

CCT: A Genetic Analysis of TS, RC. Pericope 5.

WR	SR	TB	WW	WC	GL1	TS	RC
If men do not comprehend the character of God they do not comprehend themselves.		There are very few who understand rightly the char of God— They do not comprehend any thing that is past or that which is to come & com: but little more than the brute beast if a man learns know nothing more than to eat, drink, sleep, & does not comprehend any of the desn. of God the Beast com the same thing eats drin sleeps—noes h nothing more & how are we to do it by no or. way than the inspn of A. God. I want to go back to the begin & so get you into a more lofty sphere than what the human being generally understands	But few understand the character of God. they do not know they do not understand their relationship to God. the world know no more than the brute beast, & they know no more than to eat drink and sleep & this is all man knows about God or his exhistence, except what is given by the inspiration of the Almighty. go then to the beginning that you may understand.	few beings in the world who understand the character of God and do not comprehend their own character. They cannot com the beginning nor the end neit their own relation and is but little above the beast. If a man comprehends nothing more than to eat sleep arise and not any more and what the designs of Jehova what better than the beast it does the same thing—eat drink- sleep & comprehends present ¹ and knows as much as we, unless we are able to com by the inspiration of A God. Go back to beginning to lift you minds into a more exalted		There are a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. ² They do not comprehend any thing, ³ that which ⁴ is past, or that which is to come; ⁵ and consequently, ⁶ but little above the brute beast. ⁷ If a man learns nothing more than to eat, drink, sleep, and does not comprehend any of the designs of God, the beast comprehends the same thing; it eats, drinks, sleeps, knows nothing more; yet knows as much as we unless WE ⁸ are able to comprehend by the inspiration of Almighty God. ⁹ I want to go back to the beginning, ¹⁰ and so lift your minds into a more lofty sphere, a more exalted understanding; ¹¹ that ¹²	There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. The great majority of mankind do not comprehend anything ¹⁴ either that which is past, or that which is to come, as it respects their relationship to God; they do not know ¹⁵ , neither do they understand the nature of that relationship; and consequently, they know ¹⁶ but little above the brute beast, or more than to eat, drink and sleep; this is all man knows about God, or his existence, unless it is given by the inspiration of the Almighty. If a man learns nothing more than to eat, drink, sleep, and does not comprehend any of the designs of God the beast comprehends the same thing; it eats, drinks sleeps, and knows nothing more ¹⁷ about God: yet it knows as much as we, unless we are able to comprehend by the inspiration of Almighty God. If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not

I want to ask this cong: every man wom: & child to ansr. the questn. in their own heart what kind of a being is God		standing than the human mind is wnt- want to ask this this congregation every man, woman, &c what kind of a being is God. ask yourselves.	what the human mind generally understands. I want to ask this congregation, every man, woman and child,¹³ to answer the question in their own heart, what kind of a being is God? ask yourselves.	comprehend themselves.¹⁸ I want to go back to the beginning, and so lift your minds into a more lofty sphere and¹⁹ a more exalted understanding, than what the human mind generally aspires to. I want to ask this congregation, every man, woman and child, to answer the question in their own heart, what kind of a being God is.²⁰ Ask yourselves;
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¹ The thought here links to TB regarding a lack of understanding of the past and things to come.

² The theme builds on John 17:3.

³ The ms history reads [anything].

⁴ The editorial addition of “which” makes the statement symmetrical, but may obscure the meaning.

⁵ WC conveys a similar thought with [They cannot compren the beginning nor the end].

⁶ Probably should read “comprehend” rather than “consequently”.

⁷ JS suggests here that man and beast are potentially at least, on different levels. Man is capable of contemplating his position in the universe but is incapable of coming to a true understanding without divine aid. His own experience was certainly motivation for the statement. The somewhat negative tone may reflect his difficulties with his critics but also he fellow Saints who he could regard as slow in understanding his teaching: “But their has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation it has been like splitting hemlock knots with a Corn doger for a wedge & a pumpkin for a beetle, Even the Saints are slow to understand I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God, but we frequently see some of them after suffering all they have for the work of God will fly to pieces like glass as soon as any thing Comes that is Contrary to their traditions, they Cannot stand the fire at all, How many will be able to abide a Celestial law & go through & receive their exhaltation I am unable to say but many are Called & few are Chosen.” See, Journal of Wilford Woodruff, January 21, 1844, CHL, Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:340.]

Elsewhere JS expresses the idea that beasts may be “intelligent,” if not on earth, then in heaven perhaps. See the following note from his discourse of April 8, 1843.

⁸ Ms history reads [We] with triple underline, a typical printer's signal. Whether it arises from the TS ms or the TS copy itself is impossible to tell, but Willard Richards' history plan for 1844 indicates conference minutes were to be taken from the *Times and Seasons*. (See ms history, volume 4, January-December 1844, CHL.) The VOT reads [we].

⁹ JS was stating a truism of the times here. Preaching of the day advocated the abrupt division between the "animal kingdom" and man. Such distinctions were of course made before that era as well. Man was regarded as the only being capable of reason, etc. JS may also have drawn this distinction since later in the sermon he advocates the uncreate nature of the human mind or spirit. Perhaps JS might have put animals in a different category than man on this issue. Clearly there are other issues, if one allows that animals have uncreate "souls," how far down the chain of being does this extend? To bacterial fauna? JS offered some views on "beasts" and heaven in an April 8, 1843 sermon: "John learned that God glorified himself by saving all that his hands had made whether beasts, fowl fishes or man. Any man who would tell you that this could not be, would tell you that the revelations are not true. John heard the words of the beasts giving glory to God and understood them. God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them; The beasts were intelligent beings and were seen and heard by John praising and glorifying God. The popular religionists of the day say that the beasts spoken of in the revelations represent Kingdoms. Very well, on the same principle we can say that the twenty four Elders spoken of represent beasts, for they are all spoken of at the same time, and represented as all ~~giving~~ uniting in the same acts of praise and devotion. Deacon Homespun said the earth was flat as a pan cake, but science has proved to the contrary. The world is full of technicalities and misrepresentation, but I calculate to overthrow the technicalities of the world and speak of things as they actually exist. Again there is no revelation to prove that things do not exist in heaven as I have set forth, and we never can comprehend the things of God and of heaven but by revelation." (William Clayton report, Joseph Smith Collection, CHL.) Moreover, a March 1832 explanation of Revelation, canonized in 1880 as D&C 77:2, reads "beasts, and of creeping things, and of the fowls of the air; that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created." The 1832 text reads as an extension of JS's Bible revision/expansion work where his expansion of Genesis was eventually seen to propose the spiritual existence of man prior to mortality, but that text knows nothing of *self-existent* spirits. See Moses 3:7. On D&C 77, see *JSP*, MRB:259; *JSP*, D2:208-13.)

¹⁰ The thought here suggests JS's 1833 revelation, D&C 93:24.

¹¹ The phrase is redundant in thought, but possibly reflects the archetype. The language is different enough here to at least suggest that each recorder wrote mutually disjoint phrases.

¹² Obviously a typographical error, VOT corrects this to [than].

¹³ [and child] is indicated in black, since WC appears to mean this by the use of &c at this point.

¹⁴ [anything] is an insertion in GM1.

¹⁵ The two phrases preceding are reversed in WW.

¹⁶ Grimshaw is possibly expanding on the truncated phrasing in WC, but perhaps more likely, this is an expansion of WW.

¹⁷ The discussion of man vs. beast here is undoubtedly a redundancy introduced by Grimshaw by inclusion of WW text.

¹⁸ The temporal order of this statement (taken from the WR) in GM1-RC is probably incorrect, and describes the remarks at the beginning of this pericope instead. The various texts here suggest that this phrase was a summary of the remarks made by JS at this point in the sermon, and not an actual quotation. However, the conditional conveys more than the comparative language of the other sources. In contrast, WW and WC suggest that perhaps the converse statement captures the intent: If men do not comprehend themselves they do not comprehend God. This latter statement is suggested by later portions of the reports.

¹⁹ "and" is an insertion in GM1 [&].

²⁰ GM1 reads, [~~is~~ God ^{is}].