

Light on the mountain, LeGrand Baker

July 1, 1991

My journal, such as it is, is full of cryptic little unintelligible notes whose words are carefully chosen to call things to my memory but to obscure their meaning to anyone else who might read them. Experiences like this one are recorded in that way. But this story belongs to you as much as to me, so, for your sake, I'll write it in words which are intended to convey, rather than to conceal their meaning.

Last Saturday, having decided to go to the mountains instead of to the temple, we drove to where Rock Canyon Trail junctures with the road above the camp ground, parked the jeep and began to walk. I marveled that you could go as slowly I do, and was grateful for that kindness. We were a strange pair. You, spry and alive, filled to overflowing with the physical and mental exuberance of youth, like a young deer being free in the forest; me, feeling no more graceful or agile than an old and pregnant cow. (Had you grown up on a farm as I did, you would find the contrasting imagery of a bounding deer and a wobbling old cow to be somewhat picturesque.)

When we reached the end of the canyon and saw an enormous bank of snow that looked like a toboggan run reaching from the canyon floor half way up the mountain peak, I sensed, before you said it, that that snow needed to be climbed. Also near where we stood there was a young aspen tree which had been bent over by the snow so that its trunk was parallel to the ground. It had all the essential qualities of a park bench, and it needed to be sat upon. I took to the tree-bench, you to the snow.

As I watched you, I smiled. Half way up you found two sticks, then with in each hand you sprinted on all fours up to the top of the snow. I wondered where you were going when you disappeared from my view, but when I heard the thunder of a rolling rock I understood that you

had discovered a steep way to the top of the cliff which dominated the canyon where I sat. I hoped the rock had come down by itself and that you had not accompanied it.

As I sat there listening intently for the sound of another rock which would indicate you were safely moving across the face of the steep ridge, a defiant scream shattered the silence and sent my senses reeling. My first reaction was to suppose that you had come face to face with an angry mountain lion and that each of you was telling the other to get out of the way. Then I realized that I recognized the sound and watched as one angry little squirrel chased another over the jagged rocks.

Still I listened, the sudden scream of the squirrels had tightened my nerves so I was no longer willing to let my body relax and enjoy the respite of my wait. I heard more rocks tumble down, these were smaller than the first and didn't roll so far. "Good, you are safe, at least for the present." Then I began to hear a whistling sound. I do not know the calls of all the mountain birds and thought at first it might be one of them, but when it came again I knew that it was not. The sound came from the wrong side of the canyon but echoes could account for that. I listened for your shout but could not hear it. I supposed you had come tumbling down with that last bunch of rocks and that the whistle was a cry for help.

I got up, picked up a stick I could use for climbing, and hurried toward the snow.

Then it occurred to me how absurd this action was. If you were hurt I would need help finding you. If you were not, my wandering off might accomplish nothing more than getting us separated so we would end up spending the rest of the afternoon trying to find each other. So I asked for instruction and learned that you were fine and that I should go back, park myself upon my tree, and enjoy the wait. I obeyed, calmed, relaxed, and appreciative.

After a while I heard your voice, looked to the top of the cliff and saw you waving your

arms. You shouted that I should continue up the trail and meet you "at the snow line." I shouted my assent, waved my arms, and started to walk.

It was a good distance to the "snow line." I walked slowly along the trail, stopping to enjoy the flowers and to watch a bumblebee, so I half expected to find you waiting for me when I arrived. You were not there so I looked about, discovered a comfortable rock on the east slope, and sat there where I could enjoy the warmth of the sun and where you could easily find me. I was not sorry you were not there because while I waited I had time to settle back and drink in the sweet, calm beauty of the mountains and the glow of the noontime sun.

Near the top ridge, far higher than I expected to see you, my eyes caught something moving. It was long and white. I watched for it again. This time when it moved I discovered there were two of them and they were your legs. You had on a dark green shirt and khaki knee pants. I could make out the shirt, but your pants were indistinguishable against the mountain; your white legs glistened in the sunlight. They would reach out, trying to find a secure place, retract, try again, move to the left, reach again. Then one would join the other, the green shirt, with the not-so-white arms and head attached, would come down to where the legs had been and the legs would explore for another place which might sustain the weight of your body. In this manner you worked your way down the steep mountain slope until you came to a long grey line two or three times as wide as you are tall. I supposed it was a slide of shale of slate which would be slippery and treacherous to cross. There you hesitated even longer than usual, your legs moved out to test the slippery rock, then the rest of you followed. I watched, concerned, but not worried. I said a short prayer reminding the Lord that he ought to be aware of your situation, then sat back to watch your descent as I enjoyed the warmth of the sunshine.

As I looked I noticed a light, a huge light that reached up higher than the top of the slope on which you sat, and down as low as the place where you would stop rolling should you tumble from your perch. The light seemed to be two merging spheres, but they overlapped each other, so it was hard to tell. At the top of (or perhaps above) the sphere of which you were the center the light was brighter and more concentrated. Its sphere extended down to include the place where you were inching your way across the slide. The bright center of that light was intelligent, loving and aware of everything you were doing. The power of that light held under its control the very rocks across which you slowly moved. It was not a brilliant light such as would obscure you from my view by its brightness. Neither was it like the light of the sun which was reflecting from the mountains. This was a peaceful, calm, powerful light of three dimensions. And I felt and understood that the light was all I could perceive of a living, loving, intelligent being. I could tell that you were the center of the lower part of the light, but I could not discover the outer limits of either sphere because the edges faded into each other or into the sunlight which reflected from the sky and the mountains. After a few minutes my capacity to see it diminished and the light disappeared, but my capacity to feel it remained for a few moments longer. After that, I understood that it was still there, as it had been there before I saw it.

I was given to understand that what I had seen was not an assurance that you would be safe but an explanation about why you were not in danger. I understood that even the rocks to which you trusted your weight were under the controlling influence of that light.

I continued to watch your descent until the mountain's incline became easy enough that you could stand and walk. When you came to where I waited I could feel again the dazzling exuberance of your youth and watched in joyful wonder as you skipped your way across the mountain.

I had some questions about that light.

One of the wondrous things about the Spirit of the Lord is that after it teaches one what questions he should ask, it waits awhile before it teaches what the answers are. That interim between the question and the answer is a revivifying time for me.

My first questions were:

What was that light? Or should it be, What were those lights? Answer: "Those" is correct. There were two great balls of light, Darren was the center of the lower one.

What were the sources of the light? Answer: Of the lower one, Darren; of the brighter one above it, guardian angel.

Is "angel" singular or plural as I sensed? No answer. I still don't know whether the plurality I felt was you plus one angel or more angels than one.

That light exerted influence on all that was within its sphere. Who controlled that influence? Answer: Darren, in part, but mostly the angel. In time those roles will be reversed.

Then followed some waiting time as I squared that information with what else I know. That kind of squaring always generates more questions.

Is it true then, that what is really Darren is, as I saw it, the physical person plus the light which surrounds him? Yes.

Is that light capable of reaching out, embracing, and communicating with eternity? Yes, ultimately.

Before that occurs, what happens when Satan or his followers tempt Darren? Dark spots in the light.

If they should overcome him? The light and dark will reach the equilibrium Darren wishes them to reach. It could range from mostly light to only darkness with no light remaining. Why is his light made vulnerable to darkness? No answer.

Yesterday, Sunday, I was preparing my Sunday School lesson and discovered that John 13-15 may be read as a commentary on or an explanation of 3 Ne. 12: 8-12. I was reading the passages about the pure in heart seeing God when I recalled that Ether 12 said something important about that. I read verses 27 and 37-9.

And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them. . . .

And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee, thou hast been faithful; wherefore, thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong, even unto the sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father. [The weakness is not being clean, being subject to temptation, not being able to return to or to retain the presence of God.] And now I, Moroni, bid farewell unto the Gentiles, yea, and also unto my brethren whom I love, until we shall meet before the judgment-seat of Christ, where all men shall know that my garments are not spotted with your blood. [The weakness is "the darkness in them" described by President Jedediah M. Grant. (J.D. 4:136) To be unweak is to be "holy and without spot." (Moroni 10:33)] And then shall ye know that I have seen Jesus, and that he hath talked with me face to face, and that he told me in **plain humility**, even as a man telleth another in mine own language, concerning these things;

That was the answer to my question:

Why is light vulnerable to darkness? Answer: "I give unto men weakness that they may be humble."

How do you dispel the darkness? By exercising the light.

What does that mean? By first telling the darkness to go away. Then by praying to the Father that he will replace the vulnerability with humility, that one may be as the Saviour, "holy and without spot," able to communicate "in plain humility."

Thank you for that experience and for the fun of being on the mountain with you,

With my love,

LeGrand Baker