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ATONEMENT all people will be resurrected and live forever.

According to the Prophet Joseph SMITH, the spirit of prophecy is vital to the principles of salvation, revelation, and the teaching and ministering of the gospel. Each person must receive a testimony of Christ in order to attain salvation and ETERNAL LIFE with him (*TPJS*, p. 160). Since the gospel is to be taught to everyone, it follows that all people of every race and gender can experience the spirit of prophecy. Moreover, in the words of Joseph Smith, “God in his superior wisdom, has always given his Saints, wherever he had any on the earth, the same spirit, and that spirit, as John says, is the true spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus” (*TPJS*, p. 300).

It is through the spirit of prophecy that God’s continuing revelations are brought to the people of the earth, not only through his ordained prophets but also through all those who have received a testimony of Christ. The gospel cannot be taught on the earth without the spirit of prophecy or a testimony of Christ, because it is only through testimony received by revelation that Christ’s teachings are validated in the heart and mind of the person taught. One who preaches the gospel and denies the spirit of prophecy is, according to Joseph Smith, an “imposter” (*TPJS*, p. 269).

While only one person (the PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH) may exercise all the keys of the priesthood of God at one time on the earth and receive revelation for the whole Church, the underlying principle of the spirit of prophecy is that all SAINTS who receive a testimony of Christ are PROPHETS in the limited sense that they may receive revelation and INSPIRATION for themselves (*TPJS*, p. 119). This same idea is implicit in Moses’ response to Joshua: “Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!” (Num. 11:29).

LOUISE PLUMMER

SPIRITUAL DEATH

Spiritual death is the condition of one who is spiritually cut off, temporarily or permanently, from the presence of God. LDS SCRIPTURES speak of two spiritual deaths, and the concept manifests itself in many ways.

The first type of spiritual death is the actual separation from God that automatically comes

upon all born into MORTALITY as a consequence of the FALL OF ADAM. All mortals will be redeemed from this death, as well as from physical death, through Christ’s atonement and RESURRECTION (1 Cor. 15:21–23; 2 Ne. 9:10–15; Hel. 14:15–19; D&C 29:41), to be brought back into God’s presence to stand before him.

The second spiritual death will be finalized on the day of JUDGMENT for those who have not repented (Rev. 2:11; 20:6–15; Alma 12:16–36). It is the result of a lifetime of choices. For those who ultimately lose the inclination or ability to repent, or commit unpardonable sin, it becomes perdition (2 Pet. 3:7; Alma 34:35; 40:25–26) or “banishment from the presence of God and from his light and truth forever” (*DS* 2:216–30). This does not extinguish the spirit of man, however, for it is eternal (see Alma 12:18; 42:9). The Savior’s atonement gives all mankind the opportunity to avoid the second spiritual death and gain IMMORTALITY and ETERNAL LIFE.

The spiritually “dead” may be grouped into several types and categories. For example, Satan and the spirits who joined him during the WAR IN HEAVEN are eternally spiritually dead (D&C 29:36–39; 76:25–29). They are SONS OF PERDITION (see 2 Ne. 9:8–9). Mortals who sin “unto death” (D&C 64:7) by denying the Son after the Father has revealed him will join “the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power” (D&C 76:30–38). In yet another sense, all people on earth over the age of ACCOUNTABILITY are to a certain extent spiritually dead, depending on their present state of REPENTANCE and their degree of sensitivity to the LIGHT OF CHRIST and to the HOLY GHOST.

Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and most other religions believe in some form of life after death, judgment, and ultimate punishment for the unrepentant. For example, the ancient Egyptians believed that the hard-hearted would die a second death by being devoured by the Chaos monster (Keel, pp. 72–73). Major differences between the Mormon concept of spiritual death and those of others center on the ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST. The only permanent spiritual death is that which individuals bring upon themselves by refusing to repent of their sins, having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves (D&C 76:35).

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RICHARD M. ROMNEY

SPIRIT WORLD

The spirit world is the habitation of spirits. The earth itself and the living things on the earth have spirit counterparts that existed before the physical creation, and a living SOUL consists of a spirit body united with a physical body. This spirit existence, where living things are composed of organized, refined spirit matter, extends beyond the human family and includes animals and plants. Little is revealed about plant spirits beyond the fact that all living things, including plants, were created as spirits before they were created with physical bodies (Moses 3:5, 9). However, latter-day revelation indicates that human and animal spirits are living, active, intelligent beings and that spirits do not need physical bodies for existence (*see* SPIRIT). Since spirits exist before mortality, as well as afterward, there is both a premortal and a postmortal spirit world.

The premortal spirit existence, for mankind at least, was “in heaven,” in the kingdom where God lives. Explaining this phase of the Creation, the Lord said, “I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth, . . . for in heaven created I them” (Moses 3:5).

More detail is known about the place and conditions of departed spirits—the postmortal spirit world—than about the premortal. Concerning the postmortal place of human spirits, ALMA₂ sought an answer to the question “What becometh of the souls of men from this time of death to the time appointed for the resurrection?” (Alma 40:7). It was revealed to him by an angel that at the death of the body “the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life” (Alma 40:11). They are then assigned to a place of PARADISE or a place of HELL and “outer

darkness,” depending on the manner of their mortal life (Alma 40:12–14).

President Joseph F. SMITH discussed this subject further:

The spirits of all men, as soon as they depart from this mortal body, whether they are good or evil, . . . 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 spirit and body, and be brought to stand before God, and be judged according to their works. This is the final judgment [p. 448].

President Brigham YOUNG declared:

When you lay down this tabernacle, where are you going? Into the spiritual world . . . Where is the spirit world? It is right here. Do the good and evil spirits go together? Yes they do. . . . Do they go beyond the boundaries of the organized earth? No, they do not. . . . 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 [Widtsoe, pp. 376–77].

The postmortal spirit world is an actual place where spirits reside and “where they converse together the same as we do on the earth” (*TPJS*, p. 353). “Life and work and activity all continue in the spirit world. Men have the same talents and intelligence there which they had in this life. They possess the same attitudes, inclinations, and feelings there which they had in this life” (*MD*, p. 762).

The postmortal spirit world is a place of continued preparation and learning. In this sense, it is an extension of mortality. Those who have died without an opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ will have opportunity to hear and accept it in the spirit world. “The great work in the world of spirits is the preaching of the gospel to those who are imprisoned by sin and false traditions” (*MD*, p.