John the Baptist.

Did He Ever Doubt the Divine Mission of the Savior?

Editor Deseret News:

In the Gospel narrative concerning the life of John the Baptist it is stated that John on one occasion sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask Him the question "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" Upon this text some have based the opinion that the mind of John the Baptist had become darkened, as much as that he did not know that Jesus was the Christ. The writer differs from this view and begs to submit some of his reasons for so doing.

In the first place the parents of John were both righteous before God. It was announced to them by an angel that they should have a son, in answer to their prayers, and that this son should be filled with the Holy Ghost from the first moment of his existence.

When John was old enough to leave his parents, he went into the desert and remained there under the tuition of those angelic beings whose mission it was to instruct him in all the divine mysteries of the kingdom of heaven until the full time had come for him to go forth among the people and then the word of the Lord came unto him in the wilderness that he was to commence his mission saying "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and so powerful and attractive was his preaching that "there went out to him all the region round about Jordan and were baptized of him, confessing their sins." He informed the people that another man would follow him, much more mighty than he, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. Soon after this, Jesus presented himself among the multitude as a candidate for baptism, but John said, "I have more need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me." and Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Although John knew Jesus before his baptism, yet there remained another and more powerful testimony for him, one with which he had been made acquainted while in the wilderness, viz., that when he should baptize the Son of God he should see the Holy Ghost descending from heaven and rest upon Him like a dove, so that no mistake might occur, for John had already baptized many men, and there was no external difference between Jesus and others. Therefore it was absolutely necessary that John should have the means of knowing him beyond the possibility of a doubt. And John bore record saying, "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove and it abode upon Him."

The Pharisees on one occasion asked John why he baptized, if he was not the Christ. He answered them saying: "There standeth one among you whom ye know not; He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me. The next day John seeth Jesus coming to him, and saith, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. I knew He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."

Now it is evident that at this time the mission of John was nearing its close. It is also evident that Jesus did not connect his ministerial labors with those of John, for the evangelist makes the statement that "Jesus was baptizing at Enon near Salem," and some persons presented themselves to John with the question as to the propriety of Jesus baptizing, for John said, "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove and it abode upon Him."

Jesus declared to the people that John was more than a prophet, in what particular the least shall be greater in the kingdom of heaven than John the Baptist, and he said he was prepared to answer it in public, and would do it then. "If ye could but have been," he said "on account of the miracles he performed, he John did no miracle, but it was true, because he was endowed with a divine mission of preparing the way before the face of the Lord. Who was endowed with such a mission, more or most? No man." Second, He was baptized and it was required at his hands to baptize the Son of God. Whence did that? Where ever had such a great privilege or glory? Whoever led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, beholding the Holy Ghost descending upon Him in the sign of a dove? No man. Third, John, at that time was the only legal administrator holding all the keys of power there was on the earth. The keys, the kingdom, the power and the glory had departed from the Jews, and John, the son Zacharias, to the authority and decree of Heaven held the keys of power at that time.

Jesus in alluding to the prophecies, that a messenger should be sent before the face of the Lord to prepare the way (spiritually says, this is he. Luke, the evangelist, says that they (the people) justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John; also that the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves not being baptized of John.

From the foregoing we see that God had commanded the people to be baptized with the baptism of John, others who they could not have rejected the counsel. The commencement of the Angel Gabriel, to Zacharias was that "thou shalt be glad at the sight of the Lord, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." The prophecy of Zacharias was "And thou child shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His way."

All testify to the greatness of John and there is not one sentence which affords the slightest reason to believe that he became darkened in his mind, or lost the knowledge that Jesus was the Christ. On the day that he was beheaded he held the keys of his Priesthood. The head is behind the veil from the day of his martyrdom, which is reckoned to have occurred about the year 29 A. D., and conferred it on Mar. 31, thirty eighteen hundred years thereafter on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. See Doctrine and Covenants, Section 13.

After what has been produced in name of John the Baptist, and to weaken the unfavorable impressions regarding his fidelity, the writer can only appeal to reason and sound judgment, and those persons who differ with him in theory, to give the subject their sober and powerful attention and should any light have been thrown upon the subject, let the honor thereof be ascribed to the great fountain of intelligence.

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Eleventh	Robert Hyde
Twelfth	Hyrum S. Clawson
Thirteenth	Nelson A. Dayton
Fourteenth	George H. Taylor
Fifteenth	Elias Morris
Sixteenth	Frederick Kesler
Seventeenth	John Tingey
Eighteenth	Orson F. Whitney
Nineteenth	Isaac Morton
Twentieth	George Romney
Twenty-first	Marcellus E. Knowlton
Twenty-second	Albert Solomon
Twenty-third	Geo R. Jones

Country Wards.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Big Cottonwood	Edmund D. B Brinton
Bluff Dale (Mountain View)	Lewis H. Moseley
Brighton (near Big Cottonwood)	F. C. M. L.
Ely (City)	Frederick W. Schroeder
Forest (Salt Lake City)	Albert W. Davis
Draper	Wm C. Allen
City Creek (Draper)	

Bear River Stake.
President: Jesse Jensen, P. E.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Dry Creek (Bell)	John Nell
Farmers B. C. O. P.	Henry F. Burton
Grantsville (Ruller)	Alvin Butler
Granger	Daniel Miller
Hooperville	Robert Inness
Hunter (S. L. City)	William Miller
Mill Creek	Reuben C. Hamilton
Mountain Dell	William D. Hoyt
North Jordan (Taylorville)	H. Bennett
North Point (S. L. City)	
Pleasant Green (Riter)	Hyrum T. Spencer
Riverside	Appleton O. Driggs
South Cottonwood	Joseph S. Rawlins
Sandy	James Jensen
South Jordan (Butler)	William A. Hills
Union	Samuel Phillips
West Jordan	John A. Egbert

Box Elder County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
North Plymouth (Plymouth)	
" "	Thomas H. Archibald
Plymouth	Myron J. Richards
Portage (West Portage)	Emery Harris
Washdale	Moroni Ward

Oneida County, Idaho.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Cherry Creek	John H. Jones, P. E.
Malad City	Joseph Jones
Namyo'ite (American Falls)	Wm Seeley
Rockland	Isaac Thorn
Samaria	Joseph Evans
St. Johns	James P. Harrison
Woodruff (West Portage)	Jos H. Harris

Montrose Stake.
President:
Counselors: Henry C. Rogers, Lehi; Colins R. Hakes, Mesa.
Maricopa County, Arizona.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Alma (Mesa)	Alexander Hunsaker
Lehi	T. E. Jones
Mesa	William Pomeroy
Papago (Lehi)	George M. Tillotson
Papago, Southern	H. C. Rogers, P. E.
Nephi	Samuel Spencer

Moroni Stake.
President: George Teasdale, Joarez.
Counselors: A. F. McDonald and Henry Eyring, Colonia Juarez. Chihuahua, Mexico.
Chihuahua Mexico.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Colonia Pacheco	Jesse N. Smith, Jr
Colonia Juarez	Geo W. Sevey
Colonia Dublan	Winslow Farr
Colonia Diaz	Wm Derby Johnson Jr

Nauvoo Stake.
President: John S. Hinckley, Fillmore.
Counselors: Daniel Thompson, Scipio; David H. Morris, Meadow.
Millard County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Deseret	Milton Moody
Fillmore	Thomas C. Callister
Hinckley (Deseret)	Wm H. Peck
Holden	Anthony Stephenson
Kanosh	Jesse Hotchkiss
Leamington	Lars N. Christensen
Meadow (Meadow Creek)	H. B. Stevens
Oak Creek	Peter Anderson
Oasis	John Sevier
Scipio	Thomas Yates

Morgan Stake.
President: Richard Fry, Morgan.
Counselors: Samuel Francis and W. H. Rich, Morgan.
Morgan County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Croydon	George Knight
Enterprise	J. E. Hall
Milton	William Giles
Morgan, North	O. P. Anderson
" South	Charles Turner
Peterson	John A. Wass
Porterville, Sec.	J. R. Porter
" West	Samuel Carter
Richville	A. D. Dickson

Oneida Stake.
President: Geo. C. Parkinson, Franklin.
Counselors: Solomon H. Hale, Malden; F. Cowley, Preston.
Oneida County, Idaho.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Clifton	Wm P. Garner
Dayton (Card)	Stephen Collier, P. E.
Franklin	Lorenzo L. Hales
Gem	Thomas W. Peart
Falls (Riverdale)	Hyrum J. Smith, P. E.
Mink Creek	Benjamin Rasmussen
Newville (Franklin)	Jas Parkin, Jr. P. E.
Preston	Wm H. Cutler
Riverdale	Theodore A. Moreland
St Joseph (Franklin)	Eliv M. Perkins
Weston	John H. Clarke
Whitney	James Chadwick
Worm Creek (Preston)	A. Y. Merrill, P. E.

Bannock County, Idaho.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Edkin (Oxford)	Hyrum Bringhurst, P. E.
Cambridge (Oxford)	Wm Coffin
Cleveland	Joseph A. Tolman
Dayton	Elmer P. Hale
Dempsey (Oxford)	Albert P. Hale
Green Creek (Oxford)	Joseph F. Capell
Marsh Creek (Oxford)	John Wright
McCammon (Oxford)	Alonzo Norton, P. E.
Mormon Valley (Oxford)	Jos. Bennion
Oxford	Joseph H. Lewis
Pocatello	Carl J. Cazier
Swan Lake (Oxford)	George Hinds, P. E.
Thatcher (Bennion Valley)	Lewis W. Ford
Tomerson (Oxford)	Benjamin Hymas
Tyler Creek (Lago)	Wm Moller Harris
Woodland (Oxford)	Henry Wakeley

Panguitch Stake.
President: Jesse W. Crosby, Jr., Panguitch.
Counselors: Melvin M. Stout, David Cameron, Panguitch.
Garfield County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Connorville	Seth Robinson
Loa (Loa)	Andrew P. Schow
Henrieville	Francis Lyman
Marion	Calvin King
Panguitch	Allen Miller

Piute County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Circleville	James E. Peterson
Junction	John A. Allen
Mammoth (Ang)	Aaron Ash

Parowan Stake.
President: Ulrich T. Jones, Fillmore.
Counselors: Thomas Webster, Cedar; Francis Webster, Cedar.
Iron County, Utah.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
Cedar City	Wm H. Crosby
Enoch	J. H. Armstrong, P. E.
Hamblin's Fort	George Gardner, P. E.
Kanarra	Wm Finch
Paragonah	Wm E. Jones
Parowan	Charles Adams
Summit	George D. Bailey

Salt Lake Stake.
President: Angus M. Cannon, Salt Lake City.
Counselors: Joseph E. Taylor, Charles W. Penrose, Salt Lake City.
Salt Lake City Wards.

WARDS.	BISHOPS.
First	Joseph Watkins
Second	Leonard G. Rawlins
Third	Jesse West
Fourth	Harrison Sperry
Fifth	Samuel