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LIFE'S MEANING!

MAN: A PRODUCT OF PURPOSE.

WHY am I here? is the inward cry of every thinking person. Without a sufficient reply, life remains empty and desolate. Along with that question are two of equal value. Whence did I come? Where shall I go? If these three questions are answered satisfactorily, intelligent direction is given to all human actions.

Intelligent people require an objective to make life worth while. Our advancing knowledge declares that intelligence and purpose are found in the whole of the universe; therefore, there must be a purpose in man's appearance on earth. What is that purpose?
MAN IS ETERNAL.

Life's meaning can best be unravelled by searching man's inmost nature. In that pursuit, the most fundamental discovery is the eternal existence of man—that man lived before he came upon earth. In that pre-existent life he thought, acted and progressed, even as, in a different degree and under a different environment he does upon earth. "Man was in the beginning with God;" and that beginning reaches into the measureless past, beyond human comprehension. This is not a new doctrine, but one that has been forgotten in the centuries of man-made religions.
EVIDENCES OF PRE-EXISTENCE.

Every person has the feeling that he has lived in a life before this. At times the memory of that life seems very near. This universal feeling can not be laid aside as idle imagination.

Poets of many lands, have written, with clear vision, of the pre-existent life, its beauty and joy. Philosophers, among them great ones, like Plato, have convinced themselves by processes of reason, that man had a pre-existent life. Scientists who have proved the universe to be eternal, indestructible and everlasting, have refused to deny man, the head of creation, the quality of eternal existence, to make him inferior to things solely material, such as wood and stone. Prophets, inspired by the Lord, have proclaimed the pre-existence of man, as in the cry of Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?"

Modern revelation teaches definitely that man had a pre-existent life. The pre-existence of man is an assured fact.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

In the pre-existent, spiritual estate, all mankind were begotten spirit children of the Lord. We were a vast spiritual family. Thus comes the true Fatherhood of the Lord. Father-like, our Creator in that long-past day provided for our welfare. His plan for the development or education of His spirit children

is the plan of salvation, known as the Gospel. As we increased in power and understanding we approached, that is we earned, the right of another profitable experience, another school—the earth experience, an earth-school. The plan provided that the eternal spirits, having gained the experience of the spirit world and spiritual conditions, might, if they so desired, be clothed upon with mortal bodies and taught the lessons furnished by earthly or material conditions. Then, provided with the learning and power of this two-fold experience, they would return to the spirit world to continue there the progressive labours of eternity. The plan of salvation is a plan of education of eternal spirits for everlasting, eternally progressive life.

The plan of salvation involves three estates of man: First, of the pre-existent spirit world; second, of the earth, and third, of life hereafter—the three representing ascending, increasing periods of eternal, progressive existence.

The plan of salvation is intended for the whole family of spirits, not for a few of them. Its purpose will not be completed until the whole human family has yielded obedience to the plan, on earth or in the hereafter. Therefore, every man must help his brother.

To assist weak man in this work and to make possible the eternal association of the spirit with the earth-won body, Jesus, the first begotten of the Father, was appointed as Leader, Director and Saviour of mankind.

FREE AGENCY AND PROGRESSION.

The plan of human salvation was formulated by the Lord, but it is not compulsory upon eternal man. Salvation here or hereafter is not forced upon man. In every person inheres the right of free agency, the right to accept or reject whatever is offered, to act for oneself in all matters. This quality is sacred before the Lord. Taught we may be, by Divinity itself, but we must, upon our own volition, accept or reject that which is given us.

The plan of salvation provides for the progression, the unending education and increasing happiness, of eternal man. Nothing in the universe stands still. There was no standing still in the pre-existent state, there can be none in the life to come. Every man, by the exercise of his free agency, progresses towards more abundant life, or retrogrades towards darkness and death.

The plan of salvation provides the way by which man may help himself, through obedience to eternal law, to win the power and joy of eternal life.

THE BUSINESS OF EARTH.

Man comes upon earth because he has earned the right to be born and has accepted the plan of salvation. He comes as to a

school, to become acquainted with the material world and to learn how to master it. He comes in forgetfulness of his pre-existent joys, and subject to the rough forces of the material world, including death, the temporary separation of body and spirit. Every honest task of this earth, in the kitchen, shop, farm or office, every toil and struggle, contributes to the earthly education of man, and has a spiritual equivalent.

Man is so placed on earth that his free agency, the tempering, upbuilding power within him, may have the fullest exercise for expression.

Man is not left alone on earth. The Lord from the beginning has taught him such eternal principles of life as are needed. These are known in their entirety as the Gospel. They were taught to the first man; they have been taught again to others as men have departed from them or adulterated them. The earth programme is under constant divine supervision.

It is not intended that man on earth should suffer because of bodily needs. "Man is that he might have joy." The earth with its fullness is ample to supply all of humanity's needs. It is expected that he will use his powers to provide against his spiritual and bodily requirements. The Gospel, in its fullness, teaches how this may be done. Poverty and riches are not necessary to please the Lord. Properly directed efforts for happiness in the physical, economic, social or spiritual realms of life develop man and give him the most valuable results of earth life. Man is placed on earth to win true and complete happiness.

LIFE HEREAFTER.

Man is deathless. Birth is not his beginning and death is not his end. He passes from earth into the world of spirits; he recovers his body, purified and eternally useful, through the resurrection made possible by Jesus Christ, the key figure of the plan of salvation; and he continues eternally, actively, in the work of progression in knowledge, power and wisdom. He retains his power of thought, learning and action, of faith, repentance, obedience and free agency. Family relationships continue in that new world. Father, mother, children and friends maintain their devotion to each other. Over all is the presence of the Eternal Father. It is an active, progressing estate.

GRADED SALVATION.

Salvation is the reward or gift to the free agent who has used his will in harmony with the code of divine requirements for eternal progress. But, all men do not use their wills for righteousness to the same degree. Then, will everyone be saved alike? No, that would be neither logical nor just. Each person will

receive a degree of salvation proportioned to his righteous work. "In my Father's house are many mansions." No one, unless it be the impossible few, will fail of salvation. All will receive some degree of salvation, and the great punishment of those who have done evil will be that they have failed to achieve all that was within their possibilities. Yet, the mercy of God, which magnifies our small righteous endeavours into glorious rewards, will not forget the meanest sinner. Man can think, act, reject and accept, repent and seek forgiveness on that other side as here. He can make up for his failures, since his natural power of free agency remains undisturbed throughout all time. Hence the door of progression is not closed against him throughout the eternities. Nevertheless, by his misdeeds he travels onward in the rear when he might have been near the head of the army of the Lord. None of us in that great coming day shall be fully happy unless all are moving towards the greatest possible joy, that is, have accepted the laws of the Lord.

THE MEANING OF LIFE.

Thus, in terms of eternal, progressive existence, the meaning of life is explained.

Life on earth, a chapter of our eternal progression, is given us for a two-fold purpose:

1. To prepare us for further progression and development.
2. To enable us to assist our fellow men to secure the same

needed preparation.

For these purposes we strive to conquer the forces of earth, our unseemly appetites and every progress-retarding temptation. For these purposes we cherish love and beauty and all the virtues. For these purposes we meet the trials of life gladly and give glory to the Lord. Those who understand life's meaning strive boldly, happily, for progress, knowing full well that the experiences of earth will be transmuted into precious eternal realities.

THE REVELATION OF THESE DAYS.

This larger conception of the origin, destiny and meaning of human life, known since the beginning of time, was lost during the centuries of man's departure from the true doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were restored again, by revelation, in this day through the Prophet Joseph Smith, who became the organizer of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

This latter day life-philosophy is marvelous in its comprehensiveness and completeness, in its power to satisfy the righteous desires of man. Will you investigate it?

JOHN A. WIDTSOE,
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Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,
British Mission Office, 43 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.