

Intelligences - - Roberts' 70 lessons - short copy

B. H. Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology*, Second Year [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907-1912], part 1 lesson 1, p. 8-11.

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The Nature of Intelligencies: There is in that complex thing we call man, an intelligent entity, uncreated, self existent, indestructible, He—for that entity is a person; because, as we shall see, he is possessed of powers that go with personality only, hence that entity is “he,” not “it,”—he is eternal as God is; co-existent, in fact, with God; of the same kind of substance or essence with deity, though confessedly inferior in degree of intelligence and power to God. One must needs think that the name of this eternal entity—what God calls him—conveys to the mind some idea of his nature. He is called an “intelligence;” and this I believe is descriptive of him. That is, intelligence is the entity's chief characteristic. If this be a true deduction, then the entity must be self-conscious, and “others—conscious,” that is, he must have the power to distinguish himself from other things—the “me” from the “not me.” He must have the power of deliberation, by which he sets over one thing against another; with power also to form a judgment that this or that is a better thing or state than this or that. Also there goes with this idea of intelligence a power of choosing one thing instead of another, one state rather than another. These powers are inseparably connected with any idea that may be formed of an intelligence. One cannot conceive of intelligence existing without these qualities any more

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than he can conceive of an object existing in space without dimensions. The phrase “the light of truth” [Doc. & Cov., Sec. xciii.] is given in one of the revelations as the equivalent for an “intelligence” here discussed; by which is meant to be understood, as I think, that intelligent entities perceive the truth, are conscious of the truth, they know that which is, hence “the light of truth,” “intelligence.” Let it be observed that I say nothing as to the mode of the existence of these intelligences, beyond the fact of their eternity. But of their form, or the manner of their subsistence nothing, so far as I know, has been revealed, and hence we are without means of knowing anything about the modes of their existence beyond the fact of it, and the essential qualities they possess, which already have been pointed out.

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The intelligent entity inhabiting a spirit-body make up the spiritual personage. It is

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this spirit life we have so often thought about, and sang about. In this state of existence occurred the spirit's “primeval childhood;” here spirits were “nurtured” near the side of the heavenly Father, in his “high and glorious place;” thence spirits were sent to earth to unite spirit-elements

with earth-elements—in some way essential to a fulness of glory and happiness (Doc. & Cov. Sec. xciii: 32-35)—and to learn the lessons earth-life had to teach. The half awakened recollections of the human mind may be chiefly engaged with scenes, incidents and impressions of that spirit life; but that does not argue the non-existence of the uncreated intelligences who preceded the begotten spiritual personage as so plainly set forth in the revelations of God.

The difference, then, between “spirits” and “intelligencies,” as here used, is this: Spirits are uncreated intelligencies inhabiting spiritual bodies; while “intelligencies,” pure and simple, are intelligent entities, but unembodied in either spirit bodies or bodies of flesh and bone. They are uncreated, self-existent entities, possessed of “self-consciousness,” and “other-consciousness”—they are conscious of the “me” and the “not me”; they possess powers of discrimination, (without which the term “intelligence” would be a solecism) they discern between the evil and the good; between the “good” and “the better.” They possess “will” or “freedom,”—within certain limits at least—the power to determine upon a given course of conduct, as against any other course of conduct. This intelligence “can think his own thoughts, act wisely or foolishly, do right or wrong.” To accredit an “intelligence” with fewer or less important powers than these, would be to discredit him as an “intelligence” altogether.

B. H. Roberts, *The Truth, The Way, The Life* (Provo, Utah, BYU Studies, 1994), 98.

Do these higher intelligences of the stellar universe and planetary systems have so developed in themselves the quality of love that makes it possible to think of them as being willing to sacrifice themselves--to empty themselves in sacrifice to bring to pass the welfare of others whom they may esteem to be the undeveloped intelligences of the universe and may they not be capable of giving the last full measure of sacrifice to bring to pass the higher development of the "lowly" when no other means of uplift can be serviceable? Is the great truth operative among these untold millions of intelligences that greater love hath no intelligence for another than this, that he would give his life in the service of kindred intelligences when no other means of helpfulness is possible?