

Come Follow Me Lesson 49
November 29-December 5
D&C 137-138

D&C 137

*A vision given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, January 21, 1836. (This is just a few months prior to the dedication of the Kirtland temple.) HC 2: 380—381. The occasion was the administration of the ordinances of the endowment as far as they had then been revealed. (This revelation was received in the west school room on the third floor of the Kirtland Temple. Church leaders from Kirtland and Missouri had assembled to be anointed as part of the endowment of power to be bestowed upon the "first elders" in connection with the dedication of the temple. Two separate meetings were held the evening of 21 January, the latter continuing into the morning hours. During the first meeting, Joseph Smith, his father, and his brother Hyrum, along with members of the First Presidency (Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams and Oliver Cowdery, associate president of the Church), the presidency of the Church in Missouri (David Whitmer, William W. Phelps, and John Whitmer), the bishoprics in Kirtland and Missouri, and the Prophet's scribe (Warren Parrish), anointed each other with "holy oil" and offered prayers that the anointing blessings would be accepted. "The second meeting was not unlike the first, except that those being anointed were members of the Church high councils in Kirtland and Missouri. Although visions and spiritual manifestations were witnessed during both ceremonies, section 137 was received during the first anointing session" (Cook, Revelations, 303). Oliver Cowdery made the following entry in his diary for the day: "Thursday, the 21st, this morning, at 15 minutes past nine, my little daughter is 5 months old. O Lord, I thank thee that thou hast thus been merciful and spared my only child. At about three o'clock P.M. I assembled in our office garret, having all things prepared for the occasion, with presidents Joseph Smith, jr. F. G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer, John Whitmer and elder John Corrill, and washed our bodies with pure water before the Lord, preparatory to the anointing with the holy oil. After we were washed, our bodies were perfumed with a sweet smelling ousherous wash. At evening the presidents of the Church, with the two bishops and their counsellors, and elder Warren Parrish, met in the presidents' room, the high cou[n]cils of Kirtland and Zion in their rooms. Those named in the first room were anointed with the same kind of oil and in the man[er] that were Moses and Aaron, and those who stood before the Lord in ancient days, and those in the other rooms with anointing oil prepared for them. The glorious scene is too great to be described in this book, therefore, I only say, that the heavens were opened to many, and great and marvelous things were shown" (Arrington, "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland," 418-19). **Though consisting of but ten verses this is one of the most significant revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants. It lays the doctrinal foundation upon which rests the whole concept of our labors in behalf of our kindred dead. It clearly separates this doctrine from any notion that the living can neglect their responsibilities in this life, believing that they can attend to them or have someone else attend to them when they have died.** Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1137-38. **This vision of the celestial kingdom was not part of the standard works until 1976.)***

1—6, The Prophet sees his brother Alvin in the celestial kingdom; 7—9, The doctrine of salvation for the dead is revealed; 10, All children are saved in the celestial kingdom.

1 THE ^aheavens were ^bopened upon us, and I beheld the ^ccelestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the ^dbody or out I cannot tell.

2 I saw the transcendent ^abeauty of the ^bgate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was ^clike unto ^dcircling flames of fire; **(David O. McKay had a vision of the Celestial Kingdom: I . . . beheld in a vision something infinitely sublime. In the distance I beheld a beautiful white city.**

Though far away, yet I seemed to realize that trees with luscious fruit, shrubbery with gorgeously-tinted leaves, and flowers in perfect bloom abounded everywhere. The clear sky above seemed to reflect these beautiful shades of color. I then saw a great concourse of people approaching the city. Each one wore a white flowing robe, and a white headdress. Instantly my attention seemed centered upon their Leader, and though I could see only the profile of his features and his body, I recognized him at once as my Savior! The tint and radiance of his countenance were glorious to behold! There was a peace about him which seemed sublime—it was divine! The city, I understood, was his. It was the City Eternal; and the people following him were to abide there in peace and eternal happiness. But who were they? As if the Savior read my thoughts, he answered by pointing to a semicircle that then appeared above them, and on which were written in gold the words: "These Are They Who Have Overcome The World—Who Have Truly Been Born Again!" (Cherished Experiences, p. 102)

3 Also the ^ablazing ^bthrone of God, whereon was seated the ^cFather and the ^dSon.

4 I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with ^agold.

5 I saw Father ^aAdam and ^bAbraham; and my ^cfather and my mother; my brother ^dAlvin, that has long since ^eslept; **(In this most remarkable vision, the Prophet was not shown things as they were in the celestial kingdom but rather as they yet would be.** This would have been immediately evident to him as he saw in that vision his own father and mother. As already noted, his father was present in the room with him when the vision was received, and his father and mother lived for some years after this event. Each of the persons shown in the vision appears to have been deliberately chosen to emphasize that salvation is a family affair and that it centers in the promises made to our ancient fathers. In addition to seeing the Father and the Son, the Prophet saw Adam, the father of all humankind; Father Abraham, the father of the faithful; and his own father and mother reunited with his brother Alvin, who had died twelve years earlier at age twenty-five. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1138-39)

6 And ^amarveled how it was that he [Alvin] had obtained an ^binheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to ^cgather Israel the second time, and had not been ^dbaptized for the remission of sins.

SCRIPTURE MASTERY: 7 Thus came the ^avoice of the Lord unto me, saying: All who have died ^bwithout a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be ^cheirs of the celestial kingdom of God;

8 Also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who ^awould have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom; **(In these verses the principles upon which the doctrine of salvation for the dead rests are announced for the first time in this dispensation. They are: first, that the doctrine applies only to those who "died without a knowledge" of the gospel; second, that God must read the hearts of those concerned and affirm that had the gospel come to them in mortality they would have accepted it; and third, that God must judge that not only would they have accepted the gospel but that they would have done so "with all their hearts," meaning that they would have endured valiantly and faithfully to the end. These principles accord perfectly with the promise of Peter that those who receive the gospel in the spirit world must do so in such a manner that they "might be judged according to men in the flesh" (1 Peter 4:6), which is to say that the price in faith and works to receive the gospel in the spirit world is the same as the price appended to receiving it in mortality. The question could well be asked as to why it was that Alvin would be chosen to represent these truths? The answer is that he is the perfect example of the kind of person to whom these principles apply.** Alvin died in November of 1823. His passing had been a matter of considerable sorrow to the Smith family and to the young woman to whom he was engaged. Their wounded souls had been cut to the core at his funeral by the unfeeling remarks of the Presbyterian minister who had consigned Alvin to hell because he had not been baptized or involved in that church. Despite his relative youth, Alvin was a man of unusual spiritual propensity. Before his death, he called each of his brothers and sisters in turn to his bedside and gave them a parting admonition. To his

eighteen-year-old brother, Joseph, he said: "Be a good boy, and do everything that lies in your power to obtain the record [the Book of Mormon]. Be faithful in receiving instruction and in keeping every commandment that is given you" (Smith, History of Joseph Smith, 1996, 116). Mother Smith stated that "Alvin had ever manifested a greater zeal and anxiety, if it were possible, than any of the rest with regard to the record which had been shown to Joseph, and he always showed the most intense interest concerning the matter. With this before our minds, we could not endure to hear or say one word upon that subject, for the moment that Joseph spoke of the record it would immediately bring Alvin to our minds with all his kindness, his affection, his zeal, and piety. And when we looked to his place and realized that he was gone from it, to return no more in this life, we all wept with one accord over our irretrievable loss, and we could 'not be comforted, because he was not'" (Smith, History of Joseph Smith, 1996, 119). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1140-41)

9 For I, the Lord, will ^ajudge all men according to their ^bworks, **according to the ^cdesire of their hearts.** (The scales of justice used in the realms of heaven can be depended upon to render that perfect equity and judgment known only to an all-wise God. Our works will be placed in one of the pans of balance and the desires of our heart in the other. **Where our works are lacking because of circumstances beyond our control, the desires of our hearts can compensate.** For instance, if someone did not marry in the temple because the opportunity to do so was not afforded but in the judgment of God that person would have taken that opportunity with all his or her heart, then the scales are balanced. That individual is rewarded as if he or she had complied with the commandment. On the other hand, impressive works may hide evil desires left unfulfilled only because the opportunity to act on them did not come. Again, the reward will accord with the desires of the heart. Though men may deceive each other, none will deceive God. Nor will there be so much as a single soul from one end of eternity to the other who will be denied the blessings of heaven because of circumstances beyond his or her control. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1141-42)

10 And I also beheld that all ^achildren who die before they arrive at the ^byears of accountability are ^csaved in the celestial kingdom of heaven. (This idea was not entirely new to the Prophet, for he had learned from the Book of Mormon and previous revelations of the Lord's disposition in regard to the status of children. An angel explained to King Benjamin that "the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy" (Mosiah 3:18). After having described the nature of those who come forth in the first resurrection, Abinadi said simply, "And little children also have eternal life" (Mosiah 15:25). A revelation given in September of 1830 specified that "little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten" (D&C 29:46). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1142. Bruce R. McConkie: **Not only will little children be saved in the celestial kingdom of God, but they will be heirs of exaltation in that kingdom.** (Doctrines, of Salvation, vol. 2, pp. 49-57.) On this point the Prophet said: "They will there enjoy the fulness of that light, glory and intelligence, which is prepared in the celestial kingdom." (Teachings, p. 200.) To inherit the fulness is to have exaltation. Mormon Doctrine. Joseph Fielding Smith: **"The Lord will grant unto these children the privilege of all the sealing blessings which pertain to the exaltation. We were all mature spirits before we were born, and the bodies of little children will grow after the resurrection to the full stature of the spirit, and all the blessings will be theirs through their obedience, the same as if they had lived to maturity and received them on the earth.** The Lord is just and will not deprive any person of a blessing, simply because he dies before that blessing can be received. It would be manifestly unfair to deprive a little child of the privilege of receiving all the blessings of exaltation in the world to come simply because it died in infancy. . . . Children who die in childhood will not be deprived of any blessing. When they grow, after the resurrection, to the full maturity of the spirit, they will be entitled to all the blessings which they would have been entitled to had they been privileged to tarry here and receive them." (Doctrines of Salvation 2:54.) **Will children who die before the years of accountability ever be tested in the way that other mortals are tested? Satan cannot tempt little children in this life, nor in the spirit world, nor after their resurrection. Little children who die before reaching the years of**

accountability will not be tempted. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:57. **Why do some children die and others live? Are those who die better off than those who remain in mortality?** Bruce R. McConkie: We may rest assured that all things are controlled and governed by Him whose spirit children we are. He knows the end from the beginning, and he provides for each of us the testings and trials which he knows we need. President Joseph Fielding Smith once told me that we must assume that the Lord knows and arranges beforehand who shall be taken in infancy and who shall remain on earth to undergo whatever tests are needed in their cases. This accords with Joseph Smith's statement: "The Lord takes many away, even in infancy, that they may escape the envy of man, and the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth." (*Teachings*, pp. 196-97.) It is implicit in the whole scheme of things that those of us who have arrived at the years of accountability need the tests and trials to which we are subject and that our problem is to overcome the world and attain that spotless and pure state which little children already possess. *Salvation of Little Children*, p. 6. Melvin J. Ballard: You mothers worry about your little children. We do not perform sealings for them. **I lost a son six years of age, and I saw him a man in the spirit world after his death, and I saw how he had exercised his own freedom of choice and would obtain of his own will and volition a companionship, and in due time to him, and all those who are worthy of it, shall come all of the blessings and sealing privileges of the house of the Lord. Do not worry over it. They are safe; they are all right.** [Sec. 74:7.] (*Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin J. Ballard*, 1949, p. 260.))

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(President Joseph F. Smith was ill during the last six months of his life and spent much of his time confined to his room. His son, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, spent many days with him taking dictation, tending to chores for him, and taking him for rides (see Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, p. 200). At the October conference of 1918, six weeks before his death, President Smith said: "As most of you, I suppose, are aware, I have been undergoing a siege of very serious illness for the last five months. It would be impossible for me, on this occasion, to occupy sufficient time to express the desires of my heart and my feelings, as I would desire to express them to you, but I felt that it was my duty, if possible, to be present. . . . " . . . Although somewhat weakened in body, my mind is clear with reference to my duty, and with reference to the duties and responsibilities that rest upon the Latter-day Saints; and I am ever anxious for the progress of the work of the Lord, for the prosperity of the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world. . . . "I will not, I dare not, attempt to enter upon many things that are resting upon my mind this morning, and I shall postpone until some future time, the Lord being willing, my attempt to tell you some of the things that are in my mind, and that dwell in my heart. I have not lived alone these five months. I have dwelt in the spirit of prayer, of supplication, of faith and of determination; and I have had my communication with the Spirit of the Lord continuously." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1918, p. 2.) Two weeks after the general conference Elder Joseph Fielding Smith wrote down the vision as his father dictated it to him (see Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, p. 201). After it was endorsed by the counselors in the First Presidency and by the Quorum of the Twelve, it was published in the *Improvement Era* (Dec. 1918, pp. 166-70). During April conference of 1976 it was accepted as scripture and approved for publication in the Pearl of Great Price. In June 1979 the First Presidency announced that it would become section 138 of the Doctrine and Covenants. *Institute Manual*, 356-57)

A vision, given to President Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 3, 1918. In his opening address at the eighty-ninth Semiannual General Conference of the Church, on October 4, 1918, President Smith declared that he had received several divine communications during the previous months. One of these, concerning the Savior's visit to the spirits of the dead while his body was in the tomb, he had received the previous day. It was written immediately following the close of the

conference; on October 31, 1918, it was submitted to the counselors in the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and it was unanimously accepted by them. (Elder Packer spoke of it [the adding of the two new sections to the Doctrine and Covenants] at a Church Education seminar in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square on 14 October 1977: "I was surprised, and I think all of the Brethren were surprised, at how casually that announcement of two additions to the standard works was received by the Church. But we will live to sense the significance of it; we will tell our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren, that we were on the earth and remember when that took place." Talk, Church Education Seminar, 14 October 1977. Unpublished)

1—10, President Joseph F. Smith ponders upon the writings of Peter and our Lord's visit to the spirit world; 11—24, He sees the righteous dead assembled in paradise and Christ's ministry among them; 25—37, How the preaching of the gospel was organized among the spirits; 38—52, President Smith sees Adam, Eve, and many of the holy prophets in the spirit world who considered their spirit state before their resurrection as a bondage; 53—60, The righteous dead of this day continue their labors in the world of spirits.

1 ON the third of October, in the year nineteen hundred and eighteen, I sat in my room^a pondering (Pondering is often a prerequisite to receiving revelation.) over the scriptures; (Elder Boyd K. Packer: On one occasion when Elder Harold B. Lee spoke to the seminary and institute teachers, he was stressing to us the reality of spiritual communication and of the help and guidance we may receive from beyond the veil. But, he warned, we must be attuned in order to receive it. Here is an excerpt from his address: A few weeks ago, President McKay related to the Twelve an interesting experience, and I asked him yesterday if I might repeat it to you this morning. **He said it is a great thing to be responsive to the whisperings of the Spirit, and we know that when these whisperings come it is a gift and our privilege to have them. They come when we are relaxed and not under pressure of appointments.** The President then took occasion to relate an experience in the life of Bishop John Wells, former member of the Presiding Bishopric. A son of Bishop Wells was killed in Emigration Canyon on a railroad track. Brother John Wells was a great detail man and prepared many of the reports we are following up now. His boy was run over by a freight train. Sister Wells was inconsolable. She mourned during the three days prior to the funeral, received no comfort at the funeral, and was in a rather serious state of mind. One day soon after the funeral services while she was lying on her bed relaxed, still mourning, she says that her son appeared to her and said, "Mother do not mourn, do not cry. I am all right." He told her that she did not understand how the accident happened and explained that he had given the signal to the engineer to move on, and then made the usual effort to catch the railing on the freight train; but as he attempted to do so his foot caught on a root and he failed to catch the hand rail, and his body fell under the train. It was clearly an accident. Now, listen. He said that as soon as he realized that he was in another environment he tried to see his father, but he couldn't reach him. His father was so busy with the duties in his office he could not respond to his call. Therefore he had come to his mother. He said to her, "You tell father that all is well with me, and I want you not to mourn any more." **Then the President made the statement that the point he had in mind was that when we are relaxed in a private room we are more susceptible to those things; and that so far as he was concerned, his best thoughts come after he gets up in the morning and is relaxed and thinking about the duties of the day; that impressions come more dearly, as if it were to hear a voice. Those impressions are right. If we are worried about something and upset in our feelings, the inspiration does not come. If we so live that our minds are free from worry and our conscience is clear and our feelings are right toward one another, the operation of the Spirit of the Lord upon our spirit is as real as when we pick up the telephone; but when they come, we must be brave enough to take the suggested actions. The Lord will approve it and the Brethren will approve it, and we know it is right. He said, it is a great consolation in this upset world today to know that our Savior is**

directing this work. Then the President concluded: "I value that testimony." If you forget all else I have said, you remember that lesson and that admonition. (Address to seminary and institute faculty, Brigham Young University, 6 July 1956. Additional revelation comes as a result of the study of the scriptures.)

2 And ^areflecting upon the great ^batonement ^csacrifice that was made by the Son of God, for the ^dredemption of the world;

3 And the great and wonderful ^alove made manifest by the Father and the Son in the coming of the ^bRedeemer into the world;

4 That through his ^aatonement, and by ^bobedience to the principles of the gospel, mankind might be saved.

5 While I was thus engaged, my mind reverted to the writings of the apostle Peter, (One chief Apostle is pondering the words of another chief Apostle.) to the ^aprimitive saints scattered abroad throughout ^bPontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and other parts of Asia, where the gospel had been ^cpreached after the crucifixion of the Lord.

6 I opened the Bible and read the third and fourth chapters of the first epistle of ^aPeter, and as I read I was greatly ^bimpressed, more than I had ever been before, with the following passages:

7 "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

8 "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in ^aprison;

9 "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (1 Peter 3:18—20.)

10 "For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Peter 4:6.)

11 As I ^apondered over these things which are ^bwritten, the ^ceyes of my ^dunderstanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord ^erested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the ^fdead, both small and great.

12 (Will many be saved in the Celestial Kingdom?) And there were gathered together in one place **an innumerable company** of the spirits of the ^ajust, who had been ^bfaithful in the ^ctestimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality;

13 And who had offered ^asacrifice in the ^bsimilitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered ^ctribulation in their Redeemer's ^dname. (From this scripture we learn that those who inherit the Celestial Kingdom will offer a sacrifice similar to the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ. We will be called to offer a sacrifice like that of Abraham. We will be tried and chastened to see if we will be willing to offer the sacrifice that will be required of us. Gordon B. Hinckley: **Sacrifice is the very essence of religion; it is the keystone of happy home life, the basis of true friendship, the foundation of peaceful community living, of sound relations among people and nations. Without sacrifice there is no true worship of God. I become increasingly convinced of that every day. "The Father gave his Son, and the Son gave his life," and we do not worship unless we give-give of our substance, give of our time, give of our strength, give of our talent, give of our faith, give of our testimonies.** BYU Speeches of the Year, 1962.)

14 All these had departed the mortal life, **firm in the ^ahope** (Bruce R. McConkie: **All the faithful Saints, all of those who have endured to the end, depart this life with the absolute guarantee of eternal life. There is no equivocation, no doubt, no uncertainty in our minds. Those who have been true and faithful in this life will not fall by the wayside in the life to come. If they keep their covenants here and now and depart this life firm and true in the testimony of our blessed Lord, they shall come forth with an inheritance of eternal life.** We do not mean to say that those who die in the Lord, and who are true and faithful in this life, must be perfect in all things when they go into the next sphere of existence. There was only one perfect man—the Lord Jesus whose Father was God. There have been many righteous souls who have attained relative degrees of perfection, and there have been great hosts of faithful people who have kept the faith, and lived the law, and departed this life with the full

assurance of an eventual inheritance of eternal life. There are many things they will do and must do, even beyond the grave, to merit the fulness of the Father's kingdom in that final glorious day when the great King shall say unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34.) But what we are saying is that when the saints of God chart a course of righteousness, when they gain sure testimonies of the truth and divinity of the Lord's work, when they keep the commandments, when they overcome the world, when they put first in their lives the things of God's kingdom: when they do all these things, and then depart this life—though they have not yet become perfect—they shall nonetheless gain eternal life in our Father's kingdom; and eventually they shall be perfect as God their Father and Christ His Son are perfect. CR, Oct 1976, p. 107) of a glorious ^bresurrection, through the ^cgrace of God the ^dFather and his ^eOnly Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

15 I beheld that they were filled with ^ajoy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their ^bdeliverance was at hand. (Joseph Smith: "We came to this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom. The great principle of happiness consists in having a body. The devil has no body, and herein is his punishment. He is pleased when he can obtain the tabernacle of man, and when cast out by the Savior he asked to go into the herd of swine, showing that he would prefer a swine's body to having none. [Luke 8:26-33.] All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not." (Joseph Smith, TPJS, p. 181.))

16 They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the ^aspirit world, to declare their ^bredemption from the ^cbands of death.

17 Their sleeping ^adust was to be ^brestored unto its ^cperfect frame, ^dbone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the ^espirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of ^fjoy.

18 While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their ^adeliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring ^bliberty to the ^ccaptives who had been faithful;

19 And there he ^apreached to them the everlasting ^bgospel, the doctrine of the ^cresurrection and the redemption of mankind from the ^dfall, and from individual sins on conditions of ^erepentance.

20 But unto the ^awicked he did not go, and among the ungodly and the unrepentant who had ^bdefiled themselves while in the flesh, his voice was not raised;

21 Neither did the ^arebellious who rejected the ^btestimonies and the warnings of the ancient ^cprophets behold his ^dpresence, nor look upon his face.

22 Where these were, ^adarkness reigned, but among the righteous there was ^bpeace;

23 And the saints rejoiced in their ^aredemption, and bowed the ^bknee and acknowledged the Son of God as their Redeemer and Deliverer from death and the ^cchains of ^dhell.

24 Their countenances ^ashone, and the ^bradiance from the presence of the Lord rested upon them, and they ^csang praises unto his holy name.

25 I marveled, for I understood that the Savior spent about three years in his ^aministry among the Jews and those of the house of Israel, endeavoring to ^bteach them the everlasting gospel and call them unto repentance;

26 And yet, notwithstanding his mighty works, and miracles, and proclamation of the truth, in great ^apower and authority, there were but ^bfew who hearkened to his voice, and rejoiced in his presence, and received salvation at his hands.

27 But his ministry among those who were dead was limited to the ^abrief time (Somewhere between 38 and 40 hours) intervening between the crucifixion and his resurrection;

28 And I wondered at the words of Peter—wherein he said that the Son of God preached unto the ^aspirits in prison, who sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah—and how it was possible for him to preach to those spirits and perform the necessary labor among them in so short a time.

29 And as I wondered, my eyes were opened, and my understanding ^aquickened, and I perceived that the

Lord went not in person among the ^bwicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them;

30 But behold, from among the righteous, he ^aorganized his forces and appointed ^bmessengers, ^cclothed with power and authority, and ^dcommissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in ^edarkness, even to ^fall the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.

(President Wilford Woodruff explained that **in the spirit world "every Apostle, every Seventy, every Elder, etc., who has died in the faith as soon as he passes to the other side of the veil, enters into the work of the ministry, and there is a thousand times more to preach [to] there than there is here.** They have word on the other side of the veil; and they want men, and they call them" (Journal of Discourses, 22:334). Joseph F. Smith: I believe that the disciples who have passed away in this dispensation—Joseph, the Prophet, and his brother Hyrum, and Brigham, and Heber, and Willard, and Daniel and John, and Wilford and all the rest of the prophets who have lived in this dispensation, and who have been intimately associated with the work of redemption and the other ordinances of the gospel of the Son of God in this world, are preaching that same gospel that they lived and preached here, to those who are in darkness in the spirit world and who had not the knowledge before they went. The gospel Now, among all these millions of spirits that have lived on the earth and have passed away, from generation to generation, since the beginning of the world, without the knowledge of the gospel—among them you may count that at least one-half are women. Who is going to preach the gospel to the women? Who is going to carry the testimony of Jesus Christ to the hearts of the women who have passed away without a knowledge of the gospel? Well, to my mind, it is a simple thing. These good sisters who have been set apart, ordained to the work, called to it, authorized by the authority of the holy Priesthood to minister for their sex, in the House of God for the living and for the dead, will be fully authorized and empowered to preach the gospel and minister to the women while the elders and prophets are preaching it to the men. The things we experience here are typical of the things of God and the life beyond us. There is a great similarity between God's purposes as manifested here and his purposes as carried out in his presence and kingdom. Those who are authorized to preach the gospel here and are appointed here to do that work will not be idle after they have passed away, but will continue to exercise the rights that they obtained here under the Priesthood of the Son of God to minister for the salvation of those who have died without a knowledge of the truth. Gospel Doctrine, 460-61)

31 And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the ^aacceptable day of the Lord and proclaim ^bliberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would ^crepent of their sins (Those in the spirit world are still able to repent.) and receive the gospel. (Both those who died without hearing the gospel in mortality and those who rejected the words of the prophets while in the flesh are to hear the gospel in the spirit world. That is to say the gospel will be taught to all who will listen. Those who had the opportunity to receive the gospel in this life (God being their judge) and who rejected it, may accept it in the spirit world to their blessing but not to their exaltation. This is not to suggest that there is no repentance in the spirit world. This revelation states that "the dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God. And after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions, and are washed clean, shall receive a reward according to their works, for they are heirs of salvation" (D&C138:58-59). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1148)

32 Thus was the gospel preached to those who had ^adied in their sins, without a ^bknowledge of the truth, or in ^ctransgression, having ^drejected the prophets.

33 These were taught ^afaith in God, repentance from sin, ^bvicarious baptism for the ^cremission of sins, the ^dgift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands,

34 And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be ^ajudged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (Joseph Fielding Smith: If a person is in every way worthy of the blessings and was denied them while living, then any time after death the ordinances may be performed. If the person had every opportunity to receive these blessings in person and refused, or through procrastination and lack of faith

did not receive them, then he is not entitled to them, and it is doubtful if the work for him will be valid if done within one week or 1,000 years. The Lord has declared that it is he who endures to the end that shall be saved, and he who rejects or neglects these blessings until death, when he has had the opportunity, is not worthy of them. Doctrines of Salvation, 2:179. The question is often asked as to whether it is harder or easier to accept the gospel in the spirit world. If those in that sphere are to be "judged according to men in the flesh," it must of necessity require the same degree of faith and courage to accept and live the gospel there as here. For those who have accorded their lives with gospel principles, accepting the gospel will be a natural step in their progression. Those whose lives were devoted to debauchery, wickedness, and warring against light and truth will have the greatest of difficulty in changing their course. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1148)

35 And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the ^asacrifice of the Son of God upon the ^bcross.

36 Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of ^aspirits, instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the ^bprophets who had testified of him in the flesh;
37 That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their ^arebellion and transgression, that they through the ministration of his servants might also hear his words. ("Now, among all these millions of spirits that have lived on the earth and have passed away, from generation to generation, since the beginning of the world, without the knowledge of the gospel—among them you may count that at least one-half are women. **Who is going to preach the gospel to the women? Who is going to carry the testimony of Jesus Christ to the hearts of the women who have passed away without a knowledge of the gospel? Well, to my mind, it is a simple thing. These good sisters who have been set apart, ordained to the work, called to it, authorized by the authority of the Holy Priesthood to minister for their sex, in the House of God for the living and for the dead, will be fully authorized and empowered to preach the gospel and minister to the women while the elders and prophets are preaching it to the men.** The things we experience here are typical of the things of God and the life beyond us. There is a great similarity between God's purposes as manifested here and his purposes as carried out in his presence and kingdom. Those who are authorized to preach the gospel here and are appointed here to do that work will not be idle after they have passed away, but will continue to exercise the rights that they obtained here under the Priesthood of the Son of God to minister for the salvation of those who have died without a knowledge of the truth" (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 461).)

38 Among the great and ^amighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous were Father ^bAdam, the ^cAncient of Days and father of all,

39 And our glorious ^aMother ^bEve, with many of her faithful ^cdaughters who had lived through the ages and worshiped the true and living God.

40 ^aAbel, the first ^bmartyr, was there, and his brother ^cSeth, one of the mighty ones, who was in the express ^dimage of his father, Adam.

41 ^aNoah, who gave warning of the flood; ^bShem, the great ^chigh priest; (Melchizedek) ^dAbraham, the father of the faithful; ^eIsaac, ^fJacob, and Moses, the great ^glaw-giver of Israel;

42 And ^aIsaiah, who declared by prophecy that the Redeemer was anointed to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the ^bcaptives, and the opening of the ^cprison to them that were bound, were also there.

43 Moreover, **Ezekiel**, who was shown in vision the great valley of ^adry bones, which were to be ^bclothed upon with flesh, to come forth again in the resurrection of the dead, living souls;

44 **Daniel**, who foresaw and foretold the establishment of the ^akingdom of God in the latter days, never again to be destroyed nor given to other people;

45 ^aElias, who was with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration;

46 And ^aMalachi, the prophet who testified of the coming of ^bElijah—of whom also Moroni spake to the Prophet Joseph Smith, declaring that he should come before the ushering in of the great and dreadful

^cday of the Lord—were also there.

47 The Prophet Elijah was to plant in the ^ahearts of the children the promises made to their fathers,
48 Foreshadowing the great work to be done in the ^atemples of the Lord in the ^bdispensation of the
fulness of times, for the redemption of the dead, and the ^csealing of the children to their parents, lest the
whole earth be smitten with a curse and utterly wasted at his coming.

49 All these and many more, even the ^aprophets who dwelt among the Nephites and ^btestified of the
coming of the Son of God, mingled in the vast assembly and waited for their deliverance,

50 For the ^adead had looked upon the long absence of their ^bspirits from their bodies as a ^cbondage.

("The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; and
when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy" (D&C 93:33-34). All of the spirit world is
considered a prison because we do not have our bodies.)

51 These the Lord taught, and gave them ^apower to come forth, after his resurrection from the dead, to
enter into his Father's kingdom, there to be crowned with ^bimmortality and eternal life, (How do we get
the power to become resurrected? President Spencer W. Kimball: President Brigham Young, the second
president of this dispensation, said: "It is supposed by this people that we have all the ordinances in our
possession for life and salvation, and exaltation, and that we are administering in those ordinances. This
is not the case. We are in possession of all the ordinances that can be administered in the flesh; but there
are other ordinances and administrations that must be administered beyond this world. I know you
would like to ask what they are. I will mention one. We have not, neither can we receive here, the
ordinance and the keys of resurrection." (Journal of Discourses, 15:137.) Do we have the keys of
resurrection? Could you return to the earth as ones who would never again die—your own parents, your
grandparents, your ancestors? I buried my mother when I was eleven, my father when I was in my early
twenties. I have missed my parents much. If I had the power of resurrection as did the Savior of the
world, I would have been tempted to try to have kept them longer. I have been called to speak in
numerous funerals for people whom I have known, people whom I have loved, and people whom I have
saved and held on to in a limited way. We do not know of anyone who can resurrect the dead as did
Jesus the Christ when he came back to mortality. "[The keys] will be given to those who have passed off
this stage of action and have received their bodies again. . . . They will be ordained, by those who hold
the keys of the resurrection, to go forth and resurrect the Saints, just as we receive the ordinance of
baptism then receive the keys of authority to baptize others for the remission of their sins. This is one of
the ordinances we can not receive here [on the earth], and there are many more." (JD, 15:137.) CR, Apr
1977, p. 69. Brigham Young: Some person holding the keys of the resurrection, having previously
passed through that ordeal, will be delegated to resurrect our bodies. JD, 9:139)

52 And continue thenceforth their labor (What labor? To be as God is.) as had been promised by the
Lord, and be partakers of all ^a blessings which were held in reserve for them that love him.

(Having witnessed the visit of the Savior to the world of spirits while his body lay in the borrowed tomb
of Joseph of Arimathaea, the scene now changes so that President Joseph F. Smith is invited to view
things in the spirit world as they were at the time he received this vision in October of 1918. There is no
justification in the supposition that premortal spirits (Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John
Taylor, and Wilford Woodruff) mingled with the disembodied spirits during the visit of Christ to them
in the meridian of time. Those described as being present included the faithful from Adam to Malachi
(vv. 38-46) and the Book of Mormon prophets (v. 49), all of whom had complied with the law of
sacrifice as practiced in the Old Testament (vv. 12-14) and had received the power of resurrection (v.
51). It is common for a vision of this sort to change scenes, including time and place. The vision of John
the Revelator in the book of Revelation, that of Nephi in 1 Nephi 11-14, and that of the Prophet Joseph
Smith in Doctrine and Covenants 76 are classic examples. What President Smith now sees is a vision of
those who had been "reserved to come forth in the fulness of times" to lay the foundation of the "great
latter-day work." Having completed their labors in the flesh, they now continued them in the spirit

world. Verses 55 and 56 may well be a flashback to our first estate. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1149-50)

(President Smith is now going to see the pre-mortal existence.) 53 **The Prophet Joseph Smith**, and my father, **Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff**, and other choice ^aspirits who were ^breserved to come forth in the ^cfulness of times to take part in laying the ^dfoundations of the great latter-day work, (There is no scriptural evidence to suggest that those in premortality mingled with those who had died and were in the spirit world.)

54 Including the building of the ^atemples and the performance of ordinances therein for the redemption of the ^bdead, were also in the spirit world. (This is us)

55 I observed that they were also among the ^anoble and great ones who were ^bchosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God.

56 Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first ^alessons in the world of spirits and were ^bprepared to come forth in the due ^ctime of the Lord to labor in his ^dvineyard for the salvation of the souls of men.

(Now he goes back to the spirit world.) 57 I beheld that the faithful ^aelders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the ^bpreaching of the ^cgospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the ^dspirits of the dead.

58 The dead who ^arepent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ^bordinances of the house of God,

59 And after they have paid the ^apenalty of their transgressions, and are ^bwashed clean, shall receive a ^creward according to their ^dworks, for they are heirs of salvation. (In the previous verse we are assured that the dead can repent. We know that there is no true repentance without suffering (Alma 42:16-18). It naturally follows that those in the spirit world who repent will be involved in the same process that they would have been involved in had they lived to do their repenting in this life. If they are to be judged according to men in the flesh, they too must pay "the penalty of their transgressions." One illustration of this principle could include those who, in a state of despondency, commit suicide. While not negating the seriousness of this transgression, it would be our hope that there will be those who, in the course of time, having "paid the penalty" will be able to right their lives (Ballard, Suicide, 52-54). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 1150)

60 Thus was the ^avision of the redemption of the dead revealed to me, and I bear record, and I know that this ^brecord is ^ctrue, through the blessing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, even so. Amen.