
INTELLIGENCE

According to latter-day scripture, “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth” (D&C 93:36). Mankind, too, may be glorified by gaining intelligence (D&C 93:28–30). As Christ did not receive a fulness of intelligence at first but continued from “grace to grace” until he received a fulness (D&C 93:11–13, 27–28), so it is with all persons. Whatever principles of intelligence they gain in mortality will rise with them in the Resurrection (D&C 130:18–19).

To gain increased intelligence, individuals must be agents to act for themselves (D&C 93:30), which means that they must be tried and tempted (D&C 29:39), and at the same time, the works of the Lord must be plainly manifest to them (D&C 93:31) so that they will have choice. In *PREMORTAL LIFE*, men and women were intelligent beings (Abr. 3:21–22) who were given *AGENCY* by God (Moses 4:3; D&C 29:36). In mortality, they are also given agency by God (D&C 101:78), to gain knowledge of good and evil (Moses 5:11). Intelligence increases as individuals forsake evil and come to the Lord, calling on his name, obeying his voice, and keeping his commandments (D&C 93:1–2, 28, 37). Intelligence is lost through disobedience, hardening of hearts, and clinging to false traditions (Mark 8:21; D&C 93:39).

Intelligence, however defined, is not created or made (D&C 93:29); it is coeternal with God (*TPJS*, pp. 353–54). Some LDS leaders have interpreted this to mean that intelligent beings—called intelligences—existed before and after they were given spirit bodies in the premortal existence. Others have interpreted it to mean that intelligent beings were organized as spirits out of eternal intelligent matter, that they did not exist as individuals before they were organized as spirit beings in the premortal existence (Abr. 3:22; *JD* 7:57; 2:124). The Church has taken no official position on this issue.

[See also *Intelligences*.]

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INTELLIGENCES

The word “intelligences” (plural) occurs frequently in LDS literature, having reference to the period of the premortal existence of mankind. The term has received two interpretations by writers within the Church: as the literal spirit children of Heavenly Parents and as individual entities existing prior to their spirit birth. Because latter-day revelation has not clarified the meaning of the term, a more precise interpretation is not possible at present.

The scriptural source for the word “intelligences” is the *BOOK OF ABRAHAM* 3:21–22. The Lord instructed the patriarch Abraham regarding the premortal experiences of all who have been or ever will be upon the earth. Among those events was the *COUNCIL IN HEAVEN*, at which the Father’s *PLAN OF SALVATION* for his children was discussed. Abraham wrote of this, “Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; . . . for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them” (Abr. 3:22–23). The Prophet Joseph SMITH spoke of intelligences as follows: “God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. He has power to institute laws to instruct the weaker intelligences, that they may be exalted with himself, so that they might have one glory upon another, and all that knowledge, power, glory, and intelligence, which is requisite in order to save them” (*TPJS*, p. 354).

Concerning man’s premortal existence, the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith, “Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be” (D&C 93:29). “Intelligence,” as used here, is singular, and it is not clear from this passage if it refers to individual, conscious identity. As noted, Abraham referred to the spirit offspring of God as organized intelligences, apparently using the word “intelligences” to mean “spirits.” Church authorities have indicated that spirit birth was not the beginning. Spencer W. KIMBALL, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote, “Our spirit matter was eternal and co-existent with God, but it was organized into spirit bodies by our Heavenly