

"Apparent in this dialogue is the Igbo conviction that there is a carry-over of social status and other personal qualities from the world of man to the world of the dead."

-THE IGBO OF SOUTHEAST NIGERIA  
(Uchendu 1965:12)

## 52. INTRODUCTION

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## OVERVIEW:

This section deals with doctrines that seem to be represented in the canon more often than those of the pre-existence. However, they are not as interesting for some reason, perhaps due to their familiarity. Several major issues about this phase are raised by this model. Recall that this phase is actually the third of the pre-resurrection testing phases our spirit must experience during our metamorphosis. It is the last one in which we have a chance to redeem ourselves. We don't usually think of it that way, but this author believe that is the case.<sup>{1}</sup>

There are LDS who believe that Satan *et al* are unable to get to us while we are in spirit prison and paradise. And, interestingly enough, these are often the same LDS who believe that there is proselyting going on in SP. They believe that good guys go from Paradise 'down' (what is the basis for a direction? We suspect the difference has to do with other dimensions of the two condition than direction.) to SP and spread and shed enlightenment amongst the natives. That sounds just fine. However, it ain't. The idea of Satan being *persona non grata* seems initially to fit with the doctrine that the salvation legions are working. But.

Look a bit more closely first at the idea of spirits being able to "accept" the gospel after it is wafted across their screen in the SP. Sounds harmless and doesn't seem to require Satan Inc. to work. But it does require Satan's presence. And this is because the only way that free agency can be exercised in a manner that it makes a difference to the person/spirit exercising it is for there to be an opposition of forces. Remember the OPPOSITION CONDITION which is a metatheoretical condition that must apply everywhere. Nephi said it right. Spirit Prison types either have to be faced with real choices, i.e. the Silver Party must be fully opposed by the Black party, or else there is no legitimate decision making going on.

And so it follows from this that Satan, PA is there doing his duty.

One might ask whether it would be possible for the Black Party to be exerting its power without Satan and his people being around. I'm not sure it is even possible. If it were, which I doubt, the

difference is merely a notational variant of the first idea. In either situation, opposition exists and affects spirits in a manner that enables them to make meaningful decisions.

One of the major facts we know about this phase is that it is divided into two "locations" that spirits are allocated to at the time of mortal death. One asks what these divisions are: are they separate geographic locations? Or different dimensions? Or is it simply accomplished by keeping all spirits in the same location, the 'difference' being differences in priesthood-mediated blessings? The doctrine that states spirit prisoners cannot visit paradise, though the converse is allowed, might suggest physical segregation. But it is also possible to interpret the doctrine in a figurative sense, meaning that prisoners cannot 'experience' what the others can.

The fact that a segregation of spirits is made after death implies that a judgement is done. That is the only way individuals can be assigned to one or the other.<sup>{2}</sup> This is not stipulated by SMD, but it is entailed by the doctrine of two locations. What is the basis for this judgement? SMD tends to ascribe the decision about location to performance during mortality, you live a good life and get paradise, or live a bad life and get prison. Within the present model that includes a three phase testing metamorphosis, it should be apparent that the assignment to one or the other of these locations must depend on our performance through BOTH the pre-existence and mortality.<sup>{3}</sup>

#### LOCATION:

The location of these two areas where we will spend this third phase is unknown. However, as noted earlier, near-death victims have reported observations that suggest that at least spirit prison is right here on earth, but in a different dimension or different "reality" somehow.<sup>{4}</sup> There is really little to look at for a hint about the location of Paradise. Here it will be suggested that perhaps there is no physical, whatever that means, location for paradise. Perhaps all spirits remain in the SAME location after death. And in this case, the difference would be based on the

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<sup>2</sup>Of course, if one wished to extend the premises of this mechanical model to the logical extreme, s/he could argue that the segregation occurs automatically as a result of the nature of the spirit matter. See the following chapters for a discussion of how this might occur.

<sup>3</sup>CC Jung, in his INTRODUCTION to Evans-Wentz (1960:xliv) actually states an antecedent reservation:

"Above all, we know desperately little about the possibilities of continued existence of the individual soul after death, so little that we cannot even conceive how anyone could prove anything at all in this respect. Moreover, we know only too well, on epistemological grounds, that such a proof would be just as impossible as the proof of God."

The most interesting word in this quote is "desperately". For one of the pre-eminent psychiatrists of the world to use it suggests a depth of feeling on his part that one might not expect to hear from a specialist of that particular discipline.

<sup>4</sup>See Ritchie's book for details of this sort.

nature of the soul. The 'location' may actually be a condition. And this condition would result from various things. First, it would result from the intrinsic nature of the spirit matter itself. A spirit that has spent time conforming with the demands of the laws of heaven will perhaps be substantively different than one which has indulged in dalliances. And then it is possible that there were additional ordinances or actions done to or on the spirit in the death-birth process that granted the more obedient spirit some advantages.<sup>{5}</sup> This seems reasonable. If a spirit were in a positive condition, it really wouldn't matter where it was "physically" located because paradise would be inside the spirit itself.

In this section, then, we will discuss some of the philosophical matters that pertain to this phase within this model, and will say little about the mechanics of what occurs there because we know so little about it.

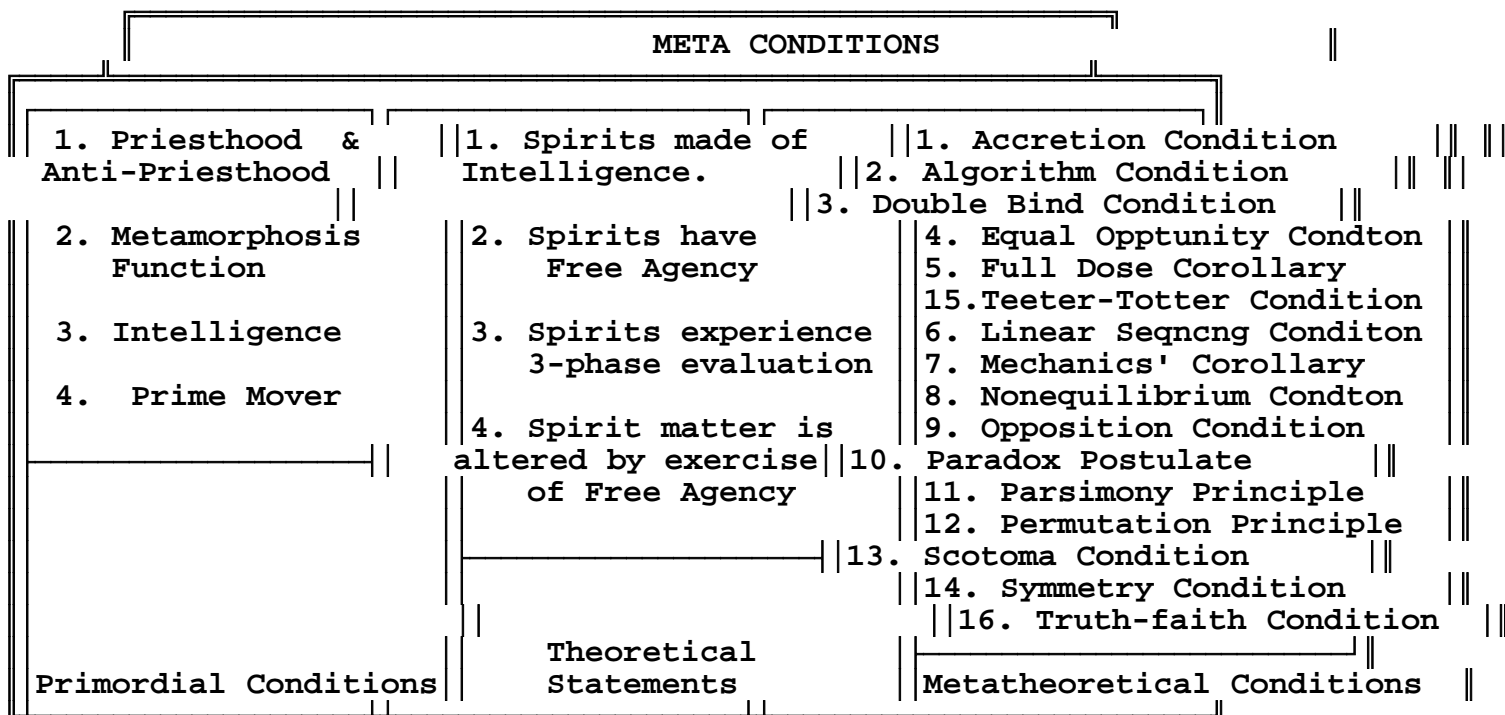
#### **INITIAL CONDITIONS:**

We postulated in Chapters 4 and 5 that all three testing phases take place in "worlds" that have been created specifically for that purpose. Each of the three world, the PE, mortality and the Post-Mortal world, is characterized by distinctive environments. These environments were designed so that spirits living in them would undergo the cardinal test of each testing phase. Free agency was the cardinal test of the PE, gender and family related issues are the cardinal test of mortality, but we don't know what the major test is of the PM world. However, we nonetheless believe that it is unique, that it is different from the first two testing worlds, and is also different from the ultimate-initial state of eternity.

The meta conditions postulated as the precursor of the other two phase worlds are the precursors for this world as well. We repeat them again here:

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<sup>5</sup> Temple ordinances come to mind.



Most of the elements in these three sets are characteristics of eternity. The elements that are special cases in the context of the broader context of eternity are those that deal with the metamorphosis of spirits. True, they are embedded in the eternal priesthods, but they are only manifested during iterations of the metamorphosis process for embryonic spirits.

The question of what the particular conditions are that stood as the initial conditions for the PM world is unanswerable to us. We are only able to speak of the initial conditions for mortality because we happen to be here now, so are close enough to be able to understand what they are. But we can't guess what the specific initial conditions are for either the PE or PM worlds. We simply postulate their existence, and incorporate them into the theory by reference. We also note that they will also be manifestations in some manner of the priesthood pair.