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## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN MORMONISM

*Douglas J. Davies*

This exploratory article on the Holy Spirit in Mormonism is in two, unequal, parts. The longer first section describes the dominant place of the Holy Spirit as a primary reference point for understanding religious experience in Mormonism as an authentic Christian movement identified in a Trinitarian creed-like fashion. The second describes the absence of the Holy Spirit in three core narratives that could be argued as constituting the theological charter for Mormonism as a theological system, viz., the Heavenly Council with its Plan of Salvation, The Gethsemane experience of Christ with its work of Atonement, and The First Vision with its essential commissioning of Joseph to initiate the Restoration. The purpose of the article is simply to identify this gap, suggesting, first, that it reflects the dynamics of a new religious movement's interplay of practical piety and the formality of theological abstraction and, second, that this gap is likely to close with time as Mormonism develops its own theological trained thinkers.

### **Overview**

At the outset it is important to highlight the fact, especially for non-LDS readers, that normal LDS reference is not to the Holy Spirit but to the Holy Ghost, itself a term rooted in the King James Bible to which most LDS are committed. Except when particular clarity is demanded, however, this article will largely adopt 'Holy Spirit' because of its contemporary widespread use in Christianity at large and in the modernization of biblical language that developed, especially in the second half of the twentieth century. Non-LDS readers should, however, be aware that there are internal LDS issues as to whether the Holy Ghost is the same entity as the Holy Spirit. As early as August 26<sup>th</sup> 1838 the Kirtland Elders' Quorum debated the question of whether the 'Holy Spirit is the Holy Ghost' and decided in the affirmative. Just to indicate

something of the complexity of other arguments Hyrum Andrus, for example, describes the Holy Spirit as centred in God and constituting His glory. As a pure and highly capacitated substance, the Holy Spirit partakes of the divine intelligence of God and is the agent by which divine truth, light and power are manifested to others. But God's glory, or His Holy Spirit, is not separate from Himself. As part of His total organized being, it constitutes His divine nature by which He is an infinitely spiritual, as well as a corporeal being.

Other spirit-related issues involved the rise of Spiritualism, when LDS leaders formally distanced themselves from that thought and practice. At the folk level some speculated as to whether Joseph Smith was the Holy Ghost whilst others wondered whether the Holy Ghost would one day take a body or not with all that this might entail for notions of embodiment and obedience. That the Holy Ghost would not need any embodiment-proof of obedience is theologically likely given the particular designation of the Holy Ghost as being perfectly at one in mind with the Father and the Son, but the issue of embodiment as the means of self-development is quite another factor, and that might well apply to the Holy Ghost. Frequently, the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is described as the basis of unanimity between Father and Son, even being the mind shared by Father and Son'. The communicative role of the 'Spirit' in general is highlighted John Taylor's words as 'the medium of communication between the heavens and the earth', something explored by Parley P. Pratt in his treatise on 'The Regeneration and Eternal Duration of Matter' where he affirmed that, 'Matter and Spirit are the two great principles of all existence', being 'of equal duration' and 'self-existent'.

Other issues lie in the way the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is often treated as an 'it' and not a 'he' in early LDS thought and hymnody. For example, the hymn 'Holy Spirit' speaks of a still small voice possessing warning tones whilst being 'full of light and cheer'. 'It guides us ever on our way ... It makes our calling plain and sure ... its admonition ... its voice ... its tuition ... its gifts' all emphasize 'it' not 'he'. By comparison the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is often being given male gendered

reference in most traditional Christian discourse including John's Gospel which is itself, often highly influential on early Mormon thought. This is, partly, because LDS discourse has been particularly concerned with the issue of conscience in relation to agency and to people coming to faith and with the place of 'Spirit' in relation to such things, all in terms of the laying on of hands after baptism for the gift of the Holy Ghost. President Joseph F. Smith at the Salt Lake Tabernacle on March 16, 1902, was clear that 'the Holy Ghost is a personage of the Godhead, and is not that which lighteth every man that cometh into the world'. This distinction between the Holy Ghost and the 'gift of the Holy Ghost' repeats a distinction explicitly made by Joseph Smith Jr. who argued that the gift is not given until repentance has occurred and until people 'come into a state of worthiness before the Lord' and receive it by the laying on of hands by those in authority. Smith's view is that the Spirit of Christ engages with human beings so that they may repent and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. His Spirit will only cease to engage with a person if that individual has gone on into baptism and reception of the Spirit gift and then apostatized. Millet is one contemporary Mormon thinker who rehearses the argument that 'the Light of Christ or the Spirit of Jesus Christ' is possessed by 'every man and woman born into mortality'.

What is certain is that there was sufficient reference to the Holy Ghost and to 'Spirit' terminology in the Bible to draw LDS founders to Father, Son and Ghost or Spirit terminology when thinking of Christian authenticity, not least in association with the Trinitarian baptismal formula invoking 'Father ... Son ... and ... Holy Ghost'. What they did with these ideas merits greater analysis than is possible in this article. John Taylor's 1855 publication *The Mormon*, for example, published largely for a non-LDS readership, included a 'short presentation of the faith' that included the affirmation: 'We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost who bears record of them forever'. This sense of record is important, marking a recurrent LDS motif originating in the Book of Mormon as the outcome of records kept and transmitted a book that also carried

witness accounts of its origin. Early Mormons also kept records of baptisms, patriarchal blessings and other rites as well as diaries and journals of their own and their families' lives. Such bearing-record is not a simple idea but implies the need to demonstrate the truth of a situation. Here it closely resembles the theological rationale of John's Gospel where events witness to Christ's identity amidst unbelieving others. This 'testifying' element characterizes a group that is aware of itself as needing to prove its case against antagonists and is a mark of a new religious movement. It is no simple narrative to be heard, enjoyed or ignored, but one is apologetic within its context of origin. And Taylor's 'short presentation' was very much just such an expression of the Christian authenticity of Mormonism than it was any expression of concern with detailed Trinitarian analysis.

There are numerous potential means of dealing with all this material. One would be historical, exploring which church leader said what and when they said it. A brief example being Vern G. Swanson's 1989 essay on 'The Development of the Concept of a Holy Ghost in Mormon Theology'. Another would be specifically theological and, taking its bearing from traditional Trinitarian thought, would seek to discuss the nature of the divine Father, Son and Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit both in their relation to each other and in their essential being as persons of the divine trinity as in some of David Paulsen's recent work. A third approach might be pastoral, advocating the engagement of the individual LDS with the Holy Spirit in the developing life of faith, discipleship, or spirituality -whichever term might best appeal as, for example, in Millet's chapter 'The Work of the Spirit' in his *The Vision of Mormonism*, and that would include the interesting issue of 'born again' language advocated by a few contemporary LDS, Millet included.

### **Spirit and Authentic Emotion**

Here we largely restrict the discussion to more historical and theological features because Mormonism was, from its outset, concerned with authenticity of faith. Joseph's initial quest of seeking to know the true church has been repeated by many Mormons for whom

the answer comes in an inward feeling of conviction evident in the expression 'a burning in the breast', and often formulated as a 'testimony'. This sensation of an inner awareness pervading the ideas going through the mind underlies the emergent tradition of asking prospective converts to read the Book of Mormon and pray vocally for confirmation of its truth. Relatively speaking, Mormonism became a quietly emotional faith with the effectiveness of meetings judged by how the Spirit touched members' feelings. Today, to be slightly overcome with emotion, perhaps having one's flow of speech interrupted, is one expression of the subtle qualities of shared sentiment closely aligned with an experience of the Spirit at a Sacrament Service, testimony meeting or elsewhere. Indeed, all are encouraged to seek to 'have the Spirit to be with them' as a Sacrament prayer petitions.

### **Joseph Smith and Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit makes an early appearance in LDS thought. Oliver Cowdery, for example, depicted Joseph being 'filled with the Holy Spirit' as 'the heavens were opened and the glory of the Lord shone roundabout and rested on him'. At a Conference in 1837, 'The Spirit of the Lord rested down upon us and our hearts were made glad'. As even these references show, while 'Spirit' language became widespread when expressing and validating the life of faith through inner sensations, there remained considerable variation over reference to 'the Spirit of the Lord', the 'Spirit of God', 'the Spirit', 'the Holy Spirit', or 'the Holy Ghost'. Joseph Smith's journal can, for example, speak of 'the voice of the Spirit' telling early leaders to wait upon God for future directions to Zion just as some days before, in his Kirtland Temple dedication prayer, he asks that all might 'receive a fullness of the Holy Ghost', and be anointed with 'power from on high' as on the day of Pentecost, with the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues and with a sense of a 'rushing mighty wind'. In a final reference he asks that 'the power of thy spirit' (sic) may enable humans to mix their voices with those of the seruphs (sic) around the throne of God. Joseph was not unfamiliar, either, with the 'gift' of the Spirit in the sense of speak-

ing in tongues. When Brigham Young first met the prophet at Kirtland in 1833 he spoke in tongues and it 'is said to have been strong among the gifted ones' and to have been 'the first time that the "gift" had been demonstrated'. These gifts were important for Mormonism as a restoration movement with early Christian phenomena as described in the Bible being regarded as essentially authentic and with their contemporary reappearance validating the LDS claim to restoration: and 'tongues' had certainly been explicitly described amongst Christ's immediate disciples. 'Tongues' in the early life of Mormonism, nearly a century before its flourishing in the Pentecostal movement in the USA though already known amongst the Irvingites in England in 1830, was, inevitably, influential.

Joseph, alert to glossolalia, chose texts from Acts as proof texts in an 1835 Letter to the Elders exemplifying the importance of the Holy Spirit following repentance and baptism. While adding a sense of validity to the Church such Spirit-related phenomena also prompted cautionary comment as when Joseph Smith told a meeting of Nauvoo's Relief Society for women that if they had any 'matter to reveal' to do so in their own tongue. 'Do not indulge too much in the gift of tongues or the Devil will take advantage. You may speak in tongues for your comfort, but I lay this down as a rule that if anything is taught by the gift of tongues it is not to be received as doctrine'. An 1840 account expressed similar ambivalence in Great Britain: 'In no one thing, perhaps, are the Saints more afraid of grieving the Spirit than in keeping silence when the spirit of tongues is upon them and especially when they have recently received this gift', one then becoming 'common in the Church in England'. However, this practice was discouraged with people being encouraged to strive 'for the best gifts' of charity, wisdom and knowledge and to 'edify and comfort each other' in their own native tongue.

One long exchange in *The Elders' Journal*, for example, concerned the question of whether the laying on of hands was necessary for the conferring of the Holy Spirit and, more particularly, whether the Holy Spirit was given prior to and to effect the emergence of faith or whether, as the LDS response affirmed, that faith 'came by hearing and

not by receiving the holy Spirit' (sic). Here the Spirit is designated as a 'witness, to give additional evidence' that would 'naturally increase the faith of the believer'. This shows the importance of the Spirit within the rites of the new church, especially the laying on of hands after baptism highlighting the Spirit's arrival at the Day of Pentecost empowering Jesus' disciples for their evangelistic work. They explain that it was 'granted as the seal of their obedience unto these ordinances': the reference to 'ordinances' being to faith, repentance and baptism. They also added the biblical account of the baptism of Jesus at the hands of John when 'the Spirit of God' descended like a dove to alight upon Jesus whilst a divine voice acclaimed him as the pleasing son. They do not imply that the Spirit came upon Jesus to make him into any different kind of person; indeed, they say he was baptized simply to 'fulfil all righteousness'. Their intent was to stress the importance of baptism by immersion and not 'by sprinkling'. One purpose of baptism was to prepare people 'for the second coming of Christ...which is nigh at hand'. Though that Second Coming did not materialize the LDS have retained a stress on the Spirit so that a contemporary Saint can, naturally, affirm that, 'As Latter-day Saints, we firmly believe that the Spirit can speak through us, that we can hear the Spirit, but that we do not dictate to the Spirit.'

One theologically pastoral issue concerning the Holy Spirit pinpointed a crucial aspect of personal faith as depicted in the Epistle to Hebrews that portrayed the impossibility of repentance for those who have tasted the heavenly gift of the Spirit and who then fall away. This held a strong affinity for Saints, given the part played by apostasy in early LDS life. Even in a later generation B.H. Roberts, in his gloss to The King Follett discourse, can deal with this 'sin against the Holy Ghost'. Citing the Hebrews text he dramatically asserts that, 'Those who sin against light and knowledge of the Holy Ghost may be said to crucify more than the body of our Lord, they crucify the Spirit'. No stronger statement could be found to express the importance of experience and its abuse in LDS discourse.

Early LDS letters and reports often use a variety of references to the Holy Spirit as a spirit of revelation and prophecy, of conferring spiritual gifts, and as a source of comfort or help, often citing biblical texts. Wilford Woodruff and Jonathan H. Hale's letter in the first publication of *The Elders' Journal*, for example, recounts a missionary venture in the Fox Islands. En route they had met with success and might have stayed to build branches in Connecticut 'had not the Spirit called us away to perform a greater work'. At an impromptu preaching service amongst local Baptists they tell how 'The Lord clothed us with his Spirit'. They extol 'the arm of JEHOVAH' in giving them success and 'say these things are true as God liveth, and the Spirit beareth record'. The second entry in the Journal, a letter from Kimball to Vilate his wife, dated September 2, 1837, tells how he arrived in England on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Arriving at Liverpool he 'had peculiar feelings when we landed, the Spirit of God burned in my breast' whilst feeling the need to 'covenant before God to live a new life'. He tells how they journey to Preston, witness scenes of dire poverty yet make some converts. A week later he tells of 'a singular circumstance' at their lodging. In the middle of the night one 'Elder Russel was much troubled with evil spirits' and came into the bedroom Kimball shared with Elder Hyde. Citing from the journal kept by Hyde, Kimball tells of his own moving experience when he 'rebuked and prayed' for Russel but, before he even concluded the prayer, his own 'voice faltered, and his mouth was shut, and he began to tremble and reel (sic) to and fro, and fell on the floor like a dead man, and uttered a deep groan'. Hyde lifts Kimball thinking that 'the devils were exceeding angry because we tried to cast them out of Br. Russel, and they made a powerful attempt as if to dispatch him at once, they struck him senseless and he fell to the floor'. Hyde, with the assistance of the apparently recovered Russel, now lay hands on Kimball 'and rebuked the evil spirits, in the name of Jesus Christ; and immediately he recovered his strength in part, so as to get up'. Kimball is covered in sweat 'as wet as if he had been taken out of the water' and they could 'very sensibly hear the evil spirits rage and foam out their shame'. Kimball then moves from this third person account taken from

Hyde's journal and tells his wife directly that 'the devil was mad because I was going to baptize and he wanted to destroy me'. He then tells how the spirits after first falling upon Russel, and then upon himself, moved on to Hyde.

These accounts portray a very real emotional-religious world in which the language of 'spirit', including evil spirits, plays a dramatic part. Interestingly, the Spirit of the Lord, whilst aligned with strongly positive emotional experience is not the force set in battle with evil spirits: it is in the name of Jesus Christ that they are commanded. The devil is identified as the source of evil and it is the devil and Jesus who are the combatants, this opposition matches the part played in the Plan of Salvation by Jesus and Lucifer and not by the Holy Spirit and Lucifer.

Similarly, two years later, and home in the USA, Kimball tells how he was awakened at night by his wife who appeared to be choking and she tells how she had dreamt that 'a personage came and seized her by the throat'. Kimball lays hands on her and rebuked the evil spirit in the name of Jesus, by the power of the holy priesthood he 'commanded it to depart'. Then children and an adult in a nearby house begin to cry in distress while domesticated animals bellow, neigh, bark, squeal, cackle and crow. He is called upon to deal with another woman as earlier he had dealt with his wife. Sometime later he is walking with Joseph Smith who has heard of this event and asks about it. Kimball tells of his English episode and asks Joseph 'what all these things meant' and whether there was 'anything wrong' with him for encountering them. Joseph explained that when in England Kimball had been 'nigh unto the Lord, there was only a veil between you and Him, but you could not see Him.' Joseph said he rejoiced when he heard of these events because then he knew that 'the work of God had taken root in that land. It was this that caused the devil to make struggle to kill you'. In Joseph's opinion, 'the nearer a person approached to the Lord, the greater power would be manifest by the devil to prevent the accomplishment of the purposes of God'. Joseph then related his own encounter with the devil following the publication of the Book of Mormon. Once in a

house purchased by Joseph Smith at Far West, formerly occupied as a public house and occupied by some 'wicked people', a child fell ill and Joseph was asked to heal it. This he did only to find the illness recur as soon as he left and several times more. Joseph asked the Lord about it and, then and there, he received 'an open vision and saw the devil in person, who contended with Joseph face to face for some time. He said it was his house, it belonged to him, and Joseph had no right there'. Then, however, 'Joseph rebuked Satan in the name of the Lord, and he departed and troubled the child no more'.

### **Spirit Power**

The importance of the Holy Spirit as a dynamic feature of early Mormonism is distinctively evident in Joseph Smith's sense of the need for a 'solemn assembly' of believers within which an 'endowment' of spiritual power would be gained. This was marked by a revelation in December 1832 and was to be, as Dean Jessee notes, its own form of day of Pentecost following the completion of the Kirtland Temple: he describes the period from January to May 1836 as just such 'a Pentecost and endowment. This very notion of endowment that was to develop a great deal in future decades in temple endowment rites thus had its origin in experiences allied with the Holy Spirit and the Biblical echoes of the Day of Pentecost.

### **Patriarchal Blessings**

Another ritual context that often mentioned the Holy Spirit in early Mormonism was that of patriarchal blessings exemplified in William McBride's blessing upon Martha, daughter of James and Lucinda Pace. She is blessed 'in the Name of Jesus', is deemed to be among the 'daughters of Israel and the line of Joseph through the loins of Ephraim', and, 'by obedience to the new and everlasting covenant' she will gain the blessings of 'the heaven above and of the earth beneath'. What is more the 'Lord will visit' her 'by dreams and by the manifestations of his Holy Spirit', and she would be able 'to read the still small whisperings of the Holy Spirit, that will make known unto thee the mind and

Will of the Father'. McBride also blessed her half-sister Ruth, whose life journey the Lord is to attend as will Angels while 'the Spirit of the Lord shall be with thee ... and ... shall be a candle to the heart and it shall reflect light to all those that associate with thee'. She will live to see 'Zion redeemed and Israel gathered and the Kingdom of God established upon the earth and with thy companion shall behold the coming of the Son of Man'.

Brigham Young's sense of the Spirit, generally conceived, was also considerable, albeit closely linked to his sense of pragmatism. He saw the Spirit as a motivating power within human activity as in his General Conference address of April 1854. In a way that clearly identifies 'Spirit' with human emotional experience his wish was 'to inquire distinctly of your feelings', wondering whether the divine power is known to his hearers. He speaks, synonymously, of 'the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ' and of the 'Spirit of God' after the fashion of St John's Gospel, as a 'fountain of living water ... springing up to everlasting life'. The Saints must know this power, as he said some years earlier when wishing to 'impress upon the minds of this people continually' that they should 'live in the light of the Spirit of God, so that every man and woman may have revelations for themselves', for if that attitude prevailed then 'you may believe what you like, if you will do good continually and no evil'.

### **Spirit Influence**

To speak of the Spirit is valuable when seeking a divine reference point capable of uniting people and giving them a sense of unity of purpose. In a passage that, incidentally, exemplifies Joseph's charisma, Parley Pratt recalled his deep sense of loss at Joseph's death, and tells how his outlook was changed by the Spirit. 'I had loved Joseph with a warmth of affection indescribable for about fourteen years', and when journeying from Chicago to Nauvoo, deeply grieving, he wondered what words of comfort he could give to the Saints awaiting him there. He cries aloud asking for divine help when,

On a sudden the Spirit of God came upon me and filled my heart with joy and gladness indescribable; and while the spirit of revelation burned within my bosom, with as visible a warmth and gladness as if it were fire. The Spirit said unto me: Lift up your head and rejoice; for behold! It is well with my servants Joseph and Hyrum. My servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth, in the flesh, and fulfil that to which he is appointed.

The Spirit instructed Pratt to tell the Saints to continue with their daily work, to build the Temple, until all of the twelve were gathered together. Other references to the Spirit take literary form, as in Eliza Snow's epic on 'Nationality' presented to Salt Lake City's Polyso-phical Institution. Reflecting both the open mindedness of that aptly named institution and the speculative curiosity of influential sectors of early Mormonism she wrote of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, every Saint receives  
Is one sense added to what nature gives;  
It is a powerful telescope whereby  
We look beyond the stretch of mortal eye,  
Its keen, perceptive vision takes a view  
Of origin and destination too.

Eliza's knowledge condensed to a stanza key LDS commitments to baptism and the conferring of the Holy Spirit and to the view of that Spirit as the basis and ground of revelation. Indeed, the role of the Spirit as an additional benefit of Church membership - 'one sense added to what nature gives' - expresses the belief in the LDS priesthood as alone possessing the power to confer that gift following baptism, a power derived from Jesus Christ as the one who restored the Melchize-dek Priesthood.

In LDS discourse, then, references to the Spirit regularly furnish the motif that draws attention to a mode of feeling, a tone of communal gathering that both inspires and affords a sense of authenticity as the true Church. This, perhaps, explains why the hymn 'The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning', 'which was added almost as an

afterthought to the 1835 hymnbook, is listed first in the 1844 edition'. This discussion of the Spirit as a marker of religious experience and of authentic religious identity concludes the first part of my article. The second, and much shorter, takes up a different concept, that of the paradigmatic scene, and works on the assumption that LDS culture possesses a strong visual element.

### **Paradigmatic Scenes and LDS Thought**

Indeed, Mormonism is one of the most visually based of all Christian groups, despite the rather naïve approach that often classifies Catholicism as strong on vision and seeing while Protestantism is strong on audition and listening. LDS culture is strong on seeing and on testifying to what it has seen, which is why the very idea of witnesses was so important at its outset. This visual capacity, fostered in Temple ritual, has fostered the importance of pictorial narratives, constructs we may explore through the concept of the paradigmatic scene, a narrative picture that becomes typical for a group, enshrining prime values and sentiments and often becoming constitutive for understanding a tradition. This concept has been variously employed by textual scholars such as Robert Alter as by anthropologists such as Rodney Needham and also, through the idiom of 'paradigm scenario' by de Souza and Thomas Maschio, the last adding a strong emotional aspect to the role of the depicted narrative. Such narrative pictures take the form of some typical event such as setting out on a journey, a battle, a homecoming or the like and are fundamental to the nature of myth. They bring together various ideas in a summarized form and are invaluable as a cultural resource for later story-telling. Though the Mormon image of handcart convert migrants coming to Zion would be one-such in popular LDS culture history there are, it seems to me, other accounts of a more definitive type. Three stand out as dominant paradigmatic scenes in Mormonism. They have been, arguably, constitutive for Mormon theology and show a high degree of mutual affinity, they are the narratives of the Heavenly Council with its Plan of Salvation, The Gethsemane

experience of Christ with its work of Atonement, and The First Vision with its essential commissioning of Joseph to initiate the Restoration.

The key feature of these paradigmatic scenes as far as this article is concerned is that the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is relatively insignificant to and absent from them. This gap between the Holy Spirit's presence and absence in two crucial components of its religious constitution -between statements of faith on the one hand and these scenes on the other- may easily pass unrecognized. One context in which this lack of recognition might become problematic is that of inter-group theological discussion when Mormons deal with other Christian traditions whose location of the Holy Spirit might depend either upon the paradigmatic scene of the biblical Day of Pentecost or on the non-scenic but philosophic account of the Holy Trinity for which paradigmatic scenes are hard to find. Even the baptism of Jesus as the Son who hears the Father's heavenly voice while a dove stands for the Holy Spirit does not quite have a convincing narrative dynamic to it.

Moreover, these three LDS narratives also carry a certain emotional charge, as established community-based narratives often do. When Lucifer is cast from heaven 'the heavens wept for him' (DC. 76: 26), and in Nephi Anderson's creative and influential narrative of the Plan of Salvation its hero, Homan, tells his partner that 'something will prompt us to the right, and we have this hope that father's Spirit will not forsake us.' This is an important reference for it does bring 'Spirit' into some relation with the Heavenly Council scene, albeit indirectly. Much more emotion is evident in the sweated blood of Christ's self-sacrificial anguish in his act of atonement in Gethsemane, and in the terrible sense of evil and its passage into deliverance in Joseph's first vision. Generally, however, the Spirit is absent. Not because of the Spirit's potential invisibility, since, for example, the malevolent presence of Satan is obvious in the tangible darkness of the First Vision story and is much in evidence in Christ's terrible encounter with evil in his garden sufferings. The Holy Spirit, however, is simply not much evident in these narratives that serve as prime charters for LDS theo-

logical reflection. A great deal more could, of course, be said in analysis of these contexts and in disclosing their symbolic parallels.

Where the Holy Spirit does most frequently occur in LDS thought is in passages that draw very heavily from John's Gospel, especially, chapters 14–17. This Johannine spirituality of 'abiding in' and of the Son doing what he sees the Father do, deeply affected Joseph in his thinking about God and when giving any thought to traditional Christian creeds whose Father, Son and Holy Ghost or Spirit motifs are often filtered through the language of John; they are seldom filtered through philosophical schemes of ontology as in creedal theology in general. In other words, the Holy Ghost has tended to be most invoked in Mormonism when accounting for religious experiences and dwelling upon authentic identity as a member of the Restoration. This is reflected in the laying on of hands, in blessings and in the Sacrament Service. When accounting for the theological core of Mormonism it is not to the Spirit as an integral aspect of the Trinity that attention passes but to the interestingly interlinked paradigmatic scenes of Council of Gods, of Gethsemane's atonement which works out the proffered salvation of the Council, and of the First Vision that restores its significance.

Above, in Heber Kimball and spirit-attack, for example, we saw that it was in the name of Jesus and not the Holy Spirit that the Apostle set against Satan and evil spirits. Theologically speaking this seems to echo the charter narrative of the Heavenly Council in which Jesus and Lucifer play major roles but in which the Holy Spirit plays no essential part. This, I think is of some significance on a wider basis and echoes my article at the last of these conferences when arguing that the Plan of Salvation tended to play the theological role in Mormonism that is played by the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in traditional Christian churches. However, in many other aspects of the religious life the role of 'Spirit' or of the 'Holy Spirit' or 'Holy Ghost' has been and is used to interpret positive experiences of support or success. Indeed, 'spirit' references have become a major means of bringing a theological frame to bear upon 'experience' as such. The world of emotion within Mormonism is a world dominated by spirit-language.

For the sake of argument and to promote further discussion this leads me to conclude that, in the starkest and most unqualified of terms, the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit has been of primary historical significance within practical Mormon living but of secondary importance within its technical theology. This differs from much traditional Christianity in which the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit serves a primary theological role within Trinitarian thought but has often been of secondary significance in practical piety. The very growth in Charismatic Christianity from the later 1960s almost proves this point. These cases also remind us that theologies change and develop, it having taken traditional Christianities the best part of five hundred years to organize doctrinal thought on God with debates still continuing. The history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, just under two hundred years of it, offers a clear example of how religious experience, ritual practice and doctrinal formulation are still in process of development. If, as appears possible, sufficient LDS thinkers engage with mainstream Christian theologians over major doctrinal issues it is likely that this gap between Mormon statements and articles of faith on the one hand and its charter paradigmatic narratives on the other will become increasingly integrated or that one will simply give way to the other. In dialogue-contexts considerable formal attention would need to be given to the quite different grammars of discourse that underlie traditional Trinitarian theologies with their attendant philosophical foundations on the one hand -especially in relation to the Eucharistic theology and ritual that drives much traditional Christianity and, on the other, to the persuasive dynamics of narrative that ground Mormon understanding of the Restoration and of its missionary work in the world at large and in its temple-rites for worlds yet more expansive.

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