Resurrection — Joseph Fielding Smith

FULNESS OF JOY (2 Ne 2:25)

...When the spirit and the body unite again in the resurrection from the dead, they are joined together in such a way that they cannot be separated, and there shall be no more death.

Then man may receive a fulness of joy. While he is in this temporal state of spirit and body, he cannot receive a fulness of joy. No man in mortal life can receive the fulness of joy which the Lord has in store for him. Only after the resurrection from the dead, only when the spirit and the body are inseparably connected — when through the resurrection the spirit and the body are welded together inseparably — can that fulness come. (Doc of Salv 2:283–284.)

SPIRIT BODIES & “SPIRITUAL” BODIES

In the resurrection from the dead, the bodies which were laid down natural bodies shall come forth spiritual bodies. That is to say, in mortality the life of the body is in the blood, but the body when raised to immortality shall be quickened by the spirit and not the blood. Hence, it becomes spiritual, but it will be composed of flesh and bones, just as the body of Jesus was, who is the prototype....

When Paul spoke of the spiritual body [1 Cor 15:42–57], he had not reference at all to the spirit body ...

After the resurrection from the dead our bodies will be spiritual bodies, but they will be bodies that are tangible, bodies that have been purified, but they will nevertheless be bodies of flesh and bones. They will not be blood bodies. They will no longer be quickened by blood but quickened by the spirit which is eternal, and they shall become immortal and shall never die. (Doc of Salv 2:284–285.)

“CORRUPTION”

Now let us understand the meaning of that term corruption [1 Cor 15:52–54]. Perhaps, because of the way that word is usually used, what you may have in mind is not exactly the meaning given by Paul in this passage of scripture. Corruption here means mortality. It means to be in this world of change.

Our bodies are changing daily. They are throwing off the waste, taking on the new. They are so constituted that the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, build up and replace those parts which have decayed or have filled their mission of usefulness and have been discarded. So this is, as Paul put it, a corruptible body that we have now, and this prophet is speaking of the mortal body when he says corruption. This mortal body shall eventually, through the resurrection, become an incorruptible body, not subject to these changes, not subject to disease and deacy. (Doc of Salv 2:286; emphasis added.)

DIFFERENT RESURRECTED BODIES

In the resurrection there will be different kinds of bodies; they will not all be alike. The body a man receives will determine his place hereafter. There will be celestial bodies, terrestrial bodies, and telestial bodies, and these bodies will differ as distinctly as do bodies here ...

Bodies will be quickened according to the kingdom which they are judged worthy to enter. Elder Orson Pratt many years ago in writing of the resurrection and the kind of bodies which would be raised in these kingdoms said:

“In every species of animals and plants, there are many resemblances in the general outlines and many specific differences characterizing the individuals of each species. So in the resurrection.

There will be several classes of resurrected bodies; some celestial, some terrestrial, some telestial, and some sons of perdition. Each of these classes will differ from the others by prominent and marked distinctions; yet, in each, considered by itself, there will be found many resemblances as well as distinctions. There will be some physical peculiarity by which each individual in every class can be identified.” (Doc of Salv 2:286–287.)

POWERS OF PROCRATION LIMITED

Some will gain celestial bodies with all the powers of exaltation and eternal increase. These bodies will shine like the sun as our Savior’s does, as described by John [Rev 1:12–18; D&C 110:1–4; Ex 24:9–10]. Those who enter the terrestrial kingdom will have terrestrial bodies, and they will not shine like the sun, but they will be more glorious than the bodies of those who receive the telestial glory.

In both of these kingdoms there will be changes in the bodies and limitations. They will not have the power of increase, neither the power or nature to live as husbands and wives, for this will be denied them and they cannot increase.

Those who receive the exaltation in the celestial kingdom will have the “continuation of the seeds forever.” [D&C 132:19.] They will live in the family relationship. In the terrestrial and in the telestial kingdoms there will be no marriage. Those who enter there will remain “separately and singly” forever. [D&C 132:15–32.]

Some of the functions in the celestial body will not appear in the terrestrial body, neither in the telestial body, and the power of procreation will be removed. I take it that men and women will, in these kingdoms, be just what the so-called Christian world expects us all to be — neither man nor woman, merely immortal beings having received the resurrection. (Doc of Salv 2:287–288; emphasis added.)

WALKING THROUGH WALLS

Resurrected bodies have control over the elements. How do you think the bodies will get out
of the graves at the resurrection? When the Angel Moroni appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Prophet’s saw him apparently come down and ascend through solid walls, or ceiling of the building. [JS–H 1:30, 43–45.] If the Prophet’s account had been a fraud, he never would have thought of such a story (as we may be sure he never would have thought of such a thing), but would have had the angel come in through the door. Why should it appear any more impossible for a resurrected being to pass through solid objects than for a spirit, for a spirit is also matter? [D&C 131:7–8.]

It was just as easy for the Angel Moroni to come to the Prophet Joseph Smith down through the building as it was for our Savior to appear to his disciples after his resurrection in the room where they were assembled when the door was closed. [Jn 20:19.]

Here, you see the door was shut, “for fear of the Jews [Jewish leaders],” but this did not prevent Jesus from appearing to them in the room. How could he do it? He had power over the elements…. (Doc of Salv 2:288.)

**JESUS’ WOUNDS**

We must not judge the resurrection of others by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is true that he appeared to his disciples and invited them to examine the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet, and the spear wound in his side, but this was a special manifestation to them.

We should know that the disciples had failed to understand that he was to rise again, and this manifestation was for their benefit. Thomas was absent, and it was with some difficulty that the other disciples could convince him that the Lord had risen. Thomas was not worse than any other one of the apostles. Perhaps they would have done just what he did had they been absent. . . .

When the Savior comes to the Jews in the hour of their distress, as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, 45:51–53, he will show them the wounds in his hands and in his feet. . . .

The Prophet Zechariah has also prophesied of the Savior’s Second Coming and his appearance to the Jews, when they will flee from their enemies and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in twain making a valley in which they shall seek refuge. At that particular time he will appear and they shall say: “What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.” [Zech 12:9–14; 13:1–9; 14:1–21.] Then will they mourn, each family apart, because they had rejected their Lord.

It is true that he also showed these wounds to the Nephites when he visited them with the same purpose in view, to convince them of his identity, and give to them a witness of his suffering. [3 Ne 11:10–17.] It can hardly be accepted as a fact that these wounds have remained in his hands, side, and feet all through the centuries from the time of his crucifixion and will remain until his Second Coming. But they will appear to the Jews as a witness against their fathers and their stubbornness in following the teachings of their fathers…. (Doc of Salv 2:290–292.)

**CHILDREN**

Of course, children who die do not grow in the grave. They will come forth with their bodies as they were laid down, and then they will grow to the full stature of manhood or womanhood after the resurrection, but all will have their bodies fully restored. (Doc of Salv 2:293.)

**RESURRECTED WITH WOUNDS AND SCARS AT FIRST**

In speaking about the resurrection at the funeral of Sister Rachel Grant, President Joseph F. Smith said that the same person, in the same form and likeness, will come forth “even to the wounds in the flesh. Not that a person will always be marred by scars, wounds, deformities, defects or infirmities, for these will be removed in their course, in their proper time, according to the merciful providence of God.” [Gospel Doctrine, 4th ed., p. 30.]

President Smith was in full accord with Amulek and Alma. He taught that the body will be restored as stated in Alma 11:42–45 and 40:22–23. While he expresses the thought that the body will come forth as it was laid down, he also expresses the thought that it will take time to adjust the body from the condition of imperfections. This, of course, is reasonable, but at the same time the length of time to make these adjustments will not cover any appreciable extent of time.

President Smith never intended to convey the thought that it would require weeks or months of time in order for the defects to be removed. These changes will come naturally, of course, but almost instantly. We cannot look upon it in any other way. For instance, a man who lost a leg in childhood will have his leg restored. It does not grow in the grave, but will be restored naturally, but with the power of the Almighty it will not take extended time for this to be accomplished.

**RESTORATION TO PERFECTION ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS.** When President Smith declares that “the body will come forth as it is laid to rest, for there is no growth in the grave,” [Gospel Doctrine, p. 566] he has in mind this: *Infants and children* do not grow in the grave, but when they come forth, they will come forth with the same body and in the same size in which the body was when it was laid away. After the resurrection the body will grow until it has reached the full stature of manhood or womanhood. He did not intend to teach that the adult who loses a leg will come forth complete in every part. *Deformities and the like will be corrected, if no immediately at the time of the uniting of the spirit and body, so soon thereafter that it will make no difference.* We may be sure that every man will receive his body in its perfect frame in the resurrection. (Doc of Salv 2:293–294.)
TERRESTRIAL RESURRECTION

First Resurrection at Second Coming. ... There shall be at least two classes which shall have the privilege of the resurrection at this time: First, those who “shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever” [D&C 76:62]; and second, honorable men, those who belong to the terrestrial kingdom as well as those of the celestial kingdom.

Resurrection of Terrestrial Bodies. Following this great event [of the celestial resurrection], and after the Lord and the righteous who are caught up to meet him have descended upon the earth, there will come to pass another resurrection. This may be considered as a part of the first, although it comes later. In this resurrection will come forth those of the terrestrial order, who were not worthy to be caught up to meet him, but who are worthy to come forth to enjoy the millennial reign.

It is written that the second angel shall sound, which is the second trump, “and then cometh the redemption of those who are Christ’s at his coming; who have received their part in the prison which is prepared for them, that they might receive the gospel, and be judged according to men in the flesh.” [D&C 76:73–75; 88:99.]

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.... [D&C 45:54.] (Doc of Salv 2:296–297.)

TELETIAL RESURRECTION

All liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers and all who love and make a lie, shall not receive the resurrection at this time [of the first resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ], but for a thousand years shall be thrust down to hell where they shall suffer the wrath of God until they pay the price of their sinning, if it is possible, by the things which they shall suffer.

These are the “spirits of men who are to be judged, and are found under condemnation; And these are the rest of the dead; and they live not again until the thousand years are ended, neither again, until the end of the earth.” [D&C 88:100–101.]

These are the hosts of the telestial world who are condemned to “suffer the wrath of God on earth”; and who are “cast down to hell and suffer the wrath of the Almighty God, until the fulness of times, when Christ shall have subdued all enemies under his feet, and shall have perfected his work.” [D&C 76:104–106.]

Sufferings of Ungodly Before Resurrection. These do not live during the millennial reign, but during that time are spending their time in torment, or anguish of soul, because of their transgressions. Christ has said that he suffered for all who repent, but his wrath is kindled against all who will not repent, and they must suffer, “how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit.” [D&C 19:15–18.]

This suffering will be a means of cleansing, or purifying, and through it the wicked shall be brought to a condition whereby they may, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, obtain immortality. Their spirits and bodies shall be again united, and they shall dwell in the telestial kingdom. But his resurrection will not come until the end of the world. (Doc of Salv 2:297–298.)

HAS THE RESURRECTION BE ON-GOING?

It is the opinion of some that the resurrection is going on all the time now, but this is purely speculation without warrant in the scriptures. It is true that the Lord has power to call forth any person or persons from the dead, as he may desire, especially if they have a mission to perform which would require their resurrection. For example, we have the cases of Peter, James, and Moroni.

We are given to understand that the first resurrection yet future, which means the coming forth of the righteous, will take place at one particular time, which is when our Savior shall appear in the clouds of heaven, when he shall return to reign. For us to speculate whether or not the Prophet Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, and others have been called forth, without any revelation from the Lord, is merely supposition. When the Lord wants any of these men, he has the power to call them, but the first resurrection, with which we have any future concern, will commence when Christ comes. (Doc of Salv 2:299–300.)

TRANSLATED BEINGS HAVE TO DIE

Translated beings are still mortal and will have to pass through the experience of death, or the separation of the spirit and the body, although this will be instantaneous. The people of the City of Enoch, Elijah, and others who received this great blessing of translation in ancient times, before the coming of our Lord, could not have received the resurrection, or the change from mortality to immortality at that time, because our Lord had not paid the debt which frees us from mortality and grants to us the resurrection and immortal life.

Christ is the “resurrection and the life” [In 11:25] and the first fruits of them that slept. [1 Cor 15:23.] Therefore, none could pass from mortality to immortality until our Savior completed his work for the redemption of man and had gained the keys of the resurrection, being the first to rise, having “life in himself” and the power to lay down his life and take it up again, thus freeing all men from the bondage which the fall had placed upon them. [3 Ne
SONS OF PERDITION (IN MORTALITY — NOT THE SPIRITS OF THOSE WHO REBELLED WITH SATAN IN THE PRE-MORTAL EXISTENCE) RESURRECTED

It has been taught by some that the resurrection would not be universal among those who have received mortal bodies, that some known as sons of perdition would be denied the privilege of the resurrection. It is very strange that such a doctrine could be entertained in the face of the many instructions and revelations coming from the Lord and his holy prophets. They universally testify that all shall come forth from the dead. Justice demands this because men are not responsible for death [Adam was] and hence are entitled to redemption from its grasp.

In his great mercy, love, and justice, our Father in heaven has provided that all his children who have gained mortality shall live again. The soul cannot be destroyed. The spirits of all men are eternal. They lived before this mortal life came, and through the atonement of Jesus Christ, they shall live after this mortal life ended.

Our Redeemer came into the world to obtain the mastery over death. If one soul born into this world, no matter how wicked he may be, were denied the resurrection, then Jesus Christ would not have the victory. It is imperative, therefore, that all must receive the resurrection.

ALL MEN TO BE RESURRECTED. No person who has lived and died on this earth will be denied the resurrection. Reason teaches this, and it is a simple matter of justice. Adam alone was responsible for death, and therefore the Lord does not lay this to the charge of any other person. Justice demands that no person who was not responsible for death shall be held responsible for it, and therefore, as Paul declared, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” [1 Cor 15:22.] (Doc of Salv 2:273–274.)