power than all other beings, because he has greater knowledge.”<sup>31</sup> Thus, the final step to Moses truly comprehending his relationship with God and the manner in which he is in a similitude of Christ is by experiencing not just the knowledge but the way in which such knowledge is perceived or understood. Moses learns how God sees and thus can exercise the power of God.

*“For behold, this is my work and my glory.”* This change in perception so affects Moses that it leads him to ask, “Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them?” (v. 30). The question is made up of two requests: (1) the purpose behind the Creation (“why are these things so”) and (2) how the Creation came about (“by what thou madest them”). God’s answer makes up the remainder of the chapter, indeed the rest of the book of Moses.

God’s response begins in verse 31: “For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.” Though God does not explain here in detail why the Creation happened, he does reveal that it happened “for mine own purpose.” Moses will get a better understanding of this answer later on in the conversation. The second request is also answered: “And by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth” (v. 32). This response resonates in Moses since similar language was used to describe both him and his assigned work. Like Christ, Moses is God’s son; like Christ, he possesses the power of God; like Christ, his work is creative in purpose; and finally, like Christ, it is because he is God’s heir that he is given the work of creation and deliverance.<sup>32</sup>

God then states that these truths concern not just this world but all of the creations God has been involved with: “And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten” (v. 33). Though similar to the declaration concerning this earth, this statement reflects the unfathomable number of God’s creations. The same concept is repeated in verse 35: “There are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man.” God states again in verse 37, “The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man.” In each case, the vastness of God’s creations is emphasized and, if left by itself, leaves the impression of an incomprehensible separation between both our experience and our existence and God’s.

This apparent gulf was recognized by Moses in the first encounter with God as he realized his own insignificance, his own nothingness, in light of God’s power. Though he was told that he was God’s son, that sense of smallness and nothingness is what registered when the glory of God withdrew. Now in the second meeting with God, Moses is again confronted with this gulf. But Moses can make sense of the paradox between the vastness of God’s creations and God’s individual awareness of every little thing because he had experienced something similar

when he viewed the entirety of this earth while perceiving every single particle. So it is with his own experience that Moses can understand God's claim following each declaration of uncountable creation: "All things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them. . . . They are numbered unto me, for they are mine" (vv. 35, 37).

With this, God now goes back and adds insight to the first answer: "For mine purpose." In verse 39 he tells Moses, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." By now, the cumulative effect of truth upon truth allows Moses to understand the implications of this statement. The endless nature of the creations and the awareness of all things are to bring to pass the exaltation of man. This is his purpose behind the Creation, to bring others to the same state as himself. This work culminates in recognizing that all mankind, like Moses, can become chosen and blessed sons and daughters of God. By knowing this, Moses can understand how the work of God does not differ, except perhaps in scale, from his own work. By experiencing the manner in which truths build upon one another in his encounters, Moses comes to understand exactly what it means to be a son of God.

And it is at this point that Moses 1 becomes applicable for us today as it provides a pattern of experiences in gaining and understanding knowledge that leads to salvation. It begins with the reception of basic truths, namely who we are and what we are to do, followed by the experiences with adversity and trial where those truths are tested and we are challenged as to the way things seem versus the way they are. In this manner, our salvation is worked out through our acquisition of knowledge. During this process, we understand that God's promise that he is always with us is true and that he is ready to provide revelation for us at any time if we remain worthy. Finally, the successful passing of the trials of mortality allows us to experience eternal life and godhood by knowing who we really are and what our work really is. There we find that the work we have been performing is in fact the same work that God himself is engaged in. Thus, one of the more important legacies of Moses is that all can come to comprehend God and the truths that define this existence and, in so doing, understand our own glory.<sup>33</sup> **RE**

## Notes

1. See Rodney Turner, "The Visions of Moses (Moses 1)," in *Studies in Scripture: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt

Lake City: Randall Book, 1985), 44: "Its central theme is the glory of God—the Father's continuing increase in it, his desire to endow his children with it, and Satan's efforts to rob men of it."

2. The Hebrew word translated as "glory" is *kabod*, which means "weightiness" or "heaviness" and is also used to describe the physical light associated with God's presence.

3. Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Kings 8:10–11. In Isaiah 6, the prophet describes the cloud or smoke that fills the temple denoting God's presence. In light of this, it is possible the smoke from the incense lit on the altar standing before the veil in the temple may have represented the Shekinah. See Kjeld Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 38 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1986), 82–83.

4. In Acts 2, the presence of the Shekinah falls on the disciples of Christ and marks the beginning of the public ministry after Christ's Resurrection. It is possible that this physical manifestation of the Shekinah on the Apostles may have led to the three thousand individuals joining the Church. Recognizing the Shekinah on these men instead of on the temple, the pilgrimaging Jews would have physical evidence that God rested on these men, not at the temple.

5. This event has been discussed numerous times in many different sources. For an excellent review see Milton J. Backman Jr. and Robert L. Millet, "Heavenly Manifestations in the Kirtland Temple," in *Studies in Scripture: The Doctrine and Covenants*, ed. by Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1984), 417–22.

6. In his analysis of this chapter, Turner recognizes that "glory" is much more than the mere physical phenomenon, but immediately following this, he discusses the manifestations of glory as light. He concludes his discussion with "glory, being pure divine energy" (49). In other words, glory becomes associated only with the manifestation of light and radiance; the aspect of glory with truth, while recognized, is not discussed; see Turner, "The Visions of Moses," 46–49.

7. See J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 255, 258: "Familiar household relationships provided the pattern not only for governmental authority and obedience but also for the organization of production and consumption and for the integration of the gods with human society. . . . At all levels in the political hierarchy, from the smallest city to the largest empire, political superiors were the 'masters' and 'fathers' of their subordinates, who were their 'servants' and 'sons'; similarly political equals were 'brothers.'"

8. F. Charles Fensham, "Father and Son Terminology for Treaty and Covenant," in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. by Hans Geodicke (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 121–35; Paul Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant: A Comprehensive Review of Covenant Formulae from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1982), 98–108.

9. The same pattern for sonship is reflected in Moses 6, where Adam's covenantal worthiness leads to God's recognition of Adam as a son: "And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity. Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons" (vv. 67–68).

10. The right to revelation by virtue of our relationship to God was addressed at the April 2007 general conference: “Speak with the Lord in prayer. Cultivate kinship with Him” (Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, 64).

11. Jerald R. Johansen, *A Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price: A Jewel among the Scriptures* (Bountiful, UT: Horizon Publishers, 1985), 36: “Moses must have been told a great deal about the Savior, Jesus Christ, and about his mission on earth, and how faithfully Christ would fulfill this work, for when the Lord reminded Moses that he was in the ‘similitude of mine Only Begotten,’ Moses seemed never to forget this great concept. As the Savior does and will do his work, so Moses could also fulfill his assignment.”

12. Though the phrase “grace and truth” is found in the New Testament (John 1:14, 17), the phrase in Moses 1 would have been written in biblical Hebrew; thus to begin to comprehend the phrase, it is necessary to understand the original biblical Hebrew.

13. See 2 Samuel 15:20; see also Psalms 25:10, 61:7, 85:10, 86:15, 89:14; Proverbs 3:3, 14:22, 16:6, 20:2. It is also found once in Alma 5:48.

14. See Nelson Glueck, *Hesed in the Bible* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1967), 68–69: “The relationship between God and people was one of mutual rights and duties with *hesed* as the norm of conduct. It was a covenant-alliance based on *hesed* and existing because of *hesed*. . . . The *hasidim* fulfill their covenantal obligations in that they practice *hesed*. . . . They can be, and remain, *hasidim* only as long as they comport themselves according to the sacred covenant concluded at Sinai and as long as they practice *hesed*.”

15. The relationship between Christ’s work and Moses’s work may be reflected in the only prophecy we have of Moses in the Old Testament. In Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses prophesies that “the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.” Then again in verse 18, Moses recounts the Lord telling him, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.” This prophecy was understood to have been fulfilled by Christ according to the prophets and apostles of the New Testament dispensation. In John 1, John the Baptist is asked whether he is the Christ, Elijah, or “that prophet” prophesied by Moses (v. 21). Later, in John 6:14, following the feeding of the five thousand, those who had gathered and partaken of the miracle said, “This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.” (Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, The Anchor Bible 29 [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966], 234: “*The Prophet who is to come into the world*. Most likely this a reference to the expectation of the Prophet-like-Moses, for in vs. 31 these people draw a connection between the food supplied by Jesus and the manna given by Moses” [234].) In Acts, the prophecy is referred to twice. In chapter 3, Peter quotes the Deuteronomic verse suggesting that the prophecy had been fulfilled in Christ, and in Acts 7, Stephen also quotes the prophecy in order to demonstrate that the Moses as recorded in the scriptures was not understood by the Israel of his day, nor of Stephen’s since Stephen’s Israel did not recognize the fulfillment of the prophecy (see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible 31 [New York: Doubleday, 1997], 289–90, 379–80). Joseph Smith himself confirms that this prophecy refers to Christ. In Joseph Smith—History 1:40, he recounts the scriptures quoted by Moroni, including Acts 3:22–23: “In addition to these, he quoted the eleventh

chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled. He quoted also the third chapter of Acts, twenty-second and twenty-third verses, precisely as they stand in our New Testament. He said that that prophet was Christ.”

16. See Turner, “The Visions of Moses,” 54–55.

17. Joseph Smith—History 1:16: “But, exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction.”

18. See Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 27: “The actions of Satan betray one of his methods to achieve his way: that of intimidation. It worked—momentarily—when ‘Moses began to fear exceedingly’ (Moses 1:20).” A relationship exists between fear and ignorance; it is lack of knowledge that leads to the paralysis often associated with fear.

19. See 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 128:20; 129:8. See also Turner, “The Visions of Moses,” 53: “At times the prince of darkness ‘transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light’ in an effort to deceive with simulated glory. By such means he has duped the world.”

20. Massimo Polidoro, “The Magic in the Brain: How Conjuring Works to Deceive Our Minds,” in *Tall Tales About the Mind & Brain: Separating Fact from Fiction*, ed. Sergio Della Sala (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 36–44: “Some of the most formidable illusions rely on the human tendency to reach a conclusion with insufficient data. ‘Seeing is believing’ is an old truism. ‘I saw it with my own eyes’ is an expression of confidence about the reality of what was experienced. People learn to trust their sensory experiences, and usually that is a practical approach. Their interpretation of the world, based on analysis of incoming sensory information, is accurate enough for most purposes. But how can anyone know that what he sees or hears is ‘reality’? Our brain is not blank or passive. . . . As experiences multiply, they set up certain expectancies in terms of what is valued and what is rejected. Past experiences bias the brain toward experiencing the world in a certain way. We learn to perceive things in certain ways which allows us to function appropriately in the physical world around us. This, however, can also lead us to wrong conclusions” (38). Part of the problem is not just what is observed, but how that observation is stored within memory. It has been well attested that what one witnesses is not necessarily what one remembers.

21. See Turner, “The Visions of Moses,” 53–54: “A knowledge of the genuine enables us to more easily recognize its imitations. Lacking this knowledge, we have no reliable basis of judgment. Being ignorant of true glory, most of mankind is, therefore, easily deceived by the devil’s counterfeits. . . . Moses could discern Satan’s veiled darkness because he had experienced true light. To a lesser degree, this same ability extends to all who ‘have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide.’”

22. See John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 59: “In ancient sources of this genre, the word *blessed* ‘designates a state of being that pertains to the gods and can be awarded to humans postmortem. In ancient Egyptian religion the term plays an important role in the cult of Osiris, in which it refers to a deceased person who has been before the court of the gods of the netherworld, who has declared there



his innocence, and who has been approved to enter the paradise of Osiris, even to become an Osiris himself.”

23. See Andrew C. Skinner, “Nephi’s Ultimate Encounter with Deity: Some Thoughts on Helaman 10,” in *Helaman through 3 Nephi 8: According to Thy Word*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992), 115–27.

24. See Johansen, *Commentary*, 39.

25. Not only was Moses a deliverer physically, but he also sought to prepare his people spiritually to enter into God’s rest, doing all that he could to sanctify his people to see God’s face and providing the law which was to lead to spiritual transformation (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–24).

26. In the New Testament, Moses is one of the individuals present during the Mount of Transfiguration, along with his fellow servants Elijah and Elias. Though the scriptures are silent as to what his purpose was exactly at the mount, in this dispensation Moses was one of three beings who were responsible for restoring priesthood keys. Doctrine and Covenants 110 records his appearance to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, again in the company of Elijah and Elias, committing to them the “keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north” (v. 11).

27. Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, April 1971, 122–25.

28. Richard F. Thompson and Stephen A. Madigan, *Memory: The Key to Consciousness* (Washington DC: Joseph Henry, 2005), 27–28: “Actually, all of us possess a high-capacity, high-resolution visual memory, one that holds a lot more information. . . . This is the good news. The bad news is that for most of us, our visual short-term memory lasts only about a fifth of a second. . . . Visual information enters a sensory register or ‘iconic’ memory where it is held in detail for a brief period. Some of this information is transferred to a short-term memory store if it is attended to, and some may even get transferred to a more permanent long-term memory; but much information from sensory memory is not attended to, is not stored, and is simply lost.” See also, Alan Parkin, *Memory: A Guide for Professionals* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 17–18: “Given that there is not an infinite capacity to expand the brain there has inevitably been pressure on space which, in turn, has meant that mental processes must be organized efficiently. From this perspective a memory system that stored everything away would be inefficient because of the large amount of space it would take up storing away information that we would never need.”

29. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 5:340.

30. Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:588.

31. Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:340.

32. In Moses 2:2, Moses is shown the creation of the earth in which the unorganized matter from which the cosmos was made is symbolically represented as “the deep” and “the water.” This “chaos” is what was transformed into a cosmic state through the creative power of God. Thus, Moses’s reception of such power would have been reminiscent of God’s creative power. Like God, he too would have been involved in a creation. The relationship between the Creation account and the deliverance of Israel is explored in Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 87–88: “The overthrow of the Egyptian host in

the sea is singled out to symbolize Israel’s deliverance, Yahweh’s victory. Later, an equation is fully drawn between the ‘drying up of the sea’ and the Creator’s defeat of Rahab or Yamm; the historical event is thereby given cosmic or primordial meaning. . . . It is highly likely that the role of the sea in the Exodus story was singled out and stressed precisely because of the ubiquitous motif of the cosmogonic battle between the creator god and [the] sea.” See also Bernhard W. Anderson, *Creation versus Cosmos: The Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1967), 37: “It is not accidental that the Second Isaiah, whose message recapitulates the Exodus tradition, speaks of Yahweh as Israel’s creator, and recalls the time when, at the Red Sea, he acted to create.”

33. Smith, *History of the Church*, 6:308: “Having a knowledge of God, we begin to know how to approach him, and how to ask so as to receive an answer. When we understand the character of God, and know how to come to him, he begins to unfold the heavens to us, and to tell us all about it. When we are ready to come to him, he is ready to come to us.”



A roundtable discussion on the *Joseph Smith Papers* and the Doctrine and Covenants

Courtesy of Richard B. Crookston

# The Doctrine and Covenants: A Roundtable Discussion, Part I

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*Holzappel:* Many of you are editors on the *Joseph Smith Papers Project*. What do you see as the major contributions of this project?

**Woodford:** The *Joseph Smith Papers Project* will not only provide these core documents—these essential documents transcribed with annotations—but also explain the impact of the revelations in their context. In other words, the *Joseph Smith Papers project* provides not only a narrative history but also a documentary that will allow narrative to be written.

**Underwood:** Our particular volumes in the Documents series include the first hundred revelations dictated by Joseph Smith. Our assignment has been to make all the documents we deal with, including the revelation texts, understandable in their 1830s context. Often when people talk about using history to understand the Doctrine and Covenants, it boils down to, “Let’s talk about the setting of the revelation. What was the immediate context and setting?” Much less is done to actually interpret particular passages within the revelation in a historically nuanced way. Some of that is done in these volumes; some of it will be new and fresh and interesting. There is still more that can be done in the aftermath.

*Holzappel:* Could you each tell us a recent discovered insight that you gained regarding the Doctrine and Covenants, something fresh that you have come to realize or started to investigate?