

Alma 40

1 Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ.

No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind.

Ezra T. Benson, *A Witness and a Warning*, p. 33

2 Fundamental to a man's understanding about his identity and purpose upon this planet is to know that God has a plan of salvation also called a plan of happiness, a plan of mercy, etc.

Neal A. Maxwell, *But For a Small Moment*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986], 62

Alma 40:6-15

3 *Spirit World*

Might we ask with Alma: What becomes of man—the eternal spirit—at the time of death? Does it remain forever in a grave of darkness? Or does it continue to exist, and if so, does it retain its individuality? Does the spirit return immediately to the divine presence? And what of the world of spirits—where is it and what of its nature? ... All such questions and many more are answered with clarity by the revelations of the Restoration, from which we learn of this afterworld, this life beyond the grave.

Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond*, p. 13.

The Resurrection

4 The resurrection is the creation of an immortal soul; it consists in the uniting or reuniting of body and spirit in immortality. . . . Resurrected beings have bodies of flesh and bones, tangible, corporeal bodies, bodies that occupy space, digest food, and have power, outwardly, to appear as mortal bodies do. (Luke 24.) . . .

Two events of transcendent importance make possible the resurrection: 1. The fall of Adam; and 2. The redemptive sacrifice of the Son of God. Adam's fall brought temporal or natural death into the world; that is, as a result of Adam's fall mortality was introduced, and mortality is the forerunner of death. Christ's redeeming sacrifice ransomed men from the effects of Adam's fall in that mortality is replaced by immortality, or in other words in that the dead come forth in the resurrection . . . The doctrine of a universal resurrection was known and taught from the beginning. . . . (See D&C 29:42-50; Moses 5:6-15.)

Christ was the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23), and because of his resurrection, "by the power of God," all men shall come forth from the grave. (Morm. 9:13.)

To those who lived before the resurrection of Christ, the day of his coming forth from the dead was known as the first resurrection. Abinadi and Alma, for instance, so considered it. (Mosiah 15:21-25; Alma 40.) To those who have lived since that day, the first resurrection is yet future and will take place at the time of the Second Coming. (D&C 88:96-102.) We have no knowledge that the resurrection is going on now or that any persons have been resurrected since the day in which Christ came forth excepting Peter, James, and Moroni, all of whom had special labors to perform in this day which necessitated tangible resurrected bodies.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 637-43

The Spirit Prison

5 There are two distinct senses in which the expression spirit prison is used: 1. Since disembodied spirits cannot gain a fulness of joy until their resurrection (they consider their habitation in the spirit world as one of imprisonment, and so the whole spirit world (including both paradise and hell) is a spirit prison. It was to the righteous spirits in prison, those who were in paradise that our Lord preached while his body was in the tomb. (;

In the vision of the redemption of the dead, President Joseph F. Smith saw that during his ministry to the spirits in prison, "the Lord went not in person among the wicked and disobedient who had rejected the truth," but that he went "declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful," to the vast assemblage of the righteous, for they "had looked upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage." (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed., pp. 472-476.)

2. In a more particular sense, however, the spirit prison is hell, that portion of the spirit world where the wicked dwell. (M Christ bridged the gulf between paradise and hell — so that the righteous could mingle with the wicked and preach them the gospel — the wicked in hell were confined to locations which precluded them from contact with the righteous in paradise. Abraham told the rich man in hell that between him and Lazarus (who was in paradise) there was a great gulf fixed so that none could go from paradise to hell or from hell to paradise. (L.)

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2^d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966] 637-43

6 If you see one of your children that has passed away it may appear to you in the form in which you would recognize it, the form of childhood; but if it came to you as a messenger bearing some important truth, it would perhaps come as the spirit of Bishop Edward Hunter's son (who died when a little child) came to him, in the stature of full-grown manhood, and revealed himself to his father, and said: "I am your son."

Bishop Hunter did not understand it. He went to my father, and said: "Hyrum, what does that mean? I buried my son when he was only a little boy, but he has come to me as a full-grown man—a noble, glorious, young man, and declared himself my son. What does it mean?"

Father (Hyrum Smith, the Patriarch) told him that the Spirit of Jesus Christ was full-grown before he was born into the world; and so our children were full-grown and possessed their full stature in the spirit, before they entered mortality, the same stature that they will possess after they have passed away from mortality, and as they will also appear after the resurrection, when they shall have completed their mission.

Joseph Smith taught the doctrine that the infant child that was laid away in death would come up in the resurrection as a child; and pointing the mother of a lifeless child, he said to her: "You will have the joy, the pleasure, and satisfaction of nurturing this child, after its resurrection, until it reaches the full stature of its spirit." There is restitution, there is growth, there is development, after the resurrection from death

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975], 455-456

7 Many other great truths not known before have been declared to the people, and one of the greatest is that to hell there is an exit as well as an entrance. Hell is no place to which a vindictive judge sends prisoners to suffer and to be punished principally for his glory; But it is a place prepared for the teaching, the disciplining of those who failed to learn here upon the earth what they should have learned...No man will be kept in hell longer than is necessary to bring him to a fitness for something better. When he reaches that stage the prison doors will open and there will be rejoicing among the hosts who welcome him into a better state.

James E. Talmage, in *Conference Report*, Apr 1930 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930], 97

8 The work of the righteous is to preach the gospel to as many as will receive it, so that whosoever receives it unto repentance may leave the spirit prison and enter into paradise when the ordinances have been done vicariously for them on earth. Through the institution of baptism for the dead, the Church is able to open the gate of baptism, which allows the repentant spirits to exit the spirit prison of hell, the state of the wicked in the spirit world.

Richard O. Cowan; as quoted in *The Book of Mormon: Alma, The Testimony of the Word*, ed. by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate [Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, BYU, 1992], 184

9 Apparently, there are no infants or children in the spirit world. All who reside there possess the stature of adult men and women, the same appearance they possess prior to mortal birth. If infants or children die, their spirits immediately resume their former adult stature while in the spirit world. However, when they regain their bodies during the resurrection, they naturally come forth as children to be raised to maturity by righteous and worthy parents. Dale C. Mouritsen, *Ensign*, Jan. 1977 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1977], 50

10 There is no baptism in the spirit world any more than there is any marrying and giving in marriage. Some person or persons dwelling in the flesh must attend to this part of the work for them; for it takes just as much to save a dead man who never received the gospel as a living man. And all those who have passed away without the gospel have the right to expect somebody in the flesh to perform this work for them. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church—Wilford Woodruff* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004], 188

11 We have more friends behind the veil than on this side, and they will hail us more joyfully than you were ever welcomed by your parents and friends in this world; and you will rejoice more when you meet them than you ever rejoiced to see a friend in this life; and then we shall go on from step to step, from rejoicing to rejoicing, and from one intelligence and power to another, our happiness becomes more and more exquisite and sensible as we proceed. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, comp by John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954], 379-380

Alma 40:8

12 *Time*

Abraham was told that one revolution (or day) on Kolob equals a thousand of our years (Abraham 3:4). If one were to carry the ratio down to smaller units of time we see some interesting implications.

KOLOB TIME	EARTH TIME
1 day	1,000 years
1 hour	41.67 years
1 minute	253 days
1 second	4.22 days
.25 second	1.1 days
.01 second	1 hour

Think of the implications of that. While a person on Kolob takes a two-hour nap, a person on Earth is born, lives to the age of eighty, and dies before the other awakens. One blink on the part of a Kolobian and he misses one whole day of ours.

Gerald Lund, *First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, pp. 158-159

13 When we pray “Thy will be done,” our submission includes yielding to God’s timing. He lives in a unique circumstance wherein the past, present, future blend in an “eternal now.” Those of us who need to wear mere wristwatches should be reluctant, therefore, to insist on our timetables for Him.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Whom the Lord Loveth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 18

Alma 40:11**14** *Taken Home to God*

These words of Alma as I understand them, do not intend to convey the thought that all spirits go back into the presence of God for an assignment to a place of peace or a place of punishment and before him receive their individual sentence. "Taken home to God," simply means that their mortal existence has come to an end, and they have returned to the world of spirits, where they are assigned to a place according to their works with the just or with the unjust, there to await the resurrection. "Back to God" is a phrase which finds an equivalent in many other well-known conditions. For instance: a man spends a stated time in some foreign mission field. When he is released and returns to the United States, he may say, "It is wonderful to be back home" yet his home may be somewhere in Utah or Idaho or some other part of the West.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:84-86

15 Alma, when he says that "the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body,... are taken home to that God who gave them life," has the idea, doubtless, in his mind that our God is omnipresent—not in His own personality but through His minister, the Holy Ghost.

He does not intend to convey the idea that they are immediately ushered into the personal presence of God. He evidently used that phrase in a qualified sense. Solomon... makes a similar statement: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The same idea is frequently expressed by the Latter-day Saints. In referring to a departed one it is often said that he has gone back to God, or he has gone "home to that God who gave him life."...

Alma says plainly that the spirits of the righteous go into a state of happiness, etc. He says the spirits of the wicked are cast into outer darkness, etc. Now, then, how can those spirits who are cast into outer darkness be in the personal presence of God? God does not dwell where they are, and they certainly do not go where He is.

George Q. Cannon, *Gospel truth*, comp. by Jerreld L. Newquist [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957], 58

16 President Brigham Young explained that to speak of the spirit returning to the God who gave it means that "when the spirits leave their bodies they are in the presence of our Father and God" in the sense that they "are prepared to see, hear and understand spiritual things" (JD 3:368). *To go into the "presence of God" is not necessarily to be "placed within a few yards or rods, or within a short distance of his person" (Orson Pratt, JD 16:365). President George Q. Cannon explained: "Alma, when he says that "the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, ...are taken home to that God who gave them life, " has the idea, doubtless, in his mind that our God is omnipresent—not in His own personality but through His minister, the Holy Spirit. He does not intend to convey the idea that they are immediately ushered in the personal presence of God. He evidently used that phrase in a qualified sense." (Gospel Truth, p. 58). "As for my going into the immediate presence of God when I die," President Heber C. Kimball observed, "I do not expect it, but I expect to go into the world of spirits and associate with my brethren, and preach the Gospel in the spiritual world, and prepare myself in every necessary way to receive my body again, and then enter through the wall into the celestial world" (JD 3:112-13).*

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol 3, pp.297-298.

Alma 40:12**17** *Paradise*

Paradise is the abode of the righteous in the world of spirits (see 2 Nephi 9:13; Alma 60:13; Moroni 10:34), a "state of happiness," a place hereafter where the spirits of the faithful "expand in wisdom, where they have respite from all their troubles, and where care and sorrow do not annoy" (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 448). Those things which burdened the obedient—the worldly cares and struggles, the vicissitudes of life—are shed with the physical body. Paradise is a place where the spirit is free to think and act with a renewed capacity and with the vigor

and enthusiasm that characterized one in one's prime. Though a person does not rest per se from the work associated with the spread of the gospel, at the same time he is delivered from those cares and worries so prevalent in a fallen world and a corrupt body.

One of the most misunderstood biblical passages in Christian history has to do with this word *paradise*. To the thief on the cross Jesus said: "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:39-43). This account has spawned a host of incorrect perceptions of doctrine, which in turn have resulted in questionable practices on the part of Christians over the centuries, not the least of which is a type of "death-bed repentance," a notion that one can postpone his confession and repentance until the time just before death. Though we must never de-emphasize or denigrate the value of sincere repentance, no matter how late in one's earthly experience (see Matthew 20:1-16)—for the word of the Lord is clear that "he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven" (D&C 1:32)—confessions and repentance coerced by the threat of death hardly prepare one's soul for a place hereafter among the sanctified.

In discoursing upon the subject, the Prophet Joseph Smith observed: "I will say something about the spirits in prison. There has been much said by modern divines about the words of Jesus (when on the cross) to the thief saying, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." King James' translators make it out to say paradise. But what is paradise? It is a modern word: it does not answer at all to the original word that Jesus made use of ... There is nothing in the original word in Greek from which this was taken that signifies paradise; but it was—*This day thou shalt be with me in the world of spirits.*" In confirming these truths, the Prophet said: "hades, the Greek or Sheol, the Hebrew, these two significations mean a world of spirits. Hades, Sheol, paradise, spirits in prison, are all one: it is a world of spirits." (*Teachings*, pp.309, 310, italics added.) Not discounting in any way, therefore, any feelings of contrition that may have existed in the heart of the thief on the cross. Parley P. Pratt thus explained that this man went into the world of spirits "in a state of ignorance, and sin, being uncultivated, unimproved, and unprepared for salvation. He went there to be taught, and to complete that repentance, which in a dying moment he commenced on earth." (JD 1:9.)

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol 3 pp. 298-299

Alma 40:13-14

18 *Spirits of the Wicked*

In a broad sense, the whole of the spirit world—paradise and hell—is a "spirit prison," inasmuch as the spirits there even the righteous, look upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage (see D&C 45:17; 138:50; see also 138:15,16,18). "I know it is a startling idea," President Brigham Young stated, "to say that the Prophet [Joseph Smith] and the persecutor of the Prophet, all go to prison together... But they have not got their bodies yet, consequently they are in prison." (JD 3:95; compare Moses 7:55-57.) It is in this sense that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison (see 1 Peter 3:18-20; 4:6). President Joseph F. Smith beheld in vision that the Savior went not in person to preach to the wicked in the postmortal spirit world, but rather that he organized his missionary force in that realm and commissioned the righteous to preach the gospel to the spirits, who were in darkness and under the bondage of sin (see D&C 138:20-22; 29-32). Christ went to the spirits in prison in the sense that he went to the spirit world.

Outer darkness, or hell, is made up of those who in mortality spurned the ways of righteousness, those who defied the word of truth, those who chose to walk in their own paths or in paths of disobedience. Joseph Smith pointed out, "The great misery of departed spirits in the world of spirits, where they go after death, is to know that they come up short of glory that others enjoy and that they might have enjoyed themselves, and they are their own accusers" (*Teachings*, pp. 310-11; compare p. 358). Thus hell or outer darkness is both a *place*—a part of the world of spirits where suffering and sorrow and appropriate preparation go on—and a *state*—a condition of the mind associated with remorseful realization.

The righteous, those who have received the ordinances of salvation and proven faithful to the attendant covenants, go into paradise at the time of their physical death. It would appear that all others, including the good and noble men and women of the earth who died without a knowledge of the gospel, enter into hell, outer darkness, or what is sometimes called (in a narrower sense than above—see Bruce R McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.755) spirit prison. This second division is not simply a place of suffering, but also a place of preparation and learning. Joseph Smith taught concerning the necessity of ordinances for entrance into paradise: “Every man that has been baptized and belongs to the kingdom has a right to be baptized for those who have gone before; and *as soon as the law of the Gospel is obeyed here [the gospel ordinance] by their friends who act as proxy for them, the Lord has administrators there to set them free*” (*Teachings*, p. 367, italics added; see also D&C 138:58; Joseph Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 2:158, 230).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written: “Before Christ bridged the gulf between paradise and hell—so that the righteous could mingle with the wicked and preach them the gospel—the wicked in hell were confined to locations which precluded them from contact with the righteous in paradise... Now that the righteous spirits in paradise have been commissioned to carry the message of salvation to the wicked spirits in hell, there is a certain amount of mingling together of the good and bad spirits. Repentance opens the prison doors to the spirits in hell; it enables those bound with the chains of hell to free themselves from darkness, unbelief, ignorance, and sin. As rapidly as they can overcome these obstacles—gain light, believe truth, acquire intelligence, cast off sin, and break the chains of hell—they can leave the hell that imprisons them and dwell with the righteous in the peace of paradise.

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol 3, pp.299-300

19 I once wondered if those who refuse to repent but who then satisfy the law of justice by paying for their own sins are then worthy to enter the celestial kingdom. The answer is no. The entrance requirements for celestial life are simply higher than merely satisfying the law of justice. For that reason, paying for our sins will not bear the same fruit as repenting of our sins .

Bruce C. Hafen, *Broken Heart*, 7-8.

20 We may enquire where the spirits dwell, that the devil has power over? They dwell everywhere...on this continent; it is full of them. If you could see ...you would see millions on millions of the spirits of those who have been slain on this continent. Would you see the spirits of those who were as good in the flesh as they knew how to be? Yes. Would you see the spirits of the wicked? Yes. Could you see the spirits of devils? Yes, and that is all there is of them.

Brigham Young, [JD, 3:368].

21 **Alma 40:15** *Partial judgment*

There are at least a couple of ways to try to understand Alma’s remarks in this verse. In one sense, Alma may be referring to the “rise” of the righteous spirit to paradise in the same sense that the body rises in the resurrection. If so, it is an odd use of the word *resurrection*. Second, since the doctrines of resurrection and judgment are so inextricable intertwined, since they are always taught together. Alma may be referring to the departure of the spirits into the spirit world at death—and particularly the division of those spirits into paradise and outer darkness—as a type of *first judgment*. This is in fact what President Joseph F. Smith called a “partial judgment” that takes place at the time of death. “Death is not the end,” he taught. “When we are sorrowing, lay away our loved ones in the grave, we have an assurance based upon the life, words, and resurrection of Christ, that we shall again meet and shake hands and associate with them in a better life, where sorrow and trouble are ended, and where there is to be no more parting.

This knowledge is one of the greatest incentives that we have to live right in this life, to pass through mortality, doing and feeling and accomplishing good. The spirits of all men, as soon as they depart from this mortal body, whether they are good or evil, we are told in the Book of Mormon, are taken home to that God who gave them life, where *there is a separation, a partial judgment*, and the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness which is called paradise.... The wicked, on the contrary, have no part nor portion in the Spirit of the Lord, and they are cast into outer darkness, being led captive, because of their own iniquity, by the evil one. (*Gospel Doctrine*, p.448, italics added; see also p. 449.)

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol 3, pp. 300-301

- 22 Death itself is an initial *day of judgment* for all persons, both the righteous and the wicked. When the spirit leaves the body at death, it is taken home to that God who gave it life, meaning that it returns to live in the realm of spiritual existence (Eccles. 12:7). At that time the spirit undergoes a partial judgment and is assigned an inheritance in paradise or in hell to await the day of the first or second resurrection.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 402

- 23 When the spirit leaves the body, it returns, says the prophet, immediately to God, to be assigned to its place, either to associate with the good and the noble ones who have lived in the paradise of God, or to be confined in the “prison-house” to await the resurrection of the body from the grave. Therefore we know that Brother Clayton has gone to God, gone to receive the partial judgment of the Almighty which pertains to the period intervening between the death of the body and the resurrection of the body, or the separation of the spirit from the body and their uniting together again. This judgment is passed upon the spirit alone. But there will come a time which will be after the resurrection, when the body and spirit shall be reunited, when the final judgment will be passed on every man.

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975], 449

Alma 40:16

- 24 This verse has proven problematic in the past. On the surface, it would appear that Alma is suggesting that the first resurrection consists of the rising of all people who lived and died from the days of Adam to the meridian of time—righteous and wicked alike—at the time of Christ’s resurrection. We know from Abinadi (see Mosiah 15:21-22) and from modern revelation (see D&C 76:50-80) that only the celestial and the terrestrial bodies come forth in the first resurrection. Alma finally clarifies his meaning in verse 20 when he states that “the souls and the bodies are reunited, of the righteous, at the resurrection of Christ.” (See also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 2:300; *Answers to Gospel Questions* 1:35-36).

Millet & McConkie p. 302

Alma 40:17-18

- 25 Though individuals have been—since A.D 34—raised from the dead with celestial bodies, the final judgment and assignment to kingdoms of glory will take place after the thousand years of Christ’s reign on earth.

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol 3, p. 302.

Alma 40:23

- 26 *Restored*

The question frequently arises as to whether a child that died in infancy will remain a child in the hereafter, and whether in the resurrection the spirit will take up the same body that it tabernacled in the flesh. . . . The late President Joseph F. Smith in an editorial in the Improvement Era, June 1904 . . . stated, “The body will come forth as it is laid to rest, for there is no growth or development in the grave. As it is laid down, so will it arise, and changes to perfection

will come by the law of restitution. But the spirit will continue to expand and develop, to the full stature of man.” Parents, therefore, who have been parted from their children by death may rest assured that, if worthy through obedience to the principles of the gospel, they will not only meet their children in the spirit world, but will also recognize them and know them as they knew them in this life. Parents too, have even a greater comfort in the fact that their little ones whose lives on earth were cut short will continue to grow and develop, and receive every blessing to which their inheritance and faithfulness will entitle them.

David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, p. 75

27 *Will the veil of forgetfulness be lifted in the spirit world?*

There are those who suppose that death brings with it a restoration of pre-earth knowledge. The scriptures do not sustain such an idea. Were this the case, those in the spirit world who had not heard the gospel could hardly be judged according to men in the flesh, as revelation ancient and modern asserts (see 1 Peter 4:6; D&C 138: 10).

Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986]*, 62.

28 Joseph Smith added this important insight about the Resurrection:

“As concerning the resurrection, I will merely say that all men will come from the grave as they lie down, whether old or young; there will not be ‘added unto their stature one cubit,’ neither taken from it; all will be raised by the power of God, having spirit in their bodies, and not blood. Children will be enthroned in the presence of God and the Lamb with bodies of the same stature that they had on earth, having been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; they will there enjoy the fullness of that light, glory and intelligence, which is prepared in the celestial kingdom. ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them.’ [See Revelation 14:13.]”
HC, 4:555-56

29 ...A man who had lost a leg in childhood will have his leg restored... Deformities and the like will be corrected, if not immediately at the time of the uniting of the spirit and body, so soon thereafter [almost instantly] that it will make no difference. . . . Infants and children do not grow in the grave, but when they come forth, they will come forth with the same body and in the same size in which the body was when it was laid away. After the resurrection the body will grow until it has reached the full stature of manhood or womanhood.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:293-294

30 Joseph Smith declared: “All your losses will be made up to you in the resurrection, provided you continue faithful. By the vision of the Almighty I have seen it.”

31 **Alma 40:25**

Righteous Shine Forth

“Here, then is eternal life,” Joseph Smith explained, “to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.”

Teachings, pp.346-47.

Alma 40:26

32 Thus, eventually, all are redeemed from spiritual death except those who have “sinned unto death” (D&C 64:7), that is, those who are destined to be sons of perdition.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 758

Conclusion to Alma 40

33 . . . Many other great truths not known before, have been declared to the people, and one of the greatest is that to hell there is an exit as well as an entrance. Hell is no place to which a vindictive judge sends prisoners to suffer and to be punished principally for his glory; but it is a place prepared for the teaching, the disciplining of those who failed to learn here upon the earth what they should have learned. . . . No man will be kept in hell longer than is necessary to bring him to a fitness for something better. When he reaches that stage the prison doors will open and there will be rejoicing among the hosts who welcome him into a better state.

James E. Talmage, Conference Report, Apr. 1930, p. 97

34 The work of the righteous is to preach the gospel to as many as will receive it, so that whosoever receives it unto repentance may leave the spirit prison and enter into paradise when the ordinances have been done vicariously for them on earth. Through the institution of baptism for the dead, the Church is able to open the gate of baptism, which allows the repentant spirits to exit the spirit prison of hell, the state of the wicked in the spirit world.

Richard O. Cowan, *Alma, The Testimony of the Word*, ed. By Nyman and Tate, p. 184

35 Where is the spirit world? It is right here. . . . Can you see it with your natural eyes? No. Can you see spirits in this room? No. Suppose the Lord should touch your eyes that you might see, could you then see the spirits? Yes, as plainly as you now see bodies. . . .

Discourses of Brigham Young, pp. 376-377

36 We have more friends behind the veil than on this side, and they will hail us more joyfully than you were ever welcomed by your parents and friends in this world; and you will rejoice more when you meet them than you ever rejoiced to see a friend in this life; and then we shall go on from step to step, from rejoicing to rejoicing, and from one intelligence and power to another, our happiness becomes more and more exquisite and sensible as we proceed. . . .

Discourses of Brigham Young, pp. 379-380

37 Brother Joseph Smith gave an explanation of [evil influences]. There are places in the Mississippi Valley where the influence or the presence of invisible spirits are very perceptibly felt. He said that numbers had been slain there in war and that there were evil influences or spirits which affect the spirits of those who have tabernacles on the earth. I myself have felt those influences in other places besides the continent of America; I have felt them on the old battle grounds on the Sandwich Islands. I have come to the conclusion that if our eyes were open to see the spirit world around us, we should feel differently on this subject than we do; we would not be so unguarded and careless and so indifferent whether we had the spirit and power of God with us or not; but we would be continually watchful and prayerful to our Heavenly Father for His Holy Spirit and His holy angels to be around about us to strengthen us to overcome every evil influence.

George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truths*, 1:82