

# Patterns of Intelligence

## CHAPTER 6

### THE NATURE OF GOD

While we have talked about the existence and intelligence of God, at this point we should ask ourselves: "what is the nature of God?" What is His personality?

Satan would have us believe that God is a vengeful God, whose wrath is fierce and knows no boundary and that God enjoys casting people down to hell. As always, this is exactly the opposite of the truth.

In LDS doctrine God is a loving God because He is the literal Father of our spirits and He wants very much for us to succeed in this life.

President George Q. Cannon said:

"No matter how serious the trial, how deep the distress, how great the affliction, [God] will never desert us. He never has, and He never will. **He cannot do it.** It is [against] His character [to do so]. He is an unchangeable being. ... He will stand by us. We may pass through the fiery furnace; we may pass through deep waters; but we shall not be consumed nor overwhelmed. We shall emerge from all these trials and difficulties the better and the purer for them, if we only trust in our God and keep His commandments."

This is a marvelous quote that clearly describes the love that our Heavenly Father has for us and His extreme desire that we succeed in this life!! He will do his part for us to succeed and He will "never desert us" no matter what we do!! **He cannot desert us!!**

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, of the Quorum of Twelve, quoted President Cannon and said this in the same talk:

"Those who will receive the Lord Jesus Christ as the source of their salvation will always lie down in green pastures, no matter how barren and bleak the winter has been. And the waters of their refreshment will always be still waters, no matter how turbulent the storms of life. In walking His path of righteousness, our souls will be forever restored; and though that path may for us, as it did for Him, lead through the very valley of the shadow of death, yet we will fear no evil.

The rod of His priesthood and the staff of His Spirit will always comfort us. And when we hunger and thirst in the effort, He will prepare a

veritable feast before us, a table spread even in the presence of our enemies—contemporary enemies—which might include fear or family worries, sickness or personal sorrow of a hundred different kinds." Jeffrey R. Holland: " He Hath Filled the Hungry with Good Things'," Ensign, Nov 1997, 64

In these quotes we see the great love and great desire for our ultimate success that our Heavenly Father has for us.

There is a Turkish proverb: "No matter how far you've gone down the wrong road, turn back." And the prophets would add: "and God will be standing right behind you when you turn around."

We mortals are in the middle of a war, with our free agency, trying to decide which fork in the road we will choose.

Heavenly Father knows none of us will go through life without making many mistakes. Only Christ was capable of going through life without making many mistakes (in fact He made no mistakes). So there is sufficient provision made for us so that if we are not perfect, as none of us are, we can still "choose eternal life" now matter how far we have gone down the wrong path!!

We were put on this planet based on a complex plan so that we could learn, gain experience, be tested and progress (i.e. improve over time). We were not placed here, as evolutionists would claim, to see who we can conquer, how much power we can accumulate or how rich we can become!!

28 O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

29 But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God.

30 But wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world. For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures; wherefore, their treasure is their God. And behold, *their treasure shall perish with them also.*

2 Nephi 9:28-30

If we do what satan wants, and set our hearts on riches, honor and power so we can fantasize about being superior to others; this is exactly the opposite of what God wants, which is for us to use our talents and resources to help and serve others.

Money, by itself, will not condemn anyone. It is how a person thinks about this money, how they think about God, how they think about others and what they do with their money. This is one of my favorite stories in the Bible:

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; **for I am tormented in this flame.**

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a **great gulf fixed**: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses **and the prophets**; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, **If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.**

Clearly, in this story the Savior is talking about **His living prophet (i.e. if they hear not Moses and the [living] prophets)**. The dead will not likely visit us to warn us if we are doing wrong because we have a living prophet. In other words, we are expected to listen to our living prophet as were those in the time of Christ.

Also, in this story the rich man, when he was alive, obviously was more concerned about his money than in helping Lazarus. In fact, there is no evidence he cared at all about Lazarus. The rich man was clearly not living the Golden Rule. In fact, that may be the main sin that he committed to end up in hell, though his wealth may also have condemned him for other reasons as well.

Did he obtain his gold honestly? We don't know. Did he inherit his wealth? We don't know. Did he use his wealth to help others? No. Only the third issue seems to be relevant in this story.

The "Golden Rule" is not about gold, it is about service. It is about the mental and spiritual state of the person who has the gold (or what people would do if they had the gold). Do they love others or do they love their gold?

The goal of satan and evolution is to convince people to conquer others, to get above others and to think they are "better" than others. This is the measure of success according to satan and evolution and "the world."

But this very measure of success to evolution *can be* the very measure of failure to God (see the end of 2 Nephi 9:30 above - "*their treasure shall perish with them also*").

Even if the rich man had given a little money to Lazarus, he likely still would have ended up in hell because his heart was clearly on his treasure, not in following God and His prophets. A token gesture to the poor is not an indication of where a person's heart is.

This next quote from the Book of Mormon is a marvelous summary of why we were put on this earth and what God expects from us. These are the words of Lehi to his sons as recorded in 2 Nephi chapter 9:

26 And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given.

27 Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are *free to choose liberty and eternal life*, through the great Mediator of all men, or to *choose captivity and death*, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.

28 And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words, and choose eternal life, according to the will of his Holy Spirit;

29 And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom.

2 Nephi 2:26-29

Note in verses 28 and 29 Lehi is essentially saying: "if you have chosen the wrong road turn around and start going down the right road." In fact, Laban and Lemuel had frequently had gone down the wrong road!! But they never did change for very long.

Given all the very bad things some of his sons had done, they were given an amazing offer!! But they ultimately rejected the offer.

What these verses are saying is that (because of the atonement of Christ) we are "*free to choose liberty and eternal life*, through the great Mediator of all men, or to *choose captivity and death*, according to the captivity and power of the devil."

More importantly, we are free to turn around if we are on the wrong road.

Heavenly Father has made provisions so that we can turn around and change paths.

In fact, Heavenly Father seeks that all men might have the "eternal life" (verse 27) that He has.

Satan seeks that "all men might be miserable like unto himself" (verse 27) and that "he may reign over you in his own kingdom" (verse 29).

What a contrast!!! This is the ultimate "opposite" between God and satan!!

We see in these verses the baseline difference between Christ and Heavenly Father versus satan (the devil). Heavenly Father and Christ want us to succeed and they will do what they can (without taking away our free agency) to help us obtain eternal life. When we fall, they will pick us up!! When we turn around, they will be there.

Satan, on the other hand, wants us to fail and he will do anything in his power (satan is not given the power to force us against our free agency, he can only tempt us) to make sure we fail so we will be "miserable like unto himself."

Satan also tries to convince us that we are beyond repentance, which is another false doctrine.

As always, we see that the will of God and the will of satan are mirror images of each other.

The theory of evolution teaches that there is no God, there is no Christ, there is no plan of salvation and that we are here to conquer others, such as becoming rich and powerful.

God wants us to love others, not conquer them. God is on our side!! But He will not interfere with our opportunity to make choices. He can and will answer our prayers and questions, in His own time and in His own way, if we will exercise faith in Him.

He has given the church members local leaders, such as Bishops and Stake Presidents, to help us one-on-one. This is an amazing gift and we should take advantage of that gift when we need to.

Remember above all: "No matter how serious the trial, how deep the distress, how great the affliction, [God] will never desert us. He never has, and He never will. [He cannot do it.](#)"

That is the *true* nature of our God.