

Who Is Entitled to Celestial Glory

Question Time in the *Herald* for February 23, 1953, presented a discussion of baptism for the dead, in which Elder Ralston gave a quotation from *Church History*, Volume 2, page 16, which, according to the account given by the Prophet Joseph Smith, was "the voice of the Lord unto" him, as follows:

All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.

A member of our apostolic quorum has written to the First Presidency as follows:

This week's *Saints' Herald* (February 23) carries an answer to a question in which Brother Ralston cites *Church History*, Volume 2, page 16. In this quotation a report is printed of a vision which Joseph had in the Kirtland Temple, January 21, 1836.

This vision has never had General Conference approval, has it? It was not presented as a revelation for action. Using an excellent contribution from President I. A. Smith last May, 1952, we are instructed as to the relative place of Scriptures, Inspired Version, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, etc.

Should this vision, which hasn't had church approval, and which *does* alter our message, be used to permit "celestial glory" as a possibility for those who did not accept the gospel on earth through the channel of baptism? Doctrine and Covenants 76:6 states that those who died without law, the spirits of men kept in prison and honorable men of the earth who were blinded by the craftiness of men, would receive terrestrial glory but not celestial.

Since getting this letter we have examined paragraph 6 to discover

wherein the statement from *Church History* adds to or detracts or changes the meaning of paragraph 6, and since it seems reasonably clear, we see no necessity of attempting any explanation, and will satisfy ourselves—though it may not satisfy others—with a discussion of "The voice of the Lord" statement, which was quoted in Question Time.

We choose to leave with our readers the question of whether the statement of January 21, 1836, contradicts Section 76. If it does contradict it, it cannot take precedence, for the reason that Section 76 was approved by the General Assembly of August 17, 1835, and the "voice of the Lord," as given and as recorded in *Church History*, was never presented to the church for acceptance or approval.

Like some other speculative questions we encounter occasionally, we

are of the opinion that there is no violent disagreement between Section 76 and this "voice of the Lord" statement—in fact no disagreement that cannot be harmonized within reason.

But if there is, our course is clear: Section 76 must prevail over the other.

Having said this, we wish to say that an analysis of the "voice of the Lord" in 1836 discloses the significant fact that whether those who had theretofore died would be permitted or those who live afterward would be admitted to celestial glory, in *both* cases, the judgment of the Lord would be on the basis—first and primarily and fundamentally—on "works" and "according to the desire of their hearts," that is, an acceptance of God's plan.

ISRAEL A. SMITH

Latter-day Resurrection

We hear much about the crucifixion of Jesus, but much less respecting his mighty triumph, the Resurrection; much about the incarnation of the Word in the person of Jesus, but little concerning the crucifixion of the Word (truth) itself and its mighty resurrection into newness of life. In fact few of those termed Christians have even heard that there was a crucifixion and burial of the Word, let alone that the Word has been resurrected in all its fullness, beauty, and glory.

Jesus was crucified at Golgotha on a cross of rampant selfishness—between two thieves who may be said to represent the stealing away of our most precious gifts: truth and light. The two thieves are philosophy and tradition. Perhaps tradition may find a place in paradise, for it may reflect some light. But there is no place in eternity for the deceptive philosophies of men which steal away truth. There is no place in paradise, much less in Celestial Glory, for the philosophies of Aristotle as glossed over by Thomas Aquinas and blessed and sanctioned by the great church of the world as being "the word of the living God."

How precious then, to those who have had their eyes and understanding opened to see light and truth, is the resurrected fullness of the Word in the Book of Mormon, confirmed and established by the Inspired Version and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. We have indeed witnessed a magnificent and glorious resurrection *in our day*.

STAN MACKENZIE

Editorial

This electronic publication has been created with the express approval of the original copyright holder