

Denver Snuffer Podcast 165: Comprehending, Part 6

This is part six of a series where Denver discusses how we can prepare ourselves to comprehend the things God wants to teach us.

DENVER: Thousands of people, perhaps hundreds of thousands of people (maybe more) have had the opportunity to have the veil lift and be in the presence of the Lord or in the presence of the messenger who speaks in the first person in the name of the Lord. But comparatively few are ever told, as Joseph was told, that God had a work for him to do.

What distinguishes Joseph—in the First Vision—to me are two things: First, when he prayed and he was bound up by something that he called *thick darkness gathering around [him]* (Joseph Smith History 2:4 RE), he didn't submit, he didn't surrender, and he didn't accept that as the message God intended for him. But calling upon God, he persisted through that.

I've mentioned before there was a shouting Methodist tradition that typically would acknowledge **that** as a divine message. They go out, they pray, they shout to Heaven, they get bound up. And when that happens, then they've got their witness from the other side, and they know they've come in contact with God.

Joseph, for some reason, did not accept that. He pressed through, he persisted; and calling upon God, He was delivered from that—at which point he saw what was, initially, a pillar of light that troubled him until he saw that the treetops were safe from contact with it, that he might survive contact with it, also. And it gradually descended, and he saw personages within it.

The second remarkable thing about Joseph is that God had a work for him to do, **but** he ends the description of the First Vision with: *many other things did He say unto me which I cannot [reveal] at this time* (Ibid, vs. 5). Joseph **knew** a great deal more right at the beginning than he **understood**; and Joseph gradually **understood** more than he was able to **teach**. At about the time that Joseph reached not just the height of his comprehension but the height of his capacity to be able to teach, he was taken from us. We lost him.

So, God had a work for him to do, but the work that he had to do never did get completed, which is why, then, the Restoration needs to pick up and continue.

Well, a new Restoration has begun preliminary to winding up God's great work. God is very active at present. Being chosen to do God's work does not make us godly, virtuous, or better than others. Every individual must be godly and practice virtue, and even then, we're no better than any other people. The difference consists in God's willingness to direct us **forward** as **He** completes the promises and covenants He made to the Fathers. It's **God's presence**, not **our worthiness** which distinguishes us.

There's a great work that at this moment is still undone, a project that remains for a faithful people. It will require revelation from heaven to be able to accomplish, and therefore, it will require people willing to receive new revelation.

Although we may understand some few things about the Lord's plans, what we know at present is relatively small in comparison with the fullness of the revelations yet to be restored.

Incomplete understanding has never prevented mankind from obeying God. From the beginning, righteous men and women have pleased God by doing what He asks of them even though they did not yet comprehend the reasons behind the commandment:

And after many days, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, [asking], Why do you offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him, I know not but the Lord commanded me. ...the angel [spake], saying, This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father who is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, you shall do all that you do in the name of the Son. ...you shall repent...call upon...the name of the Son for ever more. And in that day the holy ghost fell upon Adam, which [bears] record of the Father and the Son... (Genesis 3:3-4 RE)

Ignorant obedience (perhaps decades or centuries) in the absence of the Holy Ghost falling upon him was the prelude that led Adam to receiving the gift. Even those taught by Christ could not understand His message. The accounts of Christ's life in the four Gospel books mention frequently that His followers did not understand what He told them. Here's one example:

Then he took the twelve and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished, for he shall be delivered unto the gentiles, ...shall be mocked, and spitefully treated, and spit on; and they shall scourge and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, neither remembered they the things which were spoken. (Luke 11:1 RE)

Adam was the first Patriarch over humanity and stands at the head of his posterity, governing in the Family of God beneath only Christ and God the Father. Yet, when he lived and obeyed God, there were commandments he was given that he did not understand. He was puzzled, but he obeyed.

Christ called twelve disciples and kept them as His closest pupils during His ministry. Yet despite walking continually with Him, there were things He taught them they could not understand. Righteous men and women have followed and pleased God despite their ignorance.

What is more important? To be a person of great understanding or a person of diligent obedience?

Building Zion is daunting. Take a moment and ask yourself what it would take to build a functioning community. Any community for any people will require **a lot** of the same things to be addressed. For example: housing, streets, water supply, waste disposal, and some form of energy. No matter how rudimentary an infrastructure a community may have, there must **always** be one.

Without a clean water supply, people get sick or die. But a water source for a community does not mean they have clean, potable water that can be consumed. Clean water requires filtering or processing to remove contaminants and unwanted organisms.

If one person drills a well and recovers clean ground water for his residence, that does not mean there is a water supply for a community. If every resident requires their own well, then the costs for a water supply will multiply far beyond the cost for a community water supply that shares costs among many residents. Communities almost always pool resources to develop a city water system.

Wastewater needs to be handled in a sanitary way to prevent outbreaks of diphtheria, cholera, and typhoid. One solution for a sanitary wastewater system is for an individual residence to have a septic tank. In a community that lacks a sewer system, septic tanks are required for every building that has a bathroom. But that increases costs for each house far above the cost required to build a shared sanitary wastewater system. This is why communities almost always pool resources to develop a city-wide wastewater system.

Roads are also generally maintained by a community in which shared resources allow the cost of a road system to be borne by all members of the community.

A community's energy needs are not always met by gas or electric power. There was a time when many houses were heated by coal or wood. Although rare now, these sources can still heat homes and provide heat to cook.

A community that is not planned and carefully developed can quickly become unlivable, unhealthy, and unsustainable. Planning and thus implementing the plan should not involve haste and hurry.

It seems to be common sense that if a community is to include people with widely varying resources and abilities, the first steps should be taken by those with both the resources and the ability to accomplish the first preparation to benefit others who will come later.

If that's common sense, then it is not discrimination or unfair for those with the means and inclination to sacrifice their resources to be the first who labor to make a land ready for others who will be invited later. Staging in an orderly way is the only method any community is or can be built. It is the only practical way to carefully build what must be built.

And now behold, this is the will of the Lord your God concerning his saints — that they should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste, lest there should be confusion, which brings pestilence (T&C 50:6). If land is not prepared beforehand, confusion

and pestilence go hand in hand. Cholera, diphtheria, and typhoid all can and **have** returned today in this nation.

Forbes Magazine reported:

Los Angeles has a growing problem with diseases borne by both flea and feces. An LAPD officer was just diagnosed with typhoid fever along with two more from the same workplace displaying symptoms. Meanwhile, cases of typhus, caused by a different bacterium, have soared in California from 13 in 2008 to 167 in 2018. In addition, there have been outbreaks of hepatitis A, tuberculosis, and staph in L.A. and other West Coast cities. (Chuck DeVore, Typhoid Fever, Typhus & Tuberculosis: Are L.S.'s Medieval Diseases Coming to Your City? June 4, 2019)

We need to be wiser than the society in which we presently live. We can build a new society that will eventually have people who are at peace with one another, living in righteousness, and having all things in common, but that is still years ahead.

The religion of God and the greatness of God is so vast and so all-encompassing that it's impossible for one person or one group or one denomination or one movement to have held onto it all. The religion began in the beginning with God standing in the presence of the first parents who were the father and the mother of the entire race of humanity and teaching them about everything there is to know, to worship, to understand, to appreciate, to love, to share, to feel, to understand. But we have done a bad job of preserving that.

We had, at the beginning, the truth taught; and then, we had the truth lost. The process of losing truth is called *apostasy*, but apostasy does not mean that everything is lost. It means that some has been lost because anything less than all of it is less than the true religion. And so, apostasy causes us to only keep part of the religion. But all religion, in all cultures, in all denominations everywhere in the world, have a common root.

From time to time, God has sent messages back into the world. Those messages are *restorations* in which some of what has been lost is then restored again to help complete the picture. I believe there have been **many** apostasies. Correspondingly, there have been **many** restorations. But a restoration, to complete the **entire** story, has to return us all the way back to the beginning, has to give us the opportunity to have, once again, everything that was here at the start that unifies together and weaves into one great whole **all** of the truths.

In some of the religions that we have heard glimpses of today, there are greater truths about some characteristics than have been preserved in the Christian tradition. We need to have reunited **all** the truths from **all** the limited apostasies (that nevertheless contain truths) into one great restoration—back into a whole—with the guidance and assistance of God.

There was a sermon that was delivered by the apostle Paul two thousand years ago when he went to Greece to teach about the restoration that Jesus Christ had brought about. The audience that he spoke to were a group of philosophers in Greece. That culture, that nation, that society has long since perished. The temples that were built back then have fallen into disarray and many of them into dust, but the **sermon** that Paul taught on Mars Hill has

been preserved, and we have a record of the sermon that he taught. He referred to them. He said:

*You ignorantly worship [God whom I] declare unto you. God...made the world and all things therein, ...He is the Lord of heaven and earth, [and] dwells not in temples made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he gives to **all** life, and breath, and all things...he is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. We are also His offspring. (Acts 10:14 RE)*

Those words of Paul on Mars Hill are echoed even more clearly in some of the things that have been said by Delmar and by Rupinder and by Jeremiah and by Sugopi today. Sometimes we lose track of how closely connected we are, every one of us, to God.

There was a king who delivered a sermon as he was ending his reign. In his old age and infirmity, he felt no longer able to provide the leadership, the guidance, and the presiding role of a king in helping bring peace to his people and serve them. And so, he called his people together, and he gave them his last bit of advice before resigning as the king and allowing his son to be the one who would lead the community after that by teaching and defending and helping it. And in King Benjamin's talk, like Paul, he mentioned that *[God] has created you from the beginning and [is] preserving you from day to day by lending you breath that [you] may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another (Mosiah 1:8 RE).*

The story that we have of the Creation in the Bible says that God put into... He breathed the breath of life into Adam. King Benjamin, talking thousands of years later, says that in you (in you, right now, every one of you), God is *lending you breath that [you] may live*. If you want to know how close you are, in reality, to God, just hold your breath. Exclude—throw away—the act of breathing that God is causing to occur in you at this very moment, and hold your breath for as long as you can. Then, when you take your next gasp for air, realize the power to do that is **loaned** to you by God. He is that intimate to you. He is that connected to you.

In a revelation that was given to Joseph Smith about this Creation, God, speaking to Joseph, told him that:

[Christ is] in all and through all things, the light of truth, and that truth shines. This is the light of Christ, as also he is in the sun and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made; as also he is in the moon and...the light of the moon and the power thereof by which it was made; as also the light of the stars and the power thereof by which they were made; and the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand. ...And the light which now shines, which gives you light, is through him who enlightens your eyes, which is the same light that quickens your understandings, which light proceeds forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space: the light which is in all things, which gives life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sits upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. (T&C 86:1 RE)

God is everywhere. The light of God is in you. If it were not in you, you would not have the power to breathe, to think, to live, to move, and to even be sustained by God's power from moment to moment to continue in your existence. We, in this present form, are not self-existent. We are dependent upon the energy, the power, and the force of God to keep us maintained as His creation. There are components about us that are coeternal with God, but that doesn't mean that we, as an organized being, existed from all eternity. God created us, but He did this long ago and far away.

Concerning this Creation in that same revelation:

There is no space in...which there is no kingdom, and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom. And unto every kingdom is...a law, and unto every law there are certain bounds also, and conditions. All things are comprehended by God and all things are before him and all things are round about him...he is above all things and in all things and...through all things, and is round about all things, and all things are by him and of him, even God, for ever and ever...The earth rolls upon her wings, and the sun gives his light by day, and the moon gives her light by night, and the stars also give their light as they roll upon their wings, in their glory, in the midst of the power of God. ...Unto what shall I liken these kingdoms that you may understand? Behold all these are kingdoms, and any man who has seen any or the least of these has seen God moving in his majesty and power... The day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him. Then shall you know that you have seen [him], that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise you could not abound. (T&C 86:6-8 RE)

Everything you can see, everything that you can experience, every sense that you are able to employ is a manifestation of God lending you this intelligence in order to comprehend Him.

When people believe themselves to be wise and smart and good and holy, we really do delude ourselves. No matter how intelligent we may think ourselves, the fact is we know practically nothing, and we will only be here a short time period.

God is everywhere and in everything, and we should be in awe of Him. Using everything that we have the ability to assemble, using all of our science, using all of our finest instrumentation, using every mechanism that we can devise, we know that approximately 68% of the energy in the universe is what is called *dark energy*. It's called dark energy because we know it's there; we haven't a clue what it is. Using that same science and ability and instrumentation, we know that 27% of the universe is comprised of *dark matter*. We know it's there because physics suggests its presence. We don't have a clue what it is. The total of these two means that 95% of the universe we can detect is composed of things we cannot see, we cannot understand, we cannot comprehend. We detect and comprehend, at best, only five percent of all that exists using our best science and best instruments to examine the universe.

On this world—just this world—depending upon the degree of humility that we acknowledge about our present understanding, we may only know of somewhere between

1% and 14% of the life forms that exist on this planet. Of the known life forms that we know about, humanity makes up no more than .001% of that life.

If we are not in awe of God, then we have an awfully small universe and an awfully large ego and an awfully ignorant vantage point. The greatness of the religions that we have heard from today (from the very first with Delmar to the last we heard from) is that the approach of the religion is the acknowledgment of something far greater than ourselves, and the sense of awe and humility that we approach that greatness stays beyond us.

God may make himself known from time to time, but even when He does so, it's difficult for (first of all) man to take it in and then, having taken it in, difficult for man to comprehend what it is that has been given to him and taken in. And then, it is something altogether more challenging and more difficult to turn that into something that can be explained even in part. But the greatest challenge is, then, to comprehend enough in order to be able to teach it. We've had great teachers in many religions, but I think it is foolish to suggest that the greatest teachers that have been out there have ever been able to adequately convey what it is that they took in because the challenge is too vast.

I liked the reference that Delmar made to his grandparents who were involved in ceremonial worship and ceremonial tradition. I understand why Rupinder says at some point along the path of progression, you reach a point at which you no longer need a ritual or a ceremony.

But the fact is that some kinds of vast information can be conveyed in the way that Jeremiah conveyed it—by telling a story, by giving a tradition. The story has embedded within it symbols that are expansive, that grow outward, that have more meaning than simply *the wolf*; more meaning than simply *the moon*; more meaning than simply *the paint on the face*. They have a library of material that they're trying to convey in a shorthanded way.

And so, the ceremony that Delmar Bondi's grandparents conveyed to him when he was a youth were not simply theater. They were an attempt to take a large amount of information and to compress it into a handful of symbols and then to deliver the handful of symbols so that someone who takes it in can then look at and reflect upon that handful of symbols and to say, "Within this symbol, I see this entire library of material; and within this symbol, I see this library of material; and within that one..." And so, ritual becomes one of the ways in which religion is intended to strike the chord in the heart and convey into the mind and into the senses that you can take information in—something that is beyond merely the senses that we work with; something that reaches out into the universe and touches that infinite.

There is this concept that Christians speak about that's called the *Holy Ghost*; it's also called the *Comforter*, that Holy Ghost, that *concept* much abused in Christianity, much misunderstood, much voiced about (a lot of silly notions), but in part of the restoration of information that has come about in these last two centuries—because we believe that God is continuously trying to restore—one of the things that we've been given in the last two centuries is a description of what that Holy Ghost includes. Let me read those words to you:

It is given to abide in you: the record of heaven, the Comforter, the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, that which

maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment. (Moses 6:61; see also Genesis 4:9 RE)

That is the Holy Ghost that—when we allow ourselves to quiet down; when we allow ourselves to take in; when we recognize the breath that we rely upon to remain conscious; when we realize that the colors that we behold with our eyes are loaned to us as a sensibility given to us by God—at that moment, you’re connecting to God. At that moment, He is present with you. At that moment, you should be in awe of Him **sharing** with you that capacity because He **is** with you.

So, when the woman is struggling getting along with the idea that she needs to praise and love and worship a God “I feel completely closed off to and forsaken and unloved,” the place to begin is to recognize it’s an expression of God’s love to you that you can see. It’s an expression of God’s love, kindness, and generosity to you that you can breathe. It’s an expression of God’s love, kindness, and sustaining power that He makes the rain to fall and the sun to shine on both the good and the evil. It’s an expression of His love and His presence with you that you have the opportunity to be here, to be part of a family, to be connected with others, to converse and to eat and to feel love and to feel kindness.

The problem is not that you’re not connected to God—because every one of us is. The problem is that the foolish religious tradition that you have been taught shuts your mind down so that you do not comprehend His presence **in** you, His presence **with** you, and His presence in this world that you now occupy.

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We are literally employing the power of God in every breath that we take, so God’s familiarity with you is based upon the fact that He is the organizing power or force within you. You get to make your choices, but He understands the choice you’re making and why you’re making it. He is in and through all of us. But the irony is that when Christ performed the atonement, Christ was mortal.

There’s an incident that happens in the book of Moses (which is now in Genesis in the new Scriptures), where Moses is inquiring of God, and he wants to know about everything. He wants to know about the entirety of all Creation. And God tells him “I can’t do that. If I were to tell you all of that, it would require that I change how you are composed, in order for you to take it in, and it is impossible for me to give that to you and for you to afterwards remain in the flesh on the Earth”—meaning that while we’re still composed of this stuff—this mortal clay—we have decided limits on us.

Jesus Christ was incarnated into this mortal stuff. He **could not** (while He was mortal) take in everything that God (in a resurrected and exalted state) **can** take in. He had to get through mortality as a bonafide mortal. Therefore, when Christ suffered the pains of the atonement, He suffered the pains in a generalized sense. Every dilemma that any man or woman will ever face/every challenge/every temptation/every disappointment/every bitterness/everything that constitutes a dilemma for the mortal He passed through. But He did that as an exemplar of what all of us goes through. He didn’t do it because he

comprehended you and comprehended me and comprehended 100 billion different people's mortal experiences; He comprehended the dilemmas that are **shared**.

I mean, you think about the people down at the counseling you do [addressing Stephanie] that have this addiction problem that they're seeking rehabilitation from; it doesn't matter what their drug of choice is, they have a syndrome in which the weakness and the appetite has gotten on top of them. And so, if you can understand in an aggregate, the nature of the weakness, you can understand and identify with each one of the victims of that particular appetite, and you can form generalizations. Christ took in all of the weaknesses, all the frailties, all of the failures in an exemplar/in an illustration/in a syndrome after syndrome, problem after problem; He experienced it all. He knows how to teach and heal and guide and lead every individual. But our Heavenly Parents—God the Father, whose power was loaned to Christ in order to make this Creation and who animated Christ, sustaining Him from moment to moment during mortality and who has surrendered the throne of the Father to Christ once He was exalted and resurrected and attained to resurrection—God the Father and God the Mother (the Heavenly Parents), they **do** know everything about all of us. And despite that, they find every one of us precious, valuable, potentially infinite, potentially like Them.

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Truth is not always welcome. The truth can require us to change our minds, acknowledge our mistakes, and do things differently. But truth is compared to light in the scriptures. Errors are compared to darkness. We are promised that if we will welcome the light, then the light will grow. “And that which does not edify is not of God, and is darkness. That which is of God is light, and he that receives light and continues in God receives more light, and that light grows brighter and brighter until the perfect day.” T&C 36:4.

Of all people in the world, you who live in the Land of the Rising Sun should understand how growing light is a blessing from heaven. The light of a perfect day is when you have all truth, and no darkness remains in you.

We plan to build a temple where mankind and the gods will associate with each other, like it was in the beginning. We know that the gods expect us to accomplish this, and we are now preparing to do this. When that temple is built, it will be the “ensign” Isaiah wrote about when he described today. People will come from the four corners of the earth, and from the islands of the sea, to assemble in that temple. Isaiah said those who come to that temple will learn about the gods and truths of this world. Isaiah wrote, “But in the last days, it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” OC Isa. 1:9.

We believe the gods intend to keep every promise they made to mankind. We believe Jesus Christ will restore all of us to life. We know that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose from the dead. He has instructed us to be baptized in His name as an initiation to follow

Him. Baptism is a ritual to symbolize death, burial and resurrection. We are put under the water, to symbolize being buried in the ground. We are brought back out of the water to symbolize rising from the grave or returning to life following death. We have authority from Jesus Christ to teach about Him and to baptize any who choose to follow Him.

Baptism begins a new life. It is sometimes called being “born again” because it represents living a new life, laying down the old life. When we begin to follow Jesus Christ, the light begins to grow. Increasing light comes as a blessing from the gods to those who follow the path of Jesus Christ.

Increasing light inside our spirits lets us understand this creation. The search for truth is the search for light. In a dark room, many things are hidden from our sight by the darkness. Eyes cannot help you in darkness. You can feel carefully, and slowly with patience and effort, you can discover chairs, and bookcases, and other things in the darkness. Yet you will not understand any colors, nor fully comprehend what is hidden in the darkness.

But in the same room, with the help of light, you can see everything. Even the colors of the objects are easily understood. There are many reasons why we do not see this creation clearly. There are many forms of darkness.

The standard of truth for today is the 1,000 year record of the people who migrated to the Americas. That record was revealed and translated in 1830. All truth from every part of the world should be measured by that record.

Having a record does not mean you understand it. Like Lance who saw only what he expected to see in the forest, and like James who also saw only what he expected, we also read the *Book of Mormon* to see what we want to see.

You have different minds, a different culture, and different ideas in you. When you read our sacred books you see, understand, and interpret them from your vantage point. You can see what we do not. In the search for truth, we can help one another to see more of what is really there and to notice what is hidden from one point of view. The most accurate book of truth is still not fully understood.

We must all be willing to accept light when the gods offer it to us. The *Book of Mormon* tells us: “he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word. 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 they know them in full. And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries.”

The *Book of Mormon* tells us that the gods have given every nation some part of the truth. We are looking to find and gather again truths from every nation. We are taught: “the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have.” We have been told: “There will yet be records restored from all the tribes, that will be gathered again into one.”

According to the *Book of Mormon*, your nation has been given words from the gods. They are wise words to guide your nation. Even if the original words have been lost or changed, the ideas from above remain as part of culture, tradition, and attitudes. Help us to understand your greatest wisdom, and we will share what wisdom we have with you.

Our scriptures declare: “Truth is Mormonism. God is the author of it. He is our shield. It is by him we received our birth. It was by his voice that we were called to a dispensation of his gospel in the beginning of the fullness of times. It was by him we received the *Book of Mormon*, and it is by him that we remain unto this day.” If you have truth, then it is part of our religion.

This is the time that was promised thousands of years ago when God “might gather together in one all things in Christ (both which are in Heaven and which are on earth), in him.”

To keep the promises, God will lead faithful people from all over the world to be gathered into one body of believers who will be commanded to begin: “building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed, that my covenant people may be gathered in one in the day that I shall come to my temple.”

King Benjamin said wickedness was never happiness. But wickedness is really the playground in which, because of this environment, our bodies are naturally vulnerable and inclined to those failings. Your body gets tired. Your body gets sleepy. You have to go to sleep at night in order to give this frail body an opportunity to rest. Does your spirit need to sleep? Does your spirit get tired? Does your spirit wear out? It’s co-eternal with God. Very often, what’s going on at night when you’re having dreams is not your body—but it’s the fact that your body can’t contain the activity of a spirit that never sleeps. There are **numerous** instances (in the Scripture) of God communicating a message to someone in a dream. There are numerous instances of God appearing in the night vision.

The apostle Paul talked about how he was caught up to the third heaven. And when he was caught up to the third heaven, he makes the observation: *...whether in the body...or...out of the body, I cannot tell*. But he was caught up to the third heaven because the bodies of your first parents (Adam and Eve and all of us as descendants of them) are made in the image of God. If you are in the presence, caught up to the third heaven, all of the things that you have now—fingers and toes, a body composed of intelligence and made of light and truth—appears to be the same thing that you’re walking around here that’s composed of dust. You can’t tell the difference between the two. Everything about that is just as physical in its appearance/in its experience as is what we experience here in these bodies of dust.

But he was caught up, and he experienced the presence of God, and he saw and he heard unspeakable things. Well, why are they unspeakable? They’re unspeakable for largely the same reason that Ezekiel describes the “glory of God” instead of “God”—and the glory of God inhabiting the place in the temple that God went into. Because it’s hard to get past the limitations of this dust in order to get your hands around and to describe what it is that gets experienced there. It is “unspeakable” because the only way I’m able to communicate to you today is either using my mouth or writing letters on a board. That’s pretty limiting. What

Paul experienced was not limited in that way. **You** have the same capacity as Paul. **You** have the ability to take into you, through the spirit, the light and the truth or the intelligence that is coequal and coexistent with God Himself.

In your physical body, there is one and only one organ that allows you to see. Now, you get a side-by-side in order to have depth perception—because the only way you can perceive depth is if you have two points of origin in order to see that you're closer and you're further away, and depth comes from the triangle. It gets used in order to triangulate to figure out distance all the time; computers do that for us all the time. But in this physical body of dust, the only way you can see is through your eyes. If we injure your eyes, we can blind you. Do you think that your spirit can only see with eyes? Well, the answer to that is your spirit can see as a native part of every bit of the person of intelligence or light and truth. If you were in the spirit and you could behold God, and God were at your side (or above you or behind you)—in the spirit and quickened, so that you weren't blinded by the body, but you could behold—you would not need to turn your eyes or to turn around; you could behold the presence of God in the spirit from every source. All of the powers of the body that are limited to the particular organs are a function of **this** organization [referring to the body]. The spirit has capacities far, far greater than the body.

When you say (assuming you sing that old song) that you are a child of God, you are **literally that** in the sense of your spirit. It was and it is connected to that couple who created you, that image (male and female) that organized the first parents—it's part of them. It resides within you. It was organized to exist and to experience things to help it grow and increase in understanding. You have to come down here and to live in a body of dust in order to spend a time experiencing things that let you comprehend the difference between light and darkness, goodness and badness, weakness and strength, eternal life and mortality. This body is going to go (that you occupy), it's going to go through not only a lot of changes, but it's also going to be riddled with mistakes and errors, some of which are going to be relatively serious. That body is going to experience a lot of regrets. Well, the regrets are because the spirit has learned something from the error or the mistake that got made and will wish that it had not happened, it was not done, you did not fail. But you did. So, how in the eternal scheme of things does God's will play out in your life, in my life, with this body of dust that has made mistakes and made errors? Temporarily, while we're still here, we have the opportunity to repent and return to God and be forgiven.

...You can have the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost and have your mind opened up so that you comprehend things that were not comprehensible.

One of the best descriptions that we've got of this in the Scripture is what happened after Joseph and Oliver went out and baptized one another based upon the commandment that they were given by John the Baptist. Afterwards, Joseph makes the observation in his history, T&C 1: "Our minds being enlightened, we were able to comprehend the more mysterious passages of scripture in a manner we could never previously attain to" (see Joseph Smith History 14:4). What that meant was: Having been quickened by the spirit, having been enlightened by the baptism of fire, having received the Holy Ghost, this awareness came to mind.

See, the Scriptures become an extraordinarily valuable basis for unlocking (with the power of the Holy Ghost) the understanding of eternity, whether it's opened up in a vision or simply comprehension as you read the Scriptures. Scriptures got composed by people under the influence of the Holy Ghost. And so, they reduce what their understanding, comprehending, or "having opened to their mind" to words on a page. But the words on the page are **not** the content. The content was what the spirit inspired. So, if you **read** with the power of the spirit like Joseph and Oliver were doing, then what comes **alive** in these passages is the same extended view, comprehension, light, and truth that extended knowledge as a result of that.

But being "quickened in the spirit in order to behold God" is actually dealing with an impediment that we have in this [the body] because the glory of God in a fullness is actually dangerous to this body. It's toxic and destructive. It would be like stepping in front of a—you know—a thermonuclear explosion. I mean, God is capable of occupying everything within His creation. He can occupy any of it. Temperature at the corona of the sun is what? Twenty million degrees? God is not damaged by that. Well, if He were to unveil all His glory (which He intends to do at some point around the Second Coming), it will be destructive of anything that He doesn't pick out to preserve and to save by quickening...

Go back now in your mind to the idea that the spirit, the holy ghost, the thing that you possess (in particular, when you connect up with it following baptism) includes the Record of Heaven or the truth of all things, and realize that that is connected to what went on before this world was.

- You're standing there when **this** Creation was planned.
- You **saw**, and you **heard** what went on in the Councils of Heaven preliminary to the commencement of the Creation of this world.
- You **knew** what the plan was.
- You knew who the **Redeemer** would be.
- You knew who the **opponent** of that was.
- You **knew** about the rebellion, and you **chose** not to participate in that.
- You **elected** to come here and to take on all of the risks and vicissitudes, the troubles and the trials of mortality because you **trusted** that Christ would deliver on His promise to come here and to redeem and reverse from the blows of death that are inflicted through the fall of man by Adam and Eve, our first parents.
- You trusted that you would **get out** of the predicament that you're in presently because the Savior stood up and said He would go, and He would do as the Father commanded.
- And another one argued that, "Not so fast! Let me go down. I will destroy the agency of man, and I will make it possible for everyone to be saved without regard to whether they are good or bad, virtuous or unvirtuous, whether they are kindly or whether they are murderers. I'll just redeem them all, and we'll repack Heaven with that same crew that goes down (after they go down, and they indulge themselves in the flesh)."

Kind of a messy plan. It might get everyone back there again, but once you brought them back there, they're even **less** suitable for occupying the halls of Heaven than they were

before they came down here in the first instance. And the objective is to come down here to be **added** upon—that is, to experience things and to make war against them; to let your conscience control your fleshly appetites; to reign in, not to give vent to licentiousness and worldliness and body-ness and ambition and hatred—all of the appetites that drag you down. And every one of you who's here, if you've ever engaged in an internal debate in which you were tempted to do something and you held yourself back from doing so, every one of you have been added upon. And the more you do that over the course of a lifetime and the more you connect to the Record of Heaven, the more you are able to understand and see and comprehend the truth of all things. It's what you're here to experience. It's what you're here to do. And every time you make a move in that direction, you're added upon.

This gives definition to what Christ was telling His apostles about when He described the coming Holy Ghost that would fall upon them. He says,

*But the Comforter, who is the holy ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you **all things**, and bring **all things** to your remembrance... (John 9:9 RE, emphasis added)*

How can you possibly remember the truth of all things? It's because it **resides** within you, and you can access that **by your heed and diligence**. Those are the very words that are used to describe how it was that Christ overcame the world: by His heed and diligence. The more heed and diligence that you give to the commandments of God, the more the light within you grows. It's already there. You're just permitting it to invade the body of flesh and to inform you by triggering your memory.

It can emerge abruptly and suddenly. Joseph talked about how you can have come to your mind sudden bursts of insight and ideas such that, shortly thereafter, you will find the thing come to pass. So, that's the principle of revelation; that's the beginning of the path. Revelation begins with stirring up from deep within you the power of that light, that truth, that glory of God so that it intrudes into your consciousness; it intrudes into your body. You grasp things that you could not previously have attained to. That principle of revelation grows and grows brighter and brighter (as it says in the Scriptures) until the perfect day. In the perfect day, you're actually standing—although in the body—you're actually standing with the Heavens opened unto you. It... The light shines forth so that you comprehend and you find companionship with the folks in Heaven, the ministering angels, the Son. The purpose of angels is to fulfill and do the works of the covenants. Purpose of the covenants is to lead you along until you have an audience with Christ. The purpose and ministry of Christ is to bring you to the Father. And the purpose of all of that is to reunite **you** back to that family that you were part of before you ever got here...

The foregoing excerpts were taken from:

- Denver's conference talk titled "The Heavens are Open", given in Hurricane, UT on March 22, 2020

- Denver's remarks given at the "Unity in Humanity" interfaith celebration, and online event held on June 7, 2020
- Denver & Stephanie's remarks made during the EU Fellowship Meeting on June 14, 2020
- Denver's talk titled "The Search for Truth", presented October 4, 2020 during the Search for Truth online event, originating from Kurayoshi, Japan
- Denver's talk titled "Understanding Your Soul," delivered in Sandy, Utah on February 6, 2021; and
- Denver's talk titled "Understanding Your Soul, Part 2," delivered in Highland, Utah on March 6, 2021