



Type: Magazine Article

---

## Editor's Table: On the Resurrection

Author(s): Joseph F. Smith

Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 7, No. 8 (June 1904), pp. 619–625

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

---

**Abstract:** No abstract available.

## EDITOR'S TABLE.

---

### ON THE RESURRECTION.

The passing of our friends naturally brings to our minds thoughts of the resurrection. One of the recent deaths in which the Church loses one of its valuable members, and his family and friends a good father and faithful man, is that of James Sharp. He was only in the early afternoon of life, so that it is difficult for those who knew him to understand aright the providence which should take him away from a useful career, while yet many who are seemingly entirely unworthy are permitted to remain among us. But the Lord doeth all things right, and we can only wonder, and praise his holy name. In the words of the scripture, however, giving us hope of the resurrection, we derive great comfort. The faithful who mourn in this case, and in all others, are reassured of a time when we shall all meet again; when the body now lying in the grave, and the spirit which is taken to rest in the paradise of God, shall be reunited. Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, has passed over the way, and has arisen to become the first fruits of the resurrection.

After his crucifixion and burial, Mary, in her sorrow, went to the sepulchre and there saw the stone rolled away. She came to Simon Peter and John, and said:

They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Then the disciples both ran to the place, and looking in saw the linen clothes, but not the body, and they believed the words of Mary; "for as yet they knew not the scriptures, that he must rise from the dead." The disciples went home.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept,

she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. \* \* \* But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hands into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them, then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed (John 20).

After the walk to Emmaus, Christ tarried with his disciples,

And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found

the eleven gathered together; and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them (Luke 24).

I believe these testimonies. I know that they are true, and that as Christ arose from the dead, so shall all the faithful arise. We shall all see each other again. I know that Jesus is the Christ, that after his death and burial he arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of the resurrection. To all believers, and to the Latter-day Saints especially, there is sweet comfort in this knowledge, and in the thought that through obedience to the ordinances and principles of the gospel, which Christ, our Savior, taught and enjoined upon the people and his disciples, men shall be born again, redeemed from sin, arise from the grave, and like Jesus return into the presence of the Father. Death is not the end. When we, 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, a state of rest, a state

of peace, where they expand in wisdom, where they have respite from all their troubles, and where care and sorrow do not annoy. 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. And in this space between death and the resurrection of the body, the two classes of souls remain, in happiness or in misery, until the time which is appointed of God that the dead shall come forth and be reunited, both soul and body, and be brought to stand before God, and be judged according to their works. This is the final judgment.

Where a man has obeyed the principles of the gospel, used his influence for good, injured no soul, loved righteousness, and despised wrong doing, laying down his body to the rest of the righteous in the grave, I feel and know that, in addition to the spirit's promised state of peace and rest in paradise, there will be a glorious reunion of body and spirit, a bright awakening for him in the resurrection, and a future beyond, full of happiness. When this time shall come, none but God knoweth, but we do know that all men shall come forth from the dead. The prophet Alma gave further testimony of this when he said:

The soul shall be restored to the body, and the body to the soul; yea, and every limb and joint shall be restored to its body; yea, even a hair of the head shall not be lost, but all things shall be restored to their proper and perfect frame (Alma 40:23).

And again, it is declared by this same prophet, speaking before the coming of Christ:

And he shall come into the world to redeem his people; and he shall take upon him the transgressions of those who believe on his name; and these are they that shall have eternal life, and salvation cometh to none else; therefore the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made, except it be the loosing of the bands of death; for behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead and stand before God, and be judged according to their works. Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal

death; the spirit and the body shall be re-united again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt. Now this restoration shall come to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, both wicked and righteous; and even there shall not so much as a hair of their heads be lost; but all things 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. Now behold, I have spoken unto you, concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body; that is from death; even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption (Alma 11:40-45).

Now, I know these statements to be true; I know them to be true by the thrill of the inspiration of God which fills my entire being with this knowledge. To me they are consistent with God's wisdom and with his holy purposes. We have the testimony of Christ; the testimony of the prophets, the whisperings of the Holy Spirit, and with these evidences, I cannot help but believe, and know that there is a resurrection of the dead, a literal, actual resurrection of the body. I cannot believe that a wise and merciful God would create a man like our friend and brother, upright, honorable, honest in all his dealings, and in his life, only to live a few years, then to pass away forever, to be known no more. As Jesus rose from the dead, so will he, and all the innocent and righteous, arise. The elements which compose this temporal body will not perish, will not cease to exist, but in the day of the resurrection these elements will come together again, bone to bone, and flesh to flesh. 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 de-



velop, and the body, after the resurrection will develop to the full stature of man.

And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.

O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, the paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh; save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect (II Nephi 9:12, 13).

Then when all men shall have passed from this first death into life, and become immortal, they will appear before the judgment seat of God, and those who are righteous shall be righteous still, while those who are filthy shall be filthy still, we are told by the prophet. The righteous who have endured the crosses of the world shall inherit the kingdom of God which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever, being delivered from death and hell and endless torment, which is the lot of those who willingly disobey.

For be it remembered, man shall be judged according to his works and desires. If his works are evil, he will be restored to evil, for "as he has desired to do evil all the day long, even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh." But, "if he hath repented of his sins, and desired righteousness until the end of his days, even so he shall be rewarded unto righteousness." And thus men stand or fall; they are their own free agents, their own judges, whether they shall chose to do good or whether evil.

This our friend, then, these our friends and our innocents, from whom we are called upon from time to time to part, for a season, having been honest, faithful, desirous of doing good, and being free from the sins of the world, as in the case of children,—shall rise again, and if we are faithful as they have been, and as pure, the time is coming when, raised to immortality, we shall

meet them; they shall be restored to us, and we to them, to inherit endless happiness in the Kingdom of God.

*Joseph F. Smith.*

---

AN OPINION VIGOROUSLY EXPRESSED.

---

It is interesting betimes to hear what others say of the Latter-day Saints. We are accustomed to see and read much that is against them, but perhaps more that is for them never reaches the public prints, for it is unpopular, and if one cannot say anything against the Saints, he seldom gets a hearing. But that does not necessarily imply that there are none who speak favorably; on the contrary, there are many who favor the people and who laud and admire their industry, virtue and Christian life. One among the numerous people of this class recently sent the following letter to President Joseph F. Smith, and there can surely be no advocacy of wrong in printing his sincere and complimentary opinion:

EVERETT, WASHINGTON, March 9, 1904.

*Hon. Joseph F. Smith,*  
*Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SIR:

I feel prompted to write to you, now that you are having such an unpleasant time before a bigoted and ungenerous people, as the unworthy denominations and senators who accuse Senator Smoot and the Mormon people of gross immorality in providing and caring for those depending on them. I assure you of my esteem for your people, the Mormons, of Salt Lake City, among whom I have many friends of a number of years standing. I've investigated, quietly, the Mormon religion and their old-time system of polygamy. From a religious standpoint I think they are as good as the best, even better, in that they look after the material welfare of their people, as well as their spiritual.

As regards polygamy, I think it has been of inestimable value to the world, in that it has peopled a wilderness and caused it to bloom like a garden.

Moreover, there is everything in favor of polygamy as formerly