The Role(s) of Jesus Christ in Fulfilling Heavenly Father’s Eternal Plan—Part One

Introduction

A few hours before entering Gethsemane where He would begin the atoning sacrifice, that greatest act of service ever performed, the Savior gathered the Apostles into an upper room where they partook of “the last supper.” He told the Apostles that He had longed “to eat this passover” with them before the suffering He was about to undergo. Then He said: “I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

Then happened a very sad thing: the Apostles began to argue about which one of them would be greatest in the kingdom of God:

And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat?

The Savior then said: “but I am among you as he that serveth.” (Luke 22:24-27)

Long before this world was created, God the Father, called upon His Firstborn to help Him achieve the objective of His eternal plan. President Russell M. Nelson said:

Jesus was the Anointed One—anointed by Heavenly Father to be His personal representative in all things pertaining to the salvation of mankind. Before the world was formed, Jesus was anointed to make immortality a reality and eternal life a possibility for all of God’s children (see John 17:24; 1 Peter 1:20). (Teachings of Russell M. Nelson [2018], 156).

In serving the Father, Jesus Christ performs many roles that will “make immortality a reality and eternal life a possibility for all of God’s children.” The purpose of this reading assignment is to explore many of those roles.

Key Concepts and Teachings

Firstborn and Heir

- **Read Colossians 1:15-19** (including footnote 15d)
- **Read D&C 93:21**
- **Read Hebrews 1:1-6**

Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Joseph F. Smith, President of Church)–June 30, 1916:

From this scripture we learn that Jesus Christ was “the firstborn of every creature,” and it is evident that the seniority here expressed must be with respect to [pre]mortal existence, for Christ was not the senior of all mortals in the flesh. He is further designated as “the firstborn from the dead,” this having reference to Him as the first to be resurrected from the dead, or as elsewhere written “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20; see also 1 Cor. 15:23); and “the firstbegotten of the dead” (Rev. 1:5; compare Acts 26:23). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews affirms the status of Jesus Christ as the firstborn of the spirit children of His Father and extols the preeminence of the Christ when tabernacled in flesh: “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him” (Heb. 1:6; read the preceding verses). (Reprinted in Ensign, April 2002, 13-18)

**Hugh B. Brown** (1883-1975) First Presidency

Chief among that vast [premortal] assembly was Jehovah, the same who would become the Christ Child, the Redeemer. He was the Firstborn among the spirits, and by birthright was both heir and leader. (Conference Report, Oct.1963, 92; emphasis added)

Jesus Christ is Heavenly Father’s Representative

By Divine Investiture of Authority (analogous to “power of attorney”), Jesus Christ is Heavenly Father’s representative. Of this, the Savior said:

- “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30; also 3 Ne. 20:35; 28:10; D&C 50:43)
- “I am come in my Father’s name” (John 5:43; see also 10:25)

Also consider the following:

Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Joseph F. Smith, President of Church)–June 30, 1916:

[In all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority. This is true of Christ in His preexistent, antemortal, or unembodied state, in the which He was known as Jehovah; also during His embodiment in the flesh; and during His labors as a disembodied spirit in the realm of the dead; and since that period in His resurrected state. Thus the Father placed His name upon the Son; and Jesus Christ spoke and ministered in and through the Father’s name; and so far as power, authority, and Godship are concerned His words and acts were and are those of the Father. (Reprinted in Ensign, April 2002, 13-18)

**Jeffrey R. Holland** Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

First and foremost, as Abinadi taught, Christ was "conceived by the power of God" and therefore has the powers of the Father within him. In addition to that divine lineal relationship, Christ also acts as the Father in that he is the Creator of heaven and earth, is the father of our spiritual rebirth and salvation, and is faithful in honoring—and therefore claiming the power of—the will of his Father above that of his own will. Because of this inseparable relationship and uncompromised trust between them, Christ can at any time and in any place speak and act for the Father by virtue of the "divine investiture of
authority” the Father has given him. (Christ and the New Covenant [1997], 183-4)

The Creator

Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created the earth. There are many scriptures that teach this truth. The following are two passages teach particularly important aspects of His role as Creator:

Read Moses 1:31-33
Read Colossians 1:15-16 Note what Paul teaches about what Christ creates and for whom?
Joseph F. Smith (1838-1918) President

... Jesus Christ, whom we also know as Jehovah, was the executive of the Father, Elohim, in the work of creation. ... Jesus Christ, being the Creator, is consistently called the Father of heaven and earth ...; and since His creations are of eternal quality He is very properly called the Eternal Father of heaven and earth. (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith [1998], 353)

King of the Earth, of Zion, and of Israel

The earth was created by Christ and for Christ. As such He is the rightful King of the earth. This concept is important for latter reading assignments.

Read Psalms 47:2, 7 King over what?
Read Moses 7:53 King over what?
Read Luke 1:32-33 King over what?
John Taylor (1808-87) President

Who made this earth? The Lord. Who sustains it? The Lord. Who upholds everything in the universe? The Lord. ... Who has a right to rule the nations, to control kingdoms and govern all the people of the earth?

This earth is properly the dwelling place, and rightful inheritance of the Saints. Inasmuch as it belongs to Jesus Christ, it also belongs to his servants and followers, for we are told, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof,” [Psalm 24:1] and that, when things are in their proper place, “the heavens and the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” (Then and there, we find Jehovah咫尺为圣，主天主，万有之父，万有之王。) It is therefore rightful inheritance. (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor [2001], 221-2)

Upon His second coming, Christ will resume His role as king of the earth:

Read D&C 38:17-22 and 45:56-59
Gordon B. Hinckley (1910-2008) President

Under [the Kingdom of God’s] present organization it has been moving forward for only a little more than a century and a half. It will continue, ever growing and spreading over the earth, as part of a great millennial pattern until the time comes when He whose right it is to reign will rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. (“An Ensign to the Nations,” Ensign, Nov. 1989, 51; emphasis added)

Jehovah

Russell M. Nelson President

We worship God the Eternal Father in the name of His Son by the power of the Holy Ghost. We know the premortal Jesus to be Jehovah, God of the Old Testament. (Thus Shall My Church Be Called”, Ensign, May 1990, 16)

Acting for Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ is God over this world. In the Old Testament, He was called Jehovah—a Hebrew word that literally means, “he is”.

When Moses asked God what name he should call Him, the Lord responded saying that His name is “I AM” (Exodus 3:14). The Hebrew word, "ehveh", translated “am” is a verb in the imperfect form. Hebrew verbs are generally found in two forms: perfect form (the verbal action is completed) or imperfect form (the verbal action is either not complete or is ongoing—determined by context). The phrase “I am” literally means, “I always am” or “I always exist.” This name expresses an important attribute of the nature of God: He is always God.

Of course, “I AM,” or EHYEH, is the first person form of this verb and is what God call’s Himself. But this is not what we would call Him. Rather, we would employ the third person form of this verb, calling Him, “HE IS,” which in Hebrew is, JEHOVAH (often written, yahweh by scholars). Jehovah literally means, “he always is” or “he always exists.”

This was an important concept for the children of Israel to understand. They lived at a time when the world in general believed in many gods, who each controlled the various forces found on earth and in the sky. These gods were born and could die. But Jehovah, the God of Israel, was in fact only of heaven and earth. He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and perfect in His nature (character and attributes). The name, Jehovah, would always remind them that He always had been, always is, and always will be God.

The Exemplar of the Father

An important role fulfilled by Jesus Christ is to exemplify the Father, who and who He is.

Read Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3
Read John 14:6-11

Jeffrey R. Holland Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Of the many magnificent purposes served in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, one great aspect of that mission often goes uncelebrated. His followers did not understand it fully at the time, and many in modern Christianity do not grasp it now, but the Savior Himself spoke of it repeatedly and emphatically. It is the grand truth that in all that Jesus came to say and do, and especially in His atoning suffering and sacrifice, 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.

To come to earth with such a responsibility, to stand in place of Elohim—speaking as He would speak, judging and serving, loving and warning, forbearing and forgiving as He would do—this is a duty of such staggering proportions that you and I cannot comprehend such a thing. But in the loyalty and determination that would be characteristic of a divine child, Jesus could comprehend it and He did it. Then, when the praise and honor began to come, He humbly directed all adulation to the Father.

“The Father ... doeth the works,” He said in earnest. “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever [the Father] doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 14:10; 5:19). On another occasion He said: “I speak that which I have seen with my Father.” “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me...” “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 8:38, 28; 6:38). (From “The Grandeur of God,” Ensign, Nov. 2003, )