

# OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

*We learn of Heavenly Father from the beginning of our Church experience—from our first prayer to our first time singing “I Am a Child of God” (Hymns, no. 301). What Latter-day Saints know about God the Father is unique, and it makes all the difference to us.*

## SEEING THE FATHER

**H**ere are three scriptural accounts of people who have beheld the Father:

- Stephen (see Acts 7:56)
- Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17)
- Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon (see D&C 76:20)

But, as Jesus said, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9).

## REAL AND INDIVIDUAL

“One of the great over-arching doctrines of this Church is our belief in God the Eternal Father. He is a being, real and individual. He is the great Governor of the universe, yet He is our Father, and we are His children.

“We pray to Him, and those prayers are a conversation between God and man. I am confident that **He hears our prayers and answers them.**”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “The Things of Which I Know,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2007, 83.

## THE ONE TRUE GOD

“The Father *is* the one true God. *This* thing is certain: **no one will ever ascend above Him;** no one will ever replace Him. . . . He is Eloheim, the Father. He is God. Of Him there *is* only one.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Pattern of Our Parentage,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 69.





### HEARING THE FATHER

**W**hen God the Father speaks, He bears witness of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. For example:

- At Jesus’s baptism (see Matthew 3:17)
- At the Mount of Transfiguration to Peter, James, and John (see Matthew 17:5)
- In a revelation to Nephi (see 2 Nephi 31:11, 15)
- At Jesus’s appearance in the Americas (see 3 Nephi 11:7)
- At the First Vision (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17)

### THE SAVIOR’S MISSION TO REVEAL THE FATHER

“In all that Jesus came to say and do, . . . He was showing us who and what God our Eternal Father is like, how completely devoted He is to His children in every age and nation. In word and in deed **Jesus was trying to reveal** and make personal to us **the true nature of His Father**, our Father in Heaven.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Grandeur of God,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 70.

### JOSEPH SMITH TEACHES ABOUT GOD THE FATHER

**J**oseph Smith taught us much about the true nature of God because he saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and received many revelations.

**What kind of being is He?** “God Himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!”<sup>1</sup>

**What does He look like?** “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s.”<sup>2</sup> “If you were to see Him today, you would see Him like a man in form—like yourselves.”<sup>3</sup>

**What is our relationship to God?** “If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves.”<sup>4</sup> “The Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family . . . as His offspring.”<sup>5</sup>

**Why did He establish the plan of salvation for us?** “God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, . . . [instituted] laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself.”<sup>6</sup>

**What is a key to drawing closer to God?** “When we understand the character of God, and know how to come to Him, He begins to unfold the heavens to us.”<sup>7</sup> ■

#### NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 40.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 130:22.
3. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 40.
4. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 40.
5. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 39.
6. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 210.
7. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 40–41.

### HEAVENLY PARENTS: A POWERFUL TRUTH

“Consider the power of the idea taught in our beloved song ‘I Am a Child of God’ (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 301). . . . Here is the answer to one of life’s great questions, ‘Who am I?’ I am a child of God with a spirit lineage to heavenly parents. **That parentage defines our eternal potential.** That powerful idea is a potent antidepressant. It can strengthen each of us to make righteous choices and to seek the best that is within us.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Powerful Ideas,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 25.