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# The Visions of Glory

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D&C 76

On February 1, 1843, in the *Times and Seasons*, William W. Phelps addressed his poem “Vade Mecum” (“Go With Me”) to the Prophet Joseph Smith, beckoning him to imagine “the next, better world”:

Go with me, will you go to the saints that have died,—  
To the next, better world, where the righteous reside;  
Where the angels and spirits in harmony be  
In the joys of a vast paradise? Go with me.

Go with me where the truth and the virtues prevail;  
Where the union is one, and the years never fail;  
Not a heart can conceive, nor a nat’ral eye see  
What the Lord has prepar’d for the just: Go with me.

Go with me where there is no destruction or war;  
Neither tyrants, or sland’rers, or nations ajar;  
Where the system is perfect, and happiness free,  
And the life is eternal with God: Come to me.

Go with me, will you go to the mansions above,  
Where the bliss and the knowledge, the light, and the love,  
And the glory of God, do eternally be?—  
Death, the wages of sin, is not here: Go with me.<sup>1</sup>

Having seen in vision a better world, the Prophet Joseph Smith composed a poetic reply to Phelps titled “The Answer.” In his poem, Joseph tells of the Plan of Salvation and of a

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<sup>1</sup> William W. Phelps, “Vade Mecum,” *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 6 (February 1, 1843): 81–82.

three-tiered heaven—celestial, terrestrial, and telestial. In so doing, he rewrites “The Vision of Glory” in poetic verse.

I will go, I will go, to the home of the Saints,  
Where the virtue’s the value, and life the reward;  
But before I return to my former estate,  
I must fulfill the mission I had from the Lord.

Wherefore, hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O ye earth;  
And rejoice, ye inhabitants, truly again;  
For the Lord he is God, and his life never ends,  
And besides him there ne’er was a Saviour of men. ... (D&C 76:1)

The myst’ry of Godliness truly is great;—  
The past, and the present, and what is to be;  
And this is the gospel—glad tidings to all,  
Which the voice from the heavens bore record to me: (D&C 76:40)

That he came to the world in the middle of time,  
To lay down his life for his friends and his foes,  
And bear away sin as a mission of love:  
And sanctify earth for a blessed repose. (D&C 76:41)

Again, I beheld the terrestrial world,  
In the order and glory of Jesus go on;  
’Twas not as the church of the first-born of God,  
But shone in its place, as the moon to the sun. (D&C 76:71)

Behold, these are they that have died without law;  
The heathen of ages that never had hope.  
And those of the region and shadow of death,  
The spirits in prison, that light has brought up. ... (D&C 76:72–73)

Again, I beheld the telestial, as third,  
The lesser, or starry world, next in its place,  
For the leaven must leaven three measures of meal,  
And every knee bow that is subject to grace. (D&C 76:81)

These are they that receiv’d not the gospel of Christ,  
Or evidence, either, that he ever was:  
As the stars are all diff’rent in glory and light,  
So differs the glory of these by the laws. ... (D&C 76:82)

I beheld the celestial, in glory sublime;  
Which is the most excellent kingdom that is.—  
Where God, e'en the Father, in harmony reigns;  
Almighty, supreme, and eternal in bliss. (D&C 76:92–93)

Where the church of the first-born in union reside,  
And they see as they're seen, and they know as they're known  
Being equal in power, dominion and might,  
With a fulness of glory and grace round his throne. (D&C 76:94–95)

The glory celestial is one like the sun;  
The glory terrestrial is one like the moon;  
The glory telestial is one like the stars,  
And all harmonize like the parts of a tune. ... (D&C 76:96–97)

I will go, I will go, while the secret of life,  
Is blooming in heaven, and blasting in hell;  
Is leaving on earth, and a-budding in space:—  
I will go, I will go, with you, brother, farewell.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith, "The Answer," *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 6 (February 1, 1843): 82–85.