

Pre-mortal Family

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Doctrine and Covenants 93:23, 29, 33-34

Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth; ...Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. ...For man is spirit. 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.

Proclamation on the Family.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

IN THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal life.

Neal A. Maxwell, October Conference, 1985.

Premortality is not a relaxing doctrine. For each of us, there are choices to be made, incessant and difficult chores to be done, ironies and adversities to be experienced, time to be well spent, talents and gifts to be well employed. Just because we were chosen “there and then,” surely does not mean we can be indifferent “here and now.” Whether foreordination for men, or foredesignation for women, those called and prepared must also prove “chosen, and faithful.”

Robert D. Hales, *Clothed with Charity: Talks from the 1996 Women’s Conference (1997)*, 134.

The family is not an accident of mortality. It existed as an organizational unit in the heavens before the world was formed; historically, it started on earth with Adam and Eve, as recorded in Genesis. Adam and Eve were married and sealed for time and all eternity by the Lord, and as a result their family will exist eternally.

Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service [2004], 48, 49.

We lived as spirit children of our Father in Heaven before we were born on this earth. We were not, however, like our Heavenly Father, nor could we ever become like Him and enjoy all the blessings that He enjoys without the experience of living in mortality with a physical body.

God's whole purpose—His work and His glory—is to enable each of us to enjoy all His blessings. He has provided a perfect plan to accomplish His purpose. We understood and accepted this plan before we came to the earth. ... In order to progress and become like God, each of us had to obtain a body and be tested during a time of probation on the earth

Pre-mortal Christ

Moses 1:32-33, 39

And by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth. And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten. ...For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

Moses 4:1-3

And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor. But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;

Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement* [2000], 74.

In the premortal council the Savior covenanted with the Father to perform the Atonement. John Taylor wrote, ‘A covenant was entered into between Him and His Father, in which He agreed to atone for the sins of the world’ [The Mediation and Atonement (1882), 97], and hence he became known as ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ (Revelation 13:8; see also Moses 7:47).

Neal A. Maxwell, *Plain and Precious Things* [1983], 53.

It was one of those special moments when a few words are preferred to many. Never has one individual offered, in so few words, to do so much for so many as did Jesus when He meekly proffered Himself as ransom for all of us.

Marion G. Romney, “Jesus Christ: Lord of the Universe,” *Improvement Era*, Nov. 1968, 46, 48.

Jesus Christ, in the sense of being its Creator and Redeemer, is the Lord of the whole universe. Except for his mortal ministry accomplished on this earth, his service and relationship to other worlds and their inhabitants are the same as his service and relationship to this earth and its inhabitants. ...

... In short, Jesus Christ, through whom God created the universe, was chosen to put into operation throughout the universe Elohim’s great plan ‘to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’—the gospel of Jesus Christ—the only way whereby man can obtain eternal life”

The Living Christ.

He was the Great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Messiah of the New. Under the direction of His Father, He was the creator of the earth. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3).

Pre-mortal Covenants

Abraham 3:19, 22-23

And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.

...Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:59.

We know they were all innocent in the beginning; but the right of free agency which was given to them enabled some [the noble and great] to outstrip others, and thus, through the eons of immortal existence, to become more intelligent, more faithful, for they were free to act for themselves, to think for themselves, to receive the truth or rebel against it.

Joseph Smith, *Teachings*, 365.

Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was. I suppose I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council.

“Foreordination,” *True to the Faith*.

In the premortal spirit world, God appointed certain spirits to fulfill specific missions during their mortal lives. This is called foreordination. Foreordination does not guarantee that individuals will receive certain callings or responsibilities. Such opportunities come in this life as a result of the righteous exercise of agency, just as foreordination came as a result of righteousness in the premortal existence.

The doctrine of foreordination applies to all members of the Church, not just to the Savior and His prophets. Before the creation of the earth, faithful women were given certain responsibilities and faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood duties. Although you do not remember that time, you surely agreed to fulfill significant tasks in the service of your Father. As you prove yourself worthy, you will be given opportunities to fulfill the assignments you then received.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:284.

Israel is an eternal people. Members of that chosen race first gained their inheritance with the faithful in the pre-mortal life. Israel was a distinct people in pre-existence. Many of the valiant and noble spirits in that first estate were chosen, elected, and foreordained to be born into the family of Jacob, so as to be natural heirs of all of the blessings of the gospel.

John A. Widstoe, "The Worth of Souls," *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, p. 189.

In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a[n] ... agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan. ... We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we became parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but ... saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father's work, and the Savior's work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation. That places us in a very responsible attitude towards the human race. By that doctrine, with the Lord at the head, we become saviors on Mount Zion, all committed to the great plan of offering salvation to the untold numbers of spirits. To do this is the Lord's self-imposed duty, this great labor his highest glory. Likewise, it is man's duty, self-imposed, his pleasure and joy, his labor, and ultimately his glory.

Dallin, H. Oaks, *Ensign*, Nov 1993, 72.

All of the myriads of mortals who have been born on this earth chose the Father's plan and fought for it. Many of us also made covenants with the Father concerning what we would do in mortality. In ways that have not been revealed, our actions in the spirit world influence us in mortality.

Mortality – Family

Moses 3:24

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.

Moses 2:28

And I, God, blessed them [Adam and Eve], and said unto them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Doctrine and Covenants 128:18

It is sufficient to know, in this case, that the earth will be smitten with a curse unless there is a welding link of some kind or other between the fathers and the children, upon some subject or other—and behold what is that subject? It is the baptism for the dead. For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect. Neither can they nor we be made perfect without those who have died in the gospel also; for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time.

Doctrine and Covenants 138:48

Foreshadowing the great work to be done in the temples of the Lord in the dispensation of the fulness of times, for the redemption of the dead, and the sealing of the children to their parents, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse and utterly wasted at his coming.

The Family: A Proclamation to The World.

WE, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife

THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord

Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.

Julie B. Beck, "Teaching the Doctrine of the Family," *Ensign*, Mar. 2011.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have a theology of the family that is based on the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. The Creation of the earth provided a place where families could live. God created a man and a woman who were the two essential halves of a family. It was part of Heavenly Father's plan that Adam and Eve be sealed and form an eternal family. The Fall provided a way for the family to grow. Adam and Eve were family leaders who chose to have a mortal experience. The Fall made it possible for them to have sons and daughters. The Atonement allows for the family to be sealed together eternally. It allows for families to have eternal growth and perfection. The plan of happiness, also called the plan of salvation, was a plan created for families. The rising generation need to understand that the main pillars of our theology are centered in the family.

Mortality – Christ

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

3 Nephi 11:11

And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

The Living Christ.

Though sinless, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38), yet was despised for it. His gospel was a message of peace and goodwill. He entreated all to follow His example. He walked the roads of Palestine, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, and raising the dead. He taught the truths of eternity, the reality of our premortal existence, the purpose of our life on earth, and the potential for the sons and daughters of God in the life to come.

He instituted the sacrament as a reminder of His great atoning sacrifice. He was arrested and condemned on spurious charges, convicted to satisfy a mob, and sentenced to die on Calvary’s cross. He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind. His was a great vicarious gift in behalf of all who would ever live upon the earth.

We solemnly testify that His life, which is central to all human history, neither began in Bethlehem nor concluded on Calvary. He was the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Redeemer of the world.

He rose from the grave to “become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20). As Risen Lord, He visited among those He had loved in life. He also ministered among His “other sheep” (John 10:16) in ancient America. In the modern world, He and His Father appeared to the boy Joseph Smith, ushering in the long-promised “dispensation of the fulness of times” (Eph. 1:10). We testify that He will someday return to earth. “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together” (Isa. 40:5). He will rule as King of Kings and reign as Lord of Lords, and every knee shall bend and every tongue shall speak in worship before Him.

Mortality – Covenants

Fourth Article of Faith

We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Moroni 4

The manner of their elders and priests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the church; and they administered it according to the commandments of Christ; wherefore we know the manner to be true; and the elder or priest did minister it—And they did kneel down with the church, and pray to the Father in the name of Christ, saying: O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it; that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

Moroni 5

The manner of administering the wine—Behold, they took the cup, and said: O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee, in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

Doctrine and Covenants 124:39

Therefore, verily I say unto you, that your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies, and your memorials for your sacrifices by the sons of Levi, and for your oracles in your most holy places wherein you receive conversations, and your statutes and judgments, for the beginning of the revelations and foundation of Zion, and for the glory, honor, and endowment of all her municipalities, are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house, which my people are always commanded to build unto my holy name.

Doctrine and Covenants 131:1-4

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees; And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]; And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

Joshua 24:15

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

2 Nephi 2:27

Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.

“Covenant,” True to the Faith.

A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and a person or group of people. God sets specific conditions, and He promises to bless us as we obey those conditions. When we choose not to keep covenants, we cannot receive the blessings, and in some instances, we suffer a penalty as a consequence of our disobedience.

All the saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. For example, you made a covenant when you were baptized, and you renew that covenant each time you partake of the sacrament (see Mosiah 18:8–10; D&C 20:37, 77, 79). If you have received the Melchizedek Priesthood, you have entered into the oath and covenant of the priesthood (see D&C 84:33–44). The temple endowment and the sealing ordinance also include sacred covenants. Always remember and honor the covenants you make with the Lord. Then you will not need to be commanded in everything you do (see D&C 58:26–28). You will be inspired by the Holy Ghost, and Christlike conduct will be part of your nature. As the Lord has promised, you will “receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (D&C 42:61). Your greatest hope should be to enjoy the sanctification that comes from this divine guidance; your greatest fear should be to forfeit these blessings.

Russell M. Nelson, “Covenants,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011.

Children of the covenant have the right to receive His doctrine and to know the plan of salvation. They claim it by making covenants of sacred significance. Brigham Young said: “All Latter-day Saints enter the new and everlasting covenant when they enter this Church. ... They enter the new and everlasting covenant to sustain the Kingdom of God.” They keep the covenant by obedience to His commandments.

At baptism we covenant to serve the Lord and keep His commandments. When we partake of the sacrament, we renew that covenant and declare our willingness to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ. Thereby we are adopted as His sons and daughters and are known as brothers and sisters. He is the father of our new life. Ultimately, in

the holy temple, we may become joint heirs to the blessings of an eternal family, as once promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their posterity. Thus, celestial marriage is the covenant of exaltation.

When we realize that we are children of the covenant, we know who we are and what God expects of us. His law is written in our hearts. He is our God and we are His people. Committed children of the covenant remain steadfast, even in the midst of adversity. When that doctrine is deeply implanted in our hearts, even the sting of death is soothed and our spiritual stamina is strengthened.

The greatest compliment that can be earned here in this life is to be known as a covenant keeper. The rewards for a covenant keeper will be realized both here and hereafter. Scripture declares that “ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, ... and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven ... [and] dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.”

Post-mortal Family

Doctrine and Covenants 132:19

And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

The Family: Proclamation to the World.

The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.

Julie B. Beck, “Teaching the Doctrine of the Family,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2011.

The Atonement allows for the family to be sealed together eternally. It allows for families to have eternal growth and perfection. The plan of happiness, also called the plan of salvation, was a plan created for families. The rising generation need to understand that the main pillars of our theology are centered in the family.

When we speak of qualifying for the blessings of eternal life, we mean qualifying for the blessings of eternal families. This was Christ’s doctrine, and it was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 2:1–3. This scripture is talking about temple blessings—ordinances and covenants without which “the whole earth [is] utterly wasted. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” was written to reinforce that the family is central to the Creator’s plan. Without the family, there is no plan; there is no reason for mortal life.

Robert D. Hales, “The Eternal Family,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996.

The plan of the Father is that family love and companionship will continue into the eternities. Being one in a family carries a great responsibility of caring, loving, lifting, and strengthening each member of the family so that all can righteously endure to the end in mortality and dwell together throughout eternity. It is not enough just to save ourselves. It is equally important that parents, brothers, and sisters are saved in our families. If we return home alone to our Heavenly Father, we will be asked, “Where is the rest of the family?” This is why we teach that families are forever. The eternal nature of an individual becomes the eternal nature of the family.

Jedediah Grant, *Deseret News*, Dec. 10, 1856, 316–17.

Family relationships are also important. President Jedediah M. Grant, a counselor to Brigham Young, saw the spirit world and described to Heber C. Kimball the organization that exists there: “He said that the people he there saw were organized in family capacities.” ... He said, ‘When I looked at families, there was a deficiency in some, ... for I saw families that would not be permitted to come and dwell together, because they had not honored their calling here.’”

Post-mortal Christ

John 11:25

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Alma 11:44

Now, this restoration shall come to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, both the wicked and the righteous; and even there shall not so much as a hair of their heads be lost; but every thing shall be restored to its perfect frame, as it is now, or in the body, and shall be brought and be arraigned before the bar of Christ the Son, and God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, which is one Eternal God, to be judged according to their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

Doctrine and Covenants 76:63

These are they whom he shall bring with him [Jesus], when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people.

1 Peter 3:18-20; 4:6

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: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. ...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 Corinthians 15:20

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Revelation 20:12

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

John 5:22

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

1 Corinthians 15:40-42

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

Doctrine and Covenants 138:17-19, 30-32

Their sleeping dust was to be restored unto its perfect frame, bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of joy. While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful; And there he preached to them the everlasting gospel, the doctrine of the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall, and from individual sins on conditions of repentance.

...But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead. And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel. Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets.

The Living Christ.

He rose from the grave to “become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20). As Risen Lord, He visited among those He had loved in life. He also ministered among His “other sheep” (John 10:16) in ancient America. In the modern world, He and His Father appeared to the boy Joseph Smith, ushering in the long-promised “dispensation of the fulness of times” (Eph. 1:10). Each of us will stand to be judged of Him according to our works and the desires of our hearts.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection*, 165.

Before the crucifixion of the Lord there was a great gulf fixed separating the righteous dead from those who had not received the Gospel, and across this gulf no man could pass. (Luke 16:26.) Christ bridged that gulf and made it possible for the word of salvation to be taken to all corners of the kingdom of darkness. In this way the realms of hell were invaded, and the dead prepared for the ordinances of the Gospel which must be performed on earth since they pertain to the mortal probation.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:128

Now, we have not power to lay down our lives and take them again. But Jesus had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it up again. ... He came into the world to die that we might live, and his atonement for sin and death is the force by which we are raised to immortality and eternal life.

So Jesus Christ did for us something that we could not do for ourselves, through his infinite atonement. On the third day after the crucifixion he took up his body and gained the keys of the resurrection, and thus has power to open the graves for all men, but this he could not do until he had first passed through death himself and conquered.

Joseph F. Smith, in *Millennial Star*, 12 Mar. 1896, 162.

Every creature that is born in the image of God will be resurrected from the dead. ... But just as sure as we go down into the grave, through the transgression of our first parents, by whom death came into the world, so sure will we be resurrected from the dead by the power of Jesus Christ. It matters not whether we have done well or ill, whether we have been intelligent or ignorant, or whether we have been bondsmen or slaves or freemen, all men will be raised from the dead.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:190, 192, 195.

In his exalted state Christ has attained all power both in heaven and on earth so that the fulness of the godhead dwells in him; he has been exalted to the right hand of the Father, from whence, in due course, he shall come to judge all men. ...Christ's judgments will be true and just.

The Son, not the Father, is the Judge of the whole earth, but his judgment is made in accordance with the will of the Father and therefore is just. Because Jesus is the Son of Man of Holiness he has been given the power to execute judgment, to sit in judgment at the great and last day, to call all men forth in immortality to stand before his bar.

Joseph F. Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 24:78.

God does not judge men as we do, nor look upon them in the same light that we do. He knows our imperfections—all the causes, the 'whys and wherefores' are made manifest unto Him. He judges us by our acts and the intents of our hearts. His judgments will be true, just and righteous; ours are obscured by the imperfections of man.

Post-mortal Covenants

Doctrine and Covenants 138:54, 57

Including the building of the temples and the performance of ordinances therein for the redemption of the dead, were also in the spirit world. ... I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel 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 spirits of the dead.

Doctrine and Covenants 132:37

[Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:133.

The Lord has made it known that his mercy extends to the uttermost bounds and that every soul is entitled to hear the gospel plan, either in this life or in the spirit world. All who hear and believe, repenting and receiving the gospel in its fullness, whether living or dead, are heirs of salvation in the celestial kingdom of God.

Ezra Taft Benson, *regional representatives' seminar*, 3 Apr. 1981, 2.

The third point included in the mission of the Church is our responsibility to redeem the dead by performing vicarious ordinances of the gospel for those who have lived on the earth.

Our members need to be taught that it is not sufficient for a husband and wife to be sealed in the temple to guarantee their exaltation—they must also be eternally linked with their progenitors and see that the work is done for those ancestors. “They without us,” said the Apostle Paul, “cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (D&C 128:15). Our members should therefore understand that they have an individual responsibility to see that they are linked to their progenitors.

Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 6:365.

It is not only necessary that you should be baptized for your dead, but you will have to go through all the ordinances for them, the same as you have gone through to save yourselves.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:148–49.

The responsibility [of doing work for our dead] rests with equal force on all, according to our individual ability and opportunities. It matters not what else we have been called to do, or what position we may occupy, or how faithfully in other ways we have labored in the Church, none is exempt from this great obligation. It is required of the apostle as well

as the humblest elder. Place, or distinction, or long service in the Church, in the mission field, the stakes of Zion, or where or how else it may have been, will not entitle one to disregard the salvation of one's dead.

Some may feel that if they pay their tithing, attend their regular meetings and other duties, give of their substance to the poor, perchance spend one, two, or more years preaching in the world, that they are absolved from further duty. But the greatest and grandest duty of all is to labor for the dead.