

Wednesday, August 22, 2012

BFHG, Part 3

by Denver Snuffer

There is a balance of light and darkness. There is an opposition necessary in all things. ([2 Ne. 2: 11-12.](#)) Moses was not able to encounter the Lord without also experiencing the adversary. ([Moses 1: 12.](#)) Joseph, likewise, felt the destructive power of our common enemy before understanding the Lord. ([JS-H 1: 16.](#)) Some days before baptism, and then about a week after, I encountered the murderous rage of the enemy who seeks to destroy us all. I do not speak or write about this, because fools are prone to give the wrong attention to such matters and thereby surrender unnecessary power to our enemies. Therefore, I leave it to others to confront this subject and only declare I know who and what my enemy is. I have rarely spoken in any detail, and do not recall providing any written account of these experiences.

I make mention of this because there are some critics who suggest I may be sincere, but I have been misled. I know the difference between the Lord and the Adversary. I've met both.

These two extremes aside, the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, in both Helaman and 3 Nephi, include ministering by angels. The first time I beheld an angel I was caught up to an exceedingly high place. From that vantage point I could see the curvature of the earth below. It was above, high and lifted up. In an instant I understood Nephi's description of an exceeding high mountain. ([1 Ne. 11: 1.](#)) When I wrote *The Second Comforter: Conversing With the Lord Through the Veil*, I included a description of this. I was told by those who reviewed it before publication that the explanation seemed arrogant; as if I were comparing myself to Nephi. Therefore, it was removed from the book. There is always tension between the obligation to declare the truth of a matter on the one hand, and the mis-perception of motives on the other. The truth can be opposed either by lies or by questioning the speaker's intention or motive. Either will do, because people are so easily removed from the truth.

To explain this subject, however, the remainder of the account needs to be told. Therefore, **I include here what was removed from the text of *The Second Comforter*.**

As I stood before this angel I noted that he was old, as tall as I am, with a beard, a full head of hair. It was long, but not quite to his shoulders. He spoke with authority, accustomed to declaring messages with efficiency and clarity. His demeanor was somber, as if the weight of eternity rested upon him. Although there was nothing vocal, he spoke with the clarity of a voice which settled deep within me as he said: "On the first day of the third month in nine years, your ministry will begin. And so you must prepare." Nearly 40 years separate me from that moment, but I can close my eyes and see it still. When an angel speaks to you, you never forget. Through all that has come and gone since that day, I am still transfixed by that moment.

After he spoke to me, he stood and gazed at me saying nothing further. Thinking that was all he had for me, I began to look about. I was impressed by the blue curvature of the earth below. I noticed there were walls, but they were transparent. I wondered why walls would be built if they were transparent, because if you can see beyond them then there was no purpose. I noticed a painting on the wall and wondered why it was there. It made me curious as to why there would be any effort made to paint a portrait here in this setting. Though I had no idea why I recognized him, the painting was of Moses. I also wondered at his baldness since the High Priest could have no blemish and serve before the Lord ([Lev. 21: 16-23](#)) I assumed he would have a full head of hair. He did not.

As I stood there reflecting on the scene, I asked nothing. Eventually I was compelled to depart and I left this scene behind. It was some time before I wondered "what ministry?" "How was I to prepare?" These questions could have been asked, but I was so distracted by the circumstances that I gave them no thought at the time. When I later inquired in prayer to know these things, I received no answer. As I persisted in asking for many

months, at length I was asked why I hadn't inquired of the angel at the time I was told of the ministry. It was a hard lesson, but perhaps the only way I would learn it.

It was many months later that I heard the instruction about keeping a journal. By that time I had no way of knowing the date of the visit, and therefore assumed it reckoned from the year I was baptized in 1973. I wrote it down.

I lost track of time as the years came and went. I'd finished serving in the military, had graduated from law school, and had a family. When I remembered and reconstructed the events, I renewed my anticipation early in 1982, waiting for March 1st. That day came and went and nothing happened.

I concluded I hadn't prepared for the ministry, and therefore lost the opportunity. I felt rejected and mourned at my failure. I tried to renew my devotion, and wondered what would have been given if I'd met the standard I was supposed to meet. But then again, I also thought that if the Lord had been more clear, perhaps I could have met the standard. I wanted to blame the Lord for my failure. He hadn't answered the questions about what it was I needed to do. At a minimum, I wanted the Lord to share in the blame for my failure. I also wanted to conceal it. I went to my journal and took out the pages dealing with this and destroyed them. This is why the journal now begins on page 14. But with the passage of time, I let it go and gave it no further thought. There was so much to do in life with family responsibilities that unpleasant thoughts of personal failure can be abandoned if you want.

On March 1st of the following year I was visited by President Tolman (the Sunday School President and at the time a Seminary Teacher in the Pleasant Grove High School Seminary program) and Bishop Harris. They called me to be the Gospel Doctrine teacher. It was not until after they left that I remembered the significance of "the first day of the third month" and rehearsed it all again in my mind. I realized that the visit must have happened in 1974 and not 1973. I had the chronology wrong.

It was many years later that I remembered destroying those pages from my journal. I had to explain all these errors in a re-creation of the events. From this I have learned to leave all the failures, all the mistakes, and any hard lessons which I have had to endure and suffer complete and recorded. There can be no attempt to shield myself from criticism in these journals. The truth of matters should be left, and my pride should be abandoned. No man elevates himself by pretensions to being more than they are.

Once called as Gospel Doctrine teacher, I remained in that position in Pleasant Grove, Alpine and Sandy, Utah for over two decades, only moving to teach Priesthood lessons when not in Gospel Doctrine. After decades of this, I was called as the Ward Mission Leader for two years, then onto the Stake High Council, then to teach the Priests' Quorum. I now do Temple Preparation for those Priests who are awaiting their mission calls.

These many years of teaching required me to study the scriptures daily, to be able to give lessons that would edify. There was not a day that went by when I did not study the scriptures for these decades.

This background is required for you to understand how I have come to my understanding on this subject. Not that *I* matter at all, but the doctrine does. It is the doctrine that will save you, not man. But you may want to understand better the background of the man who is writing about this doctrine.

If the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost is viewed as conferring revelation and opening the scriptures to your mind (as Joseph and Oliver recount in the JS-H), then I have received this endowment. If it is viewed as requiring ministering of angels, then I affirm I have received this endowment, also; not to make any personal claim, but to testify and affirm these things are not ancient, or distant. They are intended to continue in our own day. They are meant for all - including you.