

Origin, Object, and Destiny of Women

by

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THE "*Latter Day Saints*" have often been ridiculed on account of their belief in the pre-existence of spirits, and in marrying for time and for all eternity, both being Bible doctrines. We have often been requested to give our views in relation to these principles, but considering the things of the Kingdom belonged to the children of the Kingdom, therefore not meet to give them to those without. But being very politely requested by a lady a few days since, (a member of the church) to answer the following questions, we could not consistently refuse;-viz., "Where did I come from? What is my origin? What am I doing here? Whither am I going? and What is my destiny, after having obeyed the truth, if faithful to the end?"

For her benefit, and all others concerned, we will endeavor to answer the questions in brief, as we understand them. The reason will be apparent for our belief in the pre-existence of spirits, and in marrying for time and for all eternity.

Lady-whence comest thou? Thine origin? What art thou doing here? Whither art thou going, and what is thy destiny? Declare unto me if thou hast understanding? Knowest thou not, that thou art a spark of Deity, struck from the fire of his eternal blaze, and brought forth in the midst of eternal burning?

Knowest thou not that eternities ago, thy spirit, pure and holy, dwelt in thy Heavenly Father's bosom, and in his presence, and with thy mother, one of the Queens of heaven, surrounded by thy brother and sister spirits in the spirit world, among the Gods. That as thy spirit beheld the scenes transpiring there, and thou growing in intelligence, thou sawest worlds upon worlds organized and peopled with thy kindred spirits, took upon them tabernacles, died, were resurrected, and received their exaltation on the redeemed worlds they once dwelt upon. Thou being willing and anxious to imitate them, waiting and desirous to obtain a body, a resurrection and exaltation also, and having obtained permission, thou made a covenant with one of thy kindred spirits to be thy guardian angel while in mortality, also with two others, male and female spirits, that thou wouldst come and take a tabernacle through their lineage, and become one of their offspring. You also choose a kindred spirit whom you loved in the spirit world, (and had permission to come to this planet and take a tabernacle) to be your head, stay, husband, and protector on the earth, and to exalt you in the eternal worlds. All these were arranged, likewise the spirits that should tabernacle through your lineage. Thou longed, thou sighed, and thou prayed to thy Father in heaven for the time to arrive when thou couldst come to this earth, which had fled and fell from where it was first organized, near the

planet Kolob. Leave thy father and mother's bosoms, and all thy kindred spirits, come to earth, take a tabernacle, and imitate the deeds of, those you had seen exalted before you.

At length the time arrived, and thou heard the voice of thy Father, saying, "go daughter to yonder lower world, and take upon thee a tabernacle, and work out thy probation with fear and trembling, and rise to exaltation. But daughter, remember you go on this condition, that is, You are to forget all things you ever saw, or knew to be transacted in the spirit world; you are not to know or remember anything concerning the same that you have beheld transpire here; but you must go and become one of the most helpless of all beings that I have created, while in your infancy; subject to sickness, pain, tears, mourning, sorrow and death. But when truth shall touch the cords of your heart they shall vibrate; then intelligence shall illuminate your mind, and shed its luster in your soul, and you shall begin to understand the things you once knew, but which had gone from you; you shall then begin to understand and know the object of your creation. Daughter, go, and be faithful in your second estate, keep it as faithful as thou hast thy first estate.

Thy spirit filled with joy and thanksgiving rejoiced in thy Father, and rendered praise to his holy name, and the spirit world resounded in anthems of praise and rejoicing to the Father of Spirits. Thou bade father, mother, and all, farewell, and along with thy guardian angel, thou came on this terraqueous globe. The spirits thou had chosen to come and tabernacle through their lineage, and your Head having left the spirit world some years previous.) Thou came a spirit pure and holy, thou hast taken upon thee a tabernacle, thou hast obeyed the truth, and thy guardian angel ministers unto thee and watches over thee; Thou hast chosen him you loved in the spirit world to be thy companion. Now, crowns, thrones, exaltations and dominions are in reserve for thee in the eternal worlds, and the way is opened for thee to return back into the presence of thy Heavenly Father, if thou will only abide by and walk in a celestial law, fulfil the designs of thy creation, and hold out to the end. That when mortality is laid in the tomb, you may go down to your grave in peace, arise in glory, and receive your everlasting reward in the resurrection of the just, along with thy head and husband. Thou will be permitted to pass by the Gods and angels who guard the gates, and onward, upward to thy exaltation in a celestial world among the Gods. To be a *Priestess Queen* unto thy Heavenly Father and a glory to thy husband and offspring, to bear the souls of men, to people other worlds, (as thou didst bear their tabernacles in mortality,) while eternity goes and eternity comes; and if you will receive it, lady, this is eternal life. And herein' is the saying of the apostle Paul fulfilled, "that the man is not without the woman in the Lord, neither is the woman without the man in the Lord." "That man is the head of the woman, and the glory of the man is the woman." Hence, thine origin, the object of thy creation, and thy ultimate destiny, if faithful. Lady, the cup is within thy reach, drink, then the heavenly draught, and live. (John Taylor, editor, *The Mormon* N.Y. August 29, 1857)

Later, President Taylor used the same phrase, “struck from the fire of his eternal blaze” with reference to the men in the church.

John Taylor, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church, John Taylor* [Melchisedek Priesthood Manual, 2003] (Salt Lake City, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2001), p. 211-212. [Quoted from G. Homer Durham, *Gospel Kingdom* (1941) p. 1-3.]

Standing upon its broad platform, encircled by the mantle of truth, the man of God, by faith, peers into the future, withdraws the curtains of eternity unveils the mystery of the heavens, and through the dark vista of unnumbered years, beholds the purposes of the great Elohim, as they roll forth in all their majesty and power and glory. Thus standing upon a narrow neck of space, and beholding the past, present, and the future, he sees himself an eternal being claiming an affinity with God, a son of God, a spark of Deity struck from the fire of his eternal blaze. He looks upon the world and man, in all their various phases, knows his true interests, and with intelligence imparted by his Father Celestial, he comprehends their origin and destiny.

His intelligence, lit up by God and followed out, will be expansive as the world and spread through space; his law is the law of love; his rule, the rule of right to all. He loves his neighbor, and he does him good; he loves his God and therefore worships him; he sees the power of truth, which, like the light of God, spreads through all space, illuminates all worlds, and penetrates where men or angels, God or spheres are known; he clings to it. Truth is his helmet, buckler, shield, his rock, defense; his all in time and in eternity. Men call him a fool because he cannot be directed by their folly, nor follow in their erratic, truculent wake. But while they are grasping at shadows, he lays hold of the substance. While they are content with a rickety sprawling religion, fashionable for a time, but having nothing to do with eternity and smother the highest, noblest principles of man, he dare acknowledge God; and acknowledging him, he dare obey him and confess that faith which God has given to him. He grasps at all truths, human and divine. He has no darling dogma to sustain or favorite creed to uphold. He has nothing to lose but error, and nothing to gain but truth. He digs, labors, and searches for it as for hidden treasure; and while others are content with chaff and husks of straw, he seizes on the kernel, substance, the gist of all that's good, and clings to all that will ennoble and exalt the human family.

Other statements by John Taylor

John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom: Selections from the Writings and Discourses of John Taylor*, selected, arranged, and edited, with an introduction by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1941], 63.

“When the saint of God considers, and the visions of eternity are open to his view and the unalterable purposes of God are developed to his mind —— when he contemplates his true position before God, angels, and men, then he soars above the things of time and sense and bursts the cords that bind him to earthly objects. He contemplates God and his own destiny in the economy of heaven and rejoices in a blooming hope of an immortal glory.”

John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 8: 3-4.

“What is man, that thou are mindful of him?”

What is he? Let us look again and view him in another aspect. Why, he is an eternal being, and possesses within him a principle that is destined to exist “while life and thought and being last, or immortality endures.” What is he? He had his being in the eternal worlds; he existed before he came here. He is not only the son of man, but he is the son of God also. He is a God in embryo, and possesses within him a spark of that eternal flame which was struck from the blaze of God's eternal fire in the eternal world, and is placed here upon the earth that he may possess true intelligence, true light, true knowledge,—that he may know himself—that he may know God—that he may know something about what he was before he came here—that he may know something about what he is destined to enjoy in the eternal worlds—that he may be fully acquainted with his origin, with his present existence, and with his future destiny—that he may know something about the strength and weakness of human nature—that he may understand the divine law, and learn to conquer his passions, and bring into subjection every principle that is at variance with the law of God—that he may understand his true relationship to God; and finally, that he may learn how to subdue, to conquer, subject all wrong, seek after, obtain, and possess every true, holy, virtuous, and heavenly principle; and, as he is only a sojourner, that he may fulfil the measure of his creation, help himself and family, be a benefit to the present and future generations, and go back to God, having accomplished the work he came here to perform.

John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 21: 93 - 94.

God is our Father; we are his children. He has brought us into his covenant, and it is our privilege to go on from wisdom to wisdom, from intelligence to intelligence, from understanding of one principle to that of another, to go forward and progress in the development of truth until we can comprehend God. For we are his children, we are his sons and daughters, and he is our father. He has organized this Church in order that we may be educated in the principles of life, that we may comprehend those principles that exist in the bosom of God, that we may be able to teach our children correct principles, in order that we may be placed in a position whereby we can be assimilated in the likeness of our heavenly Father”

other related statements:

John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 24: 5 - 6.

Let me have a religion that will live in time, and exist whilst eternal ages roll along. That is the kind of religion I want, and if you like the other, all right, take it. But give me, if you please, the liberty to pursue happiness in my own way; if not I shall try to take it. I want none of those evanescent principles that vanish when time ceases. I profess to be an immortal being, as we all are. A spark of Deity, struck from the fire of His eternal blaze, dwells in us, a portion of that intelligence that dwells with the Gods; which, if we will follow out through the influence of the Holy Ghost, of which I have spoken, will bring us back again into the presence of God; and with us our wives, our children, and our associations. Godliness, indeed, as stated by the Apostle Paul, "is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come," and despite the ideas, the opposition and the contumely of ignorant and unenlightened men, we will rule and reign and triumph, not only in time but throughout the countless ages of eternity. That is the kind of religion that I want. I would not give a straw for the other; if other people like it, all well and good. I do not want to interrupt them. But they want to interrupt us; and they do it, many of them, though we treat them never so kindly. They seem to have a perfect mania on these points; they run wild about our private affairs.

John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 10: 131-32

Having received this knowledge [from the Holy Ghost], it operates the same upon all and hence the union that exists among us. It is the same in Canada, the same in the Northern States, the same in the Eastern States, the same in the Western States and the same in the Southern States; the same in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Denmark, Germany, the islands of the sea and the different parts of the earth wherever this seed has been sown and the Elders have gone forth in the name of Jesus Christ bearing the precious seeds of eternal life. Wherever that has rested in good hearts it has produced the same results, giving the same signs, if not the same degree of evidence, and this has cemented and united us together; it is the little leaven that begins to leaven the whole lump; it is a part of the Spirit of God—a living spark that is struck from the fire of his eternal blaze that has made itself manifest on the earth; it is the still small voice that whispers peace to the soul—the thing that Jesus spoke of when he said,—
 “My peace I give unto you; my peace I leave with you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there you may be also.”

They feel the peace that passeth all human understanding. They possess the Spirit of God, though they cannot always tell the whys and wherefores. It is not because a man is learned and polished after the learning of this world that he knows, but because he comprehends and listens

to the whisperings of the Spirit of God speaking peace to his bosom and giving him understanding that he is accepted of his Heavenly Father,—"I in thee and thou in me," &c. It is this which has drawn us together——this that has cemented and united us, that has led us from our homes to the position we now occupy in these mountains.

About his editorials, Brigham Young said:

With regard to the labours of brother Taylor in editing the paper called *The Mormon*, published in the city of New York, I have heard many remarks concerning the editorials in that paper, not only from Saints, but from those who do not profess to believe the religion we have embraced; and it is probably one of the strongest edited papers that is now published. I can say, as to its editorials, that it is one of the strongest papers ever published, so far as my information extends; and I have never read one sentence in them but what my heart could bid success to it and beat a happy response to every sentence that I have read or heard read. Brother Taylor, that is for you; and I believe that these are the feelings and the sentiments of all in this community who have perused that paper.

(*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 5: 123 - 124.)

That statement is also quoted in:

B. H. Roberts, *Life of John Taylor* Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1892], 271.

Preston Nibley, *The Presidents of the Church*, 13th ed., rev. and enl. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 84.)