

Teachings Concerning The Terrestrial Glory

D&C 76

71 And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differs from that of the church of the Firstborn who have received the fulness of the Father, even as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.

72 Behold, these are they who died without law;

73 And also they who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh;

74 Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it.

75 These are they who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men.

76 These are they who receive of his glory, but not of his fulness.

77 These are they who receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father.

78 Wherefore, they are bodies terrestrial, and not bodies celestial, and differ in glory as the moon differs from the sun.

79 These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.

80 And now this is the end of the vision which we saw of the terrestrial, that the Lord commanded us to write while we were yet in the Spirit.

97 And the glory of the terrestrial is one, even as the glory of the moon is one.

Joseph Smith - Poetic Version of D&C 76

53. 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.

54. 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.

55. To spirits in prison the Savior once preach'd,
And taught them the gospel, with powers afresh;
And then were the living baptiz'd for their dead,
That they might be judg'd as if men in the flesh.

56. These are they that are honorable men of the earth;
Who were blinded and dup'd by the cunning of men:
They receiv'd not the truth of the Savior at first;
But did, when they heard it in prison, again.

57. Not valiant for truth, they obtain'd not the crown,
But are of that glory that's typ'd by the moon:
They are they, that come into the presence of Christ,
But not to the fulness of God, on his throne. [*Times and Seasons* 4:82-85]

Terrestrial Resurrection: Part of the Resurrection of the Just

Joseph Fielding Smith

This other class, which will also have right to the first resurrection, are those who are not members of the Church of the Firstborn, but who have led honorable lives, although they refused to accept the fulness of the gospel.

Also in this class will be numbered those who died without law and hence are not under condemnation for a violation of the commandments of the Lord. The promise is made to them of redemption from death in the following words: "And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them." [D. & C. 45:54] These, too, shall partake of the mercies of the Lord and shall receive the reuniting of spirit and body inseparably, thus becoming immortal, but not with the fulness of the glory of God. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol.2, p.297)

Bruce R. McConkie

Resurrection of life, the first resurrection. Those coming forth in the morning of this resurrection do so with celestial bodies and shall inherit a celestial glory; these are they who are Christ's the firstfruits. Those coming forth in the afternoon of this resurrection do so with terrestrial bodies and consequently shall inherit

that kingdom; they are described as being Christ's at this coming. All who have been resurrected so far have received celestial bodies; the coming forth of terrestrial beings does not commence until after the Second Coming. (D. & C. 76:50-80; 88:95-99.) [Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:196]

Many in the World Live a Terrestrial Law

John Taylor

One thing we do know; one thing is clearly told us, and that is if we are not governed by the celestial law and cannot abide a celestial law, we cannot inherit a celestial kingdom. What is it to obey a celestial law? Where does the celestial law come from to begin with? From the heavens. Very well. What have the people here to do with it generally -- that is, outsiders? Nothing. They do not say they have had any revelation. They have had no principle of that kind unfolded to them. They are living under what might be termed a terrestrial law; and many of them, I think, under the circumstances, do quite as well as we do under our circumstances. We profess to be moving on a more elevated plane than they are. We profess to have come out from the world; to have separated from the ungodly. We profess to be under the guidance of apostles and prophets, pastors and teachers, etc., and to be living under the inspiration of the Most High. They do not profess anything of the kind. (*The Gospel Kingdom*, pp.327-328)

These Are They Who Died Without Law

D&C 76:72

Joseph Smith

54. Behold, these are they that have died without law; The heathen of ages that never had hope, (Poetic Version)

Joseph Fielding Smith

- Through the mission of Jesus Christ a law has been given, the law of the gospel, and that law is binding upon all those who hear it, who come in contact with it; and provision has been made so that those who are without the law or who have not heard the name of Christ, who are ignorant of the plan of salvation, because the gospel has never reached them in any form, shall not be under the same restrictions and condemnation as will those who have received that law. And they who are without the law, Christ redeems through his blood, and does not require of

them that which he requires of me and of you. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:29)

- We read in the Book of Abraham that the Lord revealed that in the world of spirits some of the intelligences were greater than others, and these he made his rulers. Contrariwise there were those who were less intelligent and evidently less fit for the exaltation offered to the faithful, yet these also were entitled to salvation from death and the torment of the damned. The Lord therefore had a place for these, thus showing his great mercy for all.

We learn from the word of the Lord to Moses that the Lord selected a place for the children of Israel, even before they were born, thus he indicated the number of spirits who were assigned to become the descendants of Jacob (Deut. 32:8-9). We may well believe that the Lord also parceled out the surface of the earth for all other peoples. Some of these places were evidently designed for inhabitants who had lost interest in or touch with the plan of salvation. We may well believe that the Lord did not permit the more progressive and more worthy spirits to come to the families of the ungodly and the less progressive peoples of the earth.

It was the privilege of this less progressive class, however, to come to the earth, and it was essential for them to receive the blessings of morality. On this topic, however, there is very little revealed, but we may feel certain that it was essential that the more progressive and intelligent spirits were not sent to the tribes among the degraded heathen. These people naturally sank under such circumstances into a condition of ignorance and spiritual darkness. Children born under such circumstances could not be exalted, yet the Lord in his mercy had decreed to them to do the very best that could be done. Not having knowledge of the things of God, they were to be judged without law and assigned to a place after the resurrection that would be suited to them without the fulness promised to the faithful.

President Brigham Young, by revelation, received a clear view of this truth and has spoken of those who are without law and understanding in the following words:

"When God revealed to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon that there was a place prepared for all, according to the light they had received and their rejection of evil and practice of good it was a great trial to many, and some apostatized because God was not going to send to everlasting punishment heathens and infants, but had a place of salvation in due time for all, and would bless the honest and

virtuous and truthful, whether they belonged to any church or not. It was a new doctrine to this generation, and many stumbled at it.” (*Journal of Discourses* 16:42) [*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 4:11-13]

Melvin J. Ballard

Now, I wish to say to you that those who died without law, meaning the pagan nations, for lack of faithfulness, for lack of devotion, in the former life, are obtaining all that they are entitled to. I don’t mean to say that all of them will be barred from entrance into the highest glory. Anyone of them who repents and complies with the conditions might also obtain celestial glory, but the great bulk of them shall only obtain the terrestrial glory. (*Three Degrees of Glory*, p.25)

Bruce R. McConkie

Those destined to inherit the terrestrial kingdom are: (1) those who died “without law” -- those heathen and pagan people who do not hear the gospel in this life, and who would not accept it with all their hearts should they hear it; (2) those who hear and reject the gospel in this life and then accept it in the spirit world; (3) those “who are honorable men of the earth, who [are] blinded by the craftiness of men”; and (4) those who are lukewarm members of the true church and who have testimonies, but who are not true and faithful in all things. (See D&C 76:71-80.) [*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.146]

Orson F. Whitney

There is another class mentioned in sacred writ, for whom, in the language of the Book of Mormon, “baptism availeth nothing.” The “heathen nations,” who “died without law,” are to be “redeemed without law,” and shall “have part in the first resurrection.” These, however, are not heirs celestial. Theirs is “the glory of the terrestrial” in the great Kingdom of the Future. (*Saturday Night Thoughts*, p. 246)

Who Received Not the Testimony of Jesus In the Flesh, but Afterwards Received It.

D&C 76:73-74

Joseph Fielding Smith

Into this kingdom will go all those who have lived clean lives, but were not willing to receive the gospel; also those who have lived clean lives but who, notwithstanding their membership in the Church, were not valiant, and those who refused to receive the gospel

when they lived on the earth, but in the spirit world accepted the testimony of Jesus. All who enter this kingdom must be of that class who have been morally clean. (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol.2, p.209)

Spencer W. Kimball

Through the scriptures we have a fairly clear picture of the fate of the people of Noah’s day who, like many people today, ignored the testimonies of written scripture and of living prophets. Luke records the words of the Savior:

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. (Luke 17:26-27.)

They were drowned in their sins. Their marriages were for time. They reveled in worldliness. They were possibly like many in the world today who place no curb upon their eating, drinking and licentiousness. Their ignoring the laws of God and the warning of the prophets continued until the very day when Noah and his family entered the ark. Then it was too late. Too late! What finality in that phrase! Following their eternal history, we find Peter telling of them more than two millennia later:

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. (1 Pet. 3:18-20.)

At last, they had a chance in the spirit world to hear the voice of missionaries and prophets again. But so late! What sad words! Nearly a further two millennia passed into history and we hear of them again in modern revelation. Of the vision given to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in 1832, the Prophet writes:

And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial.

... They who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the

gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh;

Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it. (D&C 76:71, 73-74.)

Too late! The terrestrial for them! It could have been the celestial, and it could have been exaltation! But they procrastinated the day of their preparation. The same lamentable cry of “Too late!” will apply to many of today’s Church members who did not heed the warning but who proceeded – sometimes carelessly, sometimes defiantly -- to bind themselves through mortality to those who could not or would not prepare for the blessings which were in reserve for them.

The Lord’s program is unchangeable. His laws are immutable. They will not be modified. Your opinion or mine does not alter the laws. Many in the world, and even some in the Church, seem to think that eventually the Lord will be merciful and give them the unearned blessing. But the Lord cannot be merciful at the expense of justice. (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp.248-249)

Bruce R. McConkie

- Those who lived in the days of Noah shall again hear the truth, for they, too, are among “the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it.” (D&C 76:71-80.) Theirs, however, shall be a terrestrial inheritance, and not a celestial, because they rejected the gospel in this life and then received it in the spirit world. (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4:242)
- In what is probably the greatest of all recorded visions, given February 16, 1832, the Prophet saw that those to whom Noah offered the gospel and who were then destroyed in the flood, assuming they repent and accept the gospel in their spirit prison, shall not obtain celestial rest. Theirs is an everlasting terrestrial inheritance because they rejected the truth when it was offered to them in mortality. (“A New Commandment: Save Thyself and Thy Kindred!” *Ensign*, Aug. 1976, 9)
- Those who have a fair and just opportunity to accept the gospel in this life and who do not do it, but who then do accept it when they hear it in the spirit world will go not to the celestial, but to the terrestrial kingdom. This includes those to whom Noah preached. “These are they who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached

the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it.” (D. & C. 76:72-74.) [*Mormon Doctrine*, p.686]

Melvin J. Ballard

This revelation clearly informs us that any an or woman, not only those in the days of Noah, who heard the Gospel and rejected it, but in this day any man or woman who has had a good chance to have heard the Gospel to receive it and embrace it and enjoy its blessings and privileges, who lived during their life in absolute indifference to these things, ignoring it, and neglected it, need not hope or anticipate that when they are dead the work can be done for them and they gain celestial glory. Don’t you Latter-day Saints get the notion that a man or woman can live in defiance or total indifference, having had a good chance -- not a casual chance or opportunity -- and when they die you can go and do the work for that individual and have them receive every blessing that the faithful ones are entitled to. If that becomes the doctrine of the Church we will be worse than the Catholics who believe that you can pray a man out of purgatory. But they charge for it and we don’t, so we would be more foolish than they. (*Three Degrees of Glory*, p.26)

These are They Who are Honorable Men of the Earth D&C 76:75

Joseph Fielding Smith

- If he is willing to abide by only a portion of the law, and rejects the covenants which govern in the celestial kingdom, notwithstanding he is honest, virtuous, and truthful, he shall be assigned to the terrestrial kingdom where other honorable men shall be found. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:28)
- Into the terrestrial will go all those who are honorable, who have been morally clean, but who would not receive the Gospel; also those who die without law. (*The Way to Perfection*, pp.205-206)
- Into this kingdom will go all those who have lived clean lives, but were not willing to receive the gospel; also those who have lived clean lives but who, notwithstanding their membership in the Church, were not valiant, and those who refused to receive the gospel when they lived on the earth, but in the spirit world accepted the testimony of Jesus. All who enter this kingdom must be of that class

who have been morally clean. (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol.2, p.209)

- They who enter into the terrestrial kingdom, the one higher than the telestial, are the honorable men—the honest, the virtuous, those who have been clean, and yet would not receive the gospel. There will be some others also who will go into that kingdom, but in a general sense these people will be the honest and honorable, who could not or would not see or receive the gospel of Jesus Christ, therefore they are assigned to the terrestrial kingdom. (Conference Report, April 1942, p. 27)

Spencer W. Kimball

Those who have been decent and upright and who have lived respectable and good lives will go to a terrestrial kingdom whose glory is as the moon. (“An Eternal Hope in Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, p. 72; *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.48)

George Q. Cannon

Terrestrial glory may be all right for honorable Gentiles, who have not faith enough to believe the Gospel and who do right according to the best knowledge they have; (*Conference Report, April 1900*, p. 55.)

James E. Talmage

Into the Terrestrial order shall enter those who have failed to lay hold on the privileges of eternal life while in the flesh; “honorable men of the earth” perhaps, according to human standard, yet blinded “by the craftiness” of false teachers, false philosophy, science falsely so called. These shall inherit glory, but not a fulness thereof. (*The Vitality of Mormonism*, p.287)

Neal A. Maxwell

It must be made clear that those whom the Lord calls the honorable men and women of the earth are not being lumped in with the less than honorable. The honorable may be blinded by busyness, caught up in other causes, or preoccupied with trivia, but they do not mock the saints of God nor revile. (*Things As They Really Are*, p.13)

Alvin R. Dyer

Many noble and great bodies will possess the terrestrial kingdom.... These, for the most part, will be men who, during earth-life existence, sought the excellence of men; and some who gave of their time, talents and endeavors to the ways of man-made ideals of culture, science, and education, but thought not to

include God and his ways in their search for a complete life. They received more of the spirit of the world and of the wisdom which men teach.... neglecting that spirit which is of God. (*Who Am I*, pp. 552-53.)

Not Valiant in the Testimony

D&C 76:79

Spencer W. Kimball

- The terrestrial kingdom will not be enjoyed by the very wicked, for they shall obtain only the telestial. Neither will the terrestrial be given to the valiant, the faithful, the perfected, for they will go into the celestial kingdom prepared for those who live the celestial laws. But into the terrestrial will go those who do not measure up to the celestial. Speaking of one category of terrestrial people, the Lord says: “These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.” (D&C 76:79.) The “unvaliant” Latter-day Saint will find himself there. (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.48)

Joseph Fielding Smith

“These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.” These enter into the terrestrial glory.

Who are they? All who refuse to receive the fulness of the truth, or abide by the principles and ordinances of the everlasting gospel. They may have received a testimony; they may be able to testify that they know that Jesus is the Christ; but in their lives they have refused to accept ordinances which are essential to entrance into the celestial kingdom. They have refused to live the gospel, when they knew it to be true; or have been blinded by tradition; or for other cause have not been willing to walk in the light.

In this class we could properly place those who refuse to take upon them the name of Christ, even though they belong to the Church; and those who are not willing when called to go forth and preach to a perverse world “Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

They may live clean lives; they may be honest, industrious, good citizens, and all that; but they are not willing to assume any portion of the labor which devolves upon members of the Church, in carrying on the great work of redemption of mankind.

We have known members of the Church who have

gone out in the world and have mingled with those not of our faith, and these members were ashamed to have it known that they were Latter-day Saints. Such persons certainly are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus. The Lord has said: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38). [*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:29]

Ezra Taft Benson

Concerning those who will receive the terrestrial, or lesser, kingdom, the Lord said, "These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God." (D&C 76:79; italics added.) Not to be valiant in one's testimony is a tragedy of eternal consequence. These are members who know this latter-day work is true, but who fail to endure to the end. Some may even hold temple recommends, but do not magnify their callings in the Church. Without valor, they do not take an affirmative stand for the kingdom of God. Some seek the praise, adulation, and honors of men; others attempt to conceal their sins; and a few criticize those who preside over them.

Considering some of the challenges which the Church faces currently, and which it will continue to face in the future, three statements of former Church leaders come to mind.

President Joseph F. Smith said, "There are at least three dangers that threaten the Church within, ... they are flattery of prominent men in the world, false educational ideas, and sexual impurity." (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939, pp. 312–13.) These three dangers are of greater concern today than when they were identified by President Smith.

A second statement was a prophecy by Heber C. Kimball, counselor to President Brigham Young. Speaking to members of the Church who had [page 64] come to the Salt Lake Valley, he declared:

"To meet the difficulties that are coming, it will be necessary for you to have a knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such a character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not till you obtain it. If you do not you will not stand. ...

"The time will come when no man nor woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to

be guided by the light within himself. ...

"If you don't have it you will not stand; therefore seek for the testimony of Jesus and cleave to it, that when the trying time comes you may not stumble and fall." (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967, p. 450.)

The third statement is from President Harold B. Lee, my boyhood companion and friend, and eleventh President of the Church:

"We have some tight places to go before the Lord is through with this church and the world in this dispensation, which is the last dispensation, which shall usher in the coming of the Lord. The gospel was restored to prepare a people ready to receive him. The power of Satan will increase; we see it in evidence on every hand. There will be inroads within the Church. ... We will see those who profess membership but secretly are plotting and trying to lead people not to follow the leadership that the Lord has set up to preside in this church.

"Now the only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that day when the Church was organized. We must learn to give heed to the words and commandments that the Lord shall give through his prophet, 'as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; ... as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.' (D&C 21:4–5.) There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. ... But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory.' (D&C 21:6.)" (In Conference Report, Oct. 1970, p. 152.)

Now, it seems to me that we have within those three prophetic statements the counsel we need, the counsel that is necessary to stay valiant in our testimony of Jesus and of the work of His church in these troubled times. ["Valiant in the Testimony of Jesus," *Ensign*, May 1982, pp. 63–64]

Bruce R. McConkie

Now what does it mean to be valiant in the testimony of Jesus?

It is to be courageous and bold; to use all our strength, energy, and ability in the warfare with the world; to fight the good fight of faith. "Be strong and of a good courage," the Lord commanded Joshua, and

then specified that this strength and courage consisted of meditating upon and observing to do all that is written in the law of the Lord. (See Josh. 1:6–9.) The great cornerstone of valiance in the cause of righteousness is obedience to the whole law of the whole gospel.

To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him”; it is to deny ourselves “of all ungodliness,” and “love God” with all our “might, mind and strength.” (Moro. 10:32.)

To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to believe in Christ and his gospel with unshakable conviction. It is to know of the verity and divinity of the Lord’s work on earth.

But this is not all. It is more than believing and knowing. We must be doers of the word and not hearers only. It is more than lip service; it is not simply confessing with the mouth the divine Sonship of the Savior. It is obedience and conformity and personal righteousness. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 7:21.)

To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to “press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men.” It is to “endure to the end.” (2 Ne. 31:20.) It is to live our religion, to practice what we preach, to keep the commandments. It is the manifestation of “pure religion” in the lives of men; it is visiting “the fatherless and widows in their affliction” and keeping ourselves “unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27.)

To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to bridle our passions, control our appetites, and rise above carnal and evil things. It is to overcome the world as did he who is our prototype and who himself was the most valiant of all our Father’s children. It is to be morally clean, to pay our tithes and offerings, to honor the Sabbath day, to pray with full purpose of heart, to lay our all upon the altar if called upon to do so.

To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to take the Lord’s side on every issue. It is to vote as he would vote. It is to think what he thinks, to believe what he believes, to say what he would say and do what he would do in the same situation. It is to have the mind of Christ and be one with him as he is one with his Father.

Our doctrine is clear; its application sometimes seems to be more difficult. Perhaps some personal introspection might be helpful. For instance:

Am I valiant in the testimony of Jesus if my chief interest and concern in life is laying up in store the

treasures of the earth, rather than the building up of the kingdom?

Am I valiant if I have more of this world’s goods than my just needs and wants require and I do not draw from my surplus to support missionary work, build temples, and care for the needy?

Am I valiant if my approach to the Church and its doctrines is intellectual only, if I am more concerned with having a religious dialogue on this or that point than I am on gaining a personal spiritual experience?

Am I valiant if I am deeply concerned about the Church’s stand on who can or who cannot receive the priesthood and think it is time for a new revelation on this doctrine?

Am I valiant if I use a boat, live in a country home, or engage in some other recreational pursuit on weekends that takes me away from my spiritual responsibilities?

Am I valiant if I engage in gambling, play cards, go to pornographic movies, shop on Sunday, wear immodest clothes, or do any of the things that are the accepted way of life among worldly people?

If we are to gain salvation, we must put first in our lives the things of God’s kingdom. With us it must be the kingdom of God or nothing. We have come out of darkness; ours is the marvelous light of Christ. We must walk in the light. (“Be Valiant in the Fight of Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 35)

Baptism Not Necessary for Salvation in Terrestrial Kingdom

Joseph Smith

Every man lives for himself. Adam was made to open the way of the world, and for dressing the garden. Noah was born to save seed of everything, when the earth was washed of its wickedness by the flood; and the Son of God came into the world to redeem it from the fall. But except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. This eternal truth settles the question of all men’s religion. A man may be saved, after the judgment, in the terrestrial kingdom, or in the telestial kingdom, but he can never see the celestial kingdom of God, without being born of water and the Spirit. He may receive a glory like unto the moon, [i.e., of which the light of the moon is typical], or a star, [i.e., of which the light of the stars is typical], but he can never come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, which are

written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, unless he becomes as a little child, and is taught by the Spirit of God. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.12)

Joseph Fielding Smith

The Prophet says a man may enter into the terrestrial or the telestial kingdom who has not been baptized with water and who has not in this life received these ordinances, but he can never enter into the celestial kingdom without complying with these eternal laws.

Each kingdom, of course, is governed by laws. We have nothing to do with the laws of the telestial or terrestrial kingdoms, so far as the preaching of the gospel is concerned. Our mission is to preach the salvation of the kingdom of God, where he and Christ dwell, which is the celestial kingdom. And all of the principles of the gospel which have been given unto us pertain to the celestial kingdom. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:25-26)

No Revelation Concerning Ordinances For the Terrestrial and Telestial Kingdoms

Joseph Fielding Smith

- Will those who enter the terrestrial and telestial kingdoms have to have the ordinance of baptism? No! Baptism is the door into the celestial kingdom. The Lord made this clear to Nicodemus. We are not preaching a salvation for the inhabitants of the terrestrial or the telestial kingdoms. All of the ordinances of the gospel pertain to the celestial kingdom, and what the Lord will require by way of ordinances, if any, in the other kingdoms he has not revealed. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:329)
- The First Presidency have said in answer to a similar question: “We know of no ordinances pertaining to the terrestrial or the telestial kingdom. All of the ordinances of the gospel are given for the salvation of men in the celestial kingdom and pertain unto that kingdom.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:330)

Terrestrial Resurrection Limited in Powers and Progression

Joseph Fielding Smith

In both the terrestrial and the telestial glories the

inhabitants thereof will be limited in their powers, opportunities, and progression, because, like the sons of perdition, “they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:22)

Shall Be Ministered to By Celestial and Shall Minister to the Telestial

Joseph Fielding Smith

Yet, through his abundant mercy, the Lord will do for all the best that can be done, and therefore he will give to all a place somewhere -- if not within the gates of the Holy City, then it must be on the outside -- where those who are not entitled to the fulness of blessings may be ministered to by those who have greater glory. For we read also here in this vision, where the glories are spoken of, that those who dwell in the celestial kingdom shall minister unto those of the terrestrial kingdom; those in the terrestrial kingdom shall minister to those of the telestial kingdom.

The Son may go to the terrestrial, but they who enter into that kingdom shall not receive the fulness of the Father; they will not see the greatness of his glory. He withholds that from them. They never come back again into the fulness of his presence. Those who enter into the telestial kingdom will not receive the fulness of the Father or of the Son. They will not visit there but will send messengers to visit the inhabitants of that glory and instruct them.

Those in the terrestrial kingdom shall visit those in the telestial kingdom, and those of the celestial shall visit those in the terrestrial kingdom. Where the Father is these cannot come, for the Lord has said: “Where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.” Yet in this very same section it is written that notwithstanding this fact, so great shall be the blessings that come to those who enter there that it is beyond our comprehension. Such is the great mercy of the Lord. He will endeavor to save all his children and exalt as many as he possibly can. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:5)

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The next higher degree of glory, the terrestrial, “excels in all things the glory of the telestial, even in glory, and in power, and in might, and in dominion” (D&C 76:91). The terrestrial is the abode of those who were the “honorable men of the earth” (D&C 76:75). Its most distinguishing feature is that those who qualify for terrestrial glory “receive of the presence of

the Son” (D&C 76:77). Concepts familiar to all Christians might liken this higher kingdom to heaven because it has the presence of the Son. (“Apostasy and Restoration,” *Ensign*, May 1995, p. 86)