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RESURRECTION

Resurrection is the reunion of the SPIRIT with an immortal PHYSICAL BODY. The body laid in the grave is mortal; the resurrected physical body is immortal. The whole of man, the united spirit and body, is defined in modern scripture as the “soul” of man. Resurrection from the dead constitutes the redemption of the soul (D&C 88:15–16).

Although the idea of resurrection is not extensively delineated in the Old Testament, there are some definite allusions to it (e.g., 1 Sam. 2:6; Job 14:14; 19:26; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2). And in the New Testament, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as the prototype of all resurrections, is an essential and central message: “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

The evidence of Christ’s resurrection is measurably strengthened for Latter-day Saints by other records of post-Resurrection visitations of the Christ (see JESUS CHRIST: FORTY-DAY MINISTRY AND OTHER POST-RESURRECTION APPEARANCES). For example, in the 3 Nephi account in the Book of Mormon, an entire multitude saw, heard, and touched him as he appeared in transcendent resurrected glory. This is accepted by Latter-day Saints as an ancient sacred text. The tendency of some recent scholarship outside the Church to radically separate the “Jesus of history” and the “Christ of faith” and to ascribe the resurrection faith to later interpreters is challenged by these later documents and by modern revelation.

Ancient witnesses, including Paul, came to their assurance of the reality of the Resurrection by beholding the risen Christ. From like witnesses, Latter-day Saints accept the record that at the resurrection of Christ “the graves were opened,” in both the Old World and the new, and “many bodies of the saints which slept arose” (Matt. 27:52; 3 Ne. 23:9–10). In the current dispensation, resurrected beings, including JOHN THE BAPTIST, PETER, JAMES, and MORONI₂ appeared and ministered to Joseph SMITH and Oliver COWDERY.

In the theology of Judaism and some Christian denominations resurrection has often been spiritualized—that is, redefined as a symbol for immortality of some aspect of man such as the active intellect, or of the soul considered to be an immaterial entity. In contrast, scientific naturalism tends to reject both the concept of the soul and of bodily resurrection. Latter-day Saints share few of the assumptions that underlie these dogmas. In

LDS understanding, the spirit of each individual is not immaterial, but consists of pure, refined matter: “It existed before the body, can exist in the body; and will exist separate from the body, when the body will be mouldering in the dust; and will in the resurrection, be again united with it” (TPJS, p. 207). Identity and personality persist with the spirit, and after the resurrection the spirit will dwell forever in a physical body.

Platonism and gnosticism hold that embodiment is imprisonment, descent, or association with what is intrinsically evil. In contrast, the scriptures teach that the physical body is a step upward in the progression and perfection of all. The body is sacred, a temple (1 Cor. 3:16; D&C 93:35). Redemption is not escape from the flesh but its dedication and transformation. Joseph Smith taught, “We came into this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom” (TPJS, p. 181). On the other hand, if defiled, distorted, and abused, the body may be an instrument of degradation, an enemy of genuine spirituality.

In contrast to the view that the subtle powers of intellect or soul must finally transcend the body or anything corporeal, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that all beings “who have tabernacles (bodies), have power over those who have not” (TPJS, p. 190; 2 Ne. 9:8). At minimum, this is taken to mean that intellectual and spiritual powers are enhanced by association with the flesh. It follows that a long absence of the spirit from the body in the realm of disembodied spirits awaiting resurrection will be viewed not as a beatific or blessed condition, but instead as a bondage (D&C 45:17; 138:50). Moreover, “spirit and element [the spirit body and the physical body], inseparably connected, [can] receive a fulness of joy. And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy” (D&C 93:33, 34).

In contrast to the view that the body when buried or cremated has no identifiable residue, Joseph Smith taught that “there is no fundamental principle belonging to a human system that ever goes into another in this world or the world to come” (HC 5:339). Chemical disintegration is not final destruction. The resurrected body is tangible, but when the flesh is quickened by the Spirit there will be “spirit in their [veins] and not blood” (WJS, p. 270; see also TPJS, p. 367).

Resurrection is as universal as death. All must die and all must be resurrected. It is a free gift to

everyone. It is not the result of the exercise of faith or accumulated good works. The Book of Mormon prophet Amulek declares, "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" (Alma 11:44; cf. *TPJS*, pp. 199–200, 294–297, 310–311, 319–321, 324–326).

Not all will be resurrected at the same moment, "but every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:23). "Behold, there is a time appointed that all shall come forth from the dead," Alma writes, to stand embodied before God to be judged of their thoughts, words, and deeds (Alma 40:4).

"All men will come from the grave as they lie down, whether old or young" (*TPJS*, p. 199). And he who quickeneth all things shall "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Philip. 3:21). "The body will come forth as it is laid to rest, for there is no growth nor 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, and the body, after the resurrection will develop to the full stature of man" (Joseph F. Smith, *IE* 7 [June 1904]:623–24).

The resurrected body will be suited to the conditions and glory to which the person is assigned in the day of judgment. "Some dwell in higher glory than others" (*TPJS*, p. 367). The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that "your glory shall be that glory by which your bodies are quickened" (D&C 88:28), and three glories are designated (D&C 76). Paul (1 Cor. 15:40) also mentioned three glories of resurrected bodies: one like the sun (celestial), another as the moon (terrestrial), and the third as the stars. In a revelation to Joseph Smith, the glory of the stars was identified as celestial (D&C 76). The lights of these glories differ, as do the sun, the moon, and the stars as perceived from earth. "So also is the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15:40–42).

In a general sense, the Resurrection may be divided into the resurrection of the just, also called the first resurrection, and the resurrection of the unjust, or the last resurrection. The first resurrection commenced with the resurrection of Christ and with those who immediately thereafter came forth from their graves. In much larger numbers, it will precede the thousand-year millennial reign, inaugurated by the "second coming" of the Savior

(D&C 45:44–45; cf. 1 Thes. 4:16–17). At that time, some will be brought forth to meet him, as he descends in glory. This first resurrection will continue in proper order through the MILLENNIUM. The righteous who live on earth and die during the Millennium will experience immediate resurrection. Their transformation will take place in the "twinkling of an eye" (D&C 63:51). The first resurrection includes the celestial and terrestrial glories.

The final resurrection, or resurrection of the unjust, will occur at the end of the Millennium. In the words of the apocalypse, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20:5). This last resurrection will include those destined for the celestial glory and PERDITION.

Of his visionary glimpses of the Resurrection, the Prophet Joseph Smith remarked, "The same glorious spirit gives them the likeness of glory and bloom; the old man with his silvery hairs will glory in bloom and beauty. No man can describe it to you—no man can write it" (*TPJS*, p. 368). Referring to the doctrine of the Resurrection as "principles of consolation," he pled, "Let these truths sink down in our hearts that, we may even here, begin to enjoy that which shall be in full hereafter." He added, "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" (*TPJS*, p. 296).

The hope of a glorious resurrection undergirds the radiance that characterized the faith of New Testament Saints as well as those who have since kept that faith alive in the world, including the Saints of the latter days.

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RETRENCHMENT ASSOCIATION

The retrenchment movement, conceived in 1869 by President Brigham YOUNG to encourage LDS