

SECTION 138

*A vision given to President Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 3, 1918. In his opening address at the 89th Semiannual General Conference of the Church, on October 4, 1918, President Smith declared that he had received several divine communications during the previous months. One of these, concerning the Savior's visit to the spirits of the dead while His body was in the tomb, President Smith had received the previous day. It was written immediately following the close of the conference. On October 31, 1918, it was submitted to the counselors in the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and it was unanimously accepted by them.*

*1–10, President Joseph F. Smith ponders upon the writings of Peter and our Lord's visit to the spirit world; 11–24, President Smith sees the righteous dead assembled in paradise and Christ's ministry among them; 25–37, He sees how the preaching of the gospel was organized among the spirits; 38–52, He sees Adam, Eve, and many of the holy prophets in the spirit world who considered their spirit state before their resurrection as a bondage; 53–60, The righteous dead of this day continue their labors in the world of spirits.*

1 On the third of October, in the year nineteen hundred and eighteen, I sat in my room <sup>a</sup>pondering over the scriptures;

2 And <sup>a</sup>reflecting upon the great <sup>b</sup>atonement <sup>c</sup>sacrifice that was made by the Son of God, for the <sup>d</sup>redemption of the world;

3 And the great and wonderful <sup>a</sup>love made manifest by the Father and the Son in the coming of the <sup>b</sup>Redeemer into the world;

4 That through his <sup>a</sup>atonement, and by <sup>b</sup>obedience to the principles of the gospel, mankind might be saved.

5 While I was thus engaged, my mind reverted to the writings of the apostle Peter, to the <sup>a</sup>primitive saints scattered abroad throughout <sup>b</sup>Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and other parts of Asia, where the gospel had been <sup>c</sup>preached after the crucifixion of the Lord.

6 I opened the Bible and read the <sup>a</sup>third and fourth chapters of the first epistle of Peter, and as I read I was greatly <sup>b</sup>impressed, more than I had ever been before, with the following passages:

7 “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:

8 “By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in <sup>a</sup>prison;

9 “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 Peter 3:18–20.)

10 “For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” (1 Peter 4:6.)

11 As I <sup>a</sup>pondered over these things which are <sup>b</sup>written, the <sup>c</sup>eyes of my <sup>d</sup>understanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord <sup>e</sup>rested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the <sup>f</sup>dead, both small and great.

12 And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the <sup>a</sup>just, who had been <sup>b</sup>faithful in the <sup>c</sup>testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality;

13 And who had offered <sup>a</sup>sacrifice in the <sup>b</sup>similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered <sup>c</sup>tribulation in their Redeemer's <sup>d</sup>name.

14 All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the <sup>a</sup>hope of a glorious <sup>b</sup>resurrection, through the <sup>c</sup>grace of God the <sup>d</sup>Father and his <sup>e</sup>Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

15 I beheld that they were filled with <sup>a</sup>joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their <sup>b</sup>deliverance was at hand.

16 They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the <sup>a</sup>spirit world, to declare their <sup>b</sup>redemption from the <sup>c</sup>bands of death.

17 Their sleeping <sup>a</sup>dust was to be <sup>b</sup>restored unto its <sup>c</sup>perfect frame, <sup>d</sup>bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the <sup>e</sup>spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of <sup>f</sup>joy.

18 While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their <sup>a</sup>deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring <sup>b</sup>liberty to the <sup>c</sup>captives who had been faithful;

19 And there he <sup>a</sup>preached to them the everlasting <sup>b</sup>gospel, the doctrine of the <sup>c</sup>resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the <sup>d</sup>fall, and from individual sins on conditions of <sup>e</sup>repentance.

20 But unto the <sup>a</sup>wicked he did not go, and among the ungodly and the unrepentant who had <sup>b</sup>defiled themselves while in the flesh, his voice was not raised;

21 Neither did the <sup>a</sup>rebellious who rejected the <sup>b</sup>testimonies and the warnings of the ancient <sup>c</sup>prophets behold his <sup>d</sup>presence, nor look upon his face.

22 Where these were, <sup>a</sup>darkness reigned, but among the righteous there was <sup>b</sup>peace;

23 And the saints rejoiced in their <sup>a</sup>redemption, and bowed the <sup>b</sup>knee and acknowledged the Son of God as their Redeemer and Deliverer from death and the <sup>c</sup>chains of <sup>d</sup>hell.

24 Their countenances <sup>a</sup>shone, and the <sup>b</sup>radiance from the presence of the Lord rested upon them, and they <sup>c</sup>sang praises unto his holy name.

25 I marveled, for I understood that the Savior spent about three years in his <sup>a</sup>ministry among the Jews and those of the house of Israel, endeavoring to <sup>b</sup>teach them the everlasting gospel and call them unto repentance;

26 And yet, notwithstanding his mighty works, and miracles, and proclamation of the truth, in great <sup>a</sup>power and authority, there were but <sup>b</sup>few who hearkened to his voice, and rejoiced in his presence, and received salvation at his hands.

27 But his ministry among those who were dead was limited to the <sup>a</sup>brief time intervening between the crucifixion and his resurrection;

28 And I wondered at the words of Peter—wherein he said that the Son of God preached unto the <sup>a</sup>spirits in prison, who sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah—and how it was possible for him to preach to those spirits and perform the necessary labor among them in so short a time.

29 And as I wondered, my eyes were opened, and my understanding <sup>a</sup>quickened, and I perceived that the Lord went not in person among the <sup>b</sup>wicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them;

30 But behold, from among the righteous, he <sup>a</sup>organized his forces and appointed <sup>b</sup>messengers, <sup>c</sup>clothed with power and authority, and <sup>d</sup>commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in <sup>e</sup>darkness, even to <sup>f</sup>all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.

31 And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the <sup>a</sup>acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim <sup>b</sup>liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would <sup>c</sup>repent of their sins and receive the gospel.

32 Thus was the gospel preached to those who had <sup>a</sup>died in their sins, without a <sup>b</sup>knowledge of the truth, or in <sup>c</sup>transgression, having <sup>d</sup>rejected the prophets.

33 These were taught <sup>a</sup>faith in God, repentance from sin, <sup>b</sup>vicarious baptism for the <sup>c</sup>remission of sins, the <sup>d</sup>gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands,

34 And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be <sup>a</sup>judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

35 And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the <sup>a</sup>sacrifice of the Son of God upon the <sup>b</sup>cross.

36 Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of <sup>a</sup>spirits, instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the <sup>b</sup>prophets who had testified of him in the flesh;

37 That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their <sup>a</sup>rebellion and transgression, that they through the ministrations of his servants might also hear his words.

38 Among the great and <sup>a</sup>mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous were Father <sup>b</sup>Adam, the <sup>c</sup>Ancient of Days and father of all,

39 And our glorious <sup>a</sup>Mother <sup>b</sup>Eve, with many of her faithful <sup>c</sup>daughters who had lived through the ages and worshiped the true and living God.

40 <sup>a</sup>Abel, the first <sup>b</sup>martyr, was there, and his brother <sup>c</sup>Seth, one of the mighty ones, who was in the express <sup>d</sup>image of his father, Adam.

41 <sup>a</sup>Noah, who gave warning of the flood; <sup>b</sup>Shem, the great <sup>c</sup>high priest; <sup>d</sup>Abraham, the father of the faithful; <sup>e</sup>Isaac, <sup>f</sup>Jacob, and Moses, the great <sup>g</sup>law-giver of Israel;

42 And <sup>a</sup>Isaiah, who declared by prophecy that the Redeemer was anointed to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the <sup>b</sup>captives, and the opening of the <sup>c</sup>prison to them that were bound, were also there.

43 Moreover, Ezekiel, who was shown in vision the great valley of <sup>a</sup>dry bones, which were to be <sup>b</sup>clothed upon with flesh, to come forth again in the resurrection of the dead, living souls;

44 Daniel, who foresaw and foretold the establishment of the <sup>a</sup>kingdom of God in the latter days, never again to be destroyed nor given to other people;

45 <sup>a</sup>Elias, who was with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration;

46 And <sup>a</sup>Malachi, the prophet who testified of the coming of <sup>b</sup>Elijah—of whom also Moroni spake to the Prophet Joseph Smith, declaring that he should come before the ushering in of the great and dreadful <sup>c</sup>day of the Lord—were also there.

47 The Prophet Elijah was to plant in the <sup>a</sup>hearts of the children the promises made to their fathers,

48 Foreshadowing the great work to be done in the <sup>a</sup>temples of the Lord in the <sup>b</sup>dispensation of the fulness of times, for the redemption of the dead, and the <sup>c</sup>sealing of the children to their parents, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse and utterly wasted at his coming.

49 All these and many more, even the <sup>a</sup>prophets who dwelt among the Nephites and <sup>b</sup>testified of the coming of the Son of God, mingled in the vast assembly and waited for their deliverance,

50 For the <sup>a</sup>dead had looked upon the long absence of their <sup>b</sup>spirits from their bodies as a <sup>c</sup>bondage.

51 These the Lord taught, and gave them <sup>a</sup>power to come forth, after his resurrection from the dead, to enter into his Father's kingdom, there to be crowned with <sup>b</sup>immortality and eternal life,

52 And continue thenceforth their labor as had been promised by the Lord, and be partakers of all <sup>a</sup> blessings which were held in reserve for them that love him.

53 The Prophet Joseph Smith, and my father, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and other choice <sup>a</sup>spirits who were <sup>b</sup>reserved to come forth in the <sup>c</sup>fulness of times to take part in laying the <sup>d</sup>foundations of the great latter-day work,

54 Including the building of the <sup>a</sup>temples and the performance of ordinances therein for the redemption of the <sup>b</sup>dead, were also in the spirit world.

55 I observed that they were also among the <sup>a</sup>noble and great ones who were <sup>b</sup>chosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God.

56 Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first <sup>a</sup>lessons in the world of spirits and were <sup>b</sup>prepared to come forth in the due <sup>c</sup>time of the Lord to labor in his <sup>d</sup>vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men.

57 I beheld that the faithful <sup>a</sup>elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the <sup>b</sup>preaching of the <sup>c</sup>gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those

who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the <sup>d</sup>spirits of the dead.

58 The dead who <sup>a</sup>repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the <sup>b</sup>ordinances of the house of God,

59 And after they have paid the <sup>a</sup>penalty of their transgressions, and are <sup>b</sup>washed clean, shall receive a <sup>c</sup>reward according to their <sup>d</sup>works, for they are heirs of salvation.

60 Thus was the <sup>a</sup>vision of the redemption of the dead revealed to me, and I bear record, and I know that this <sup>b</sup>record is <sup>c</sup>true, through the blessing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, even so. Amen.

1a TG Meditation; Scriptures, Study of.

2a JS—H 1:12.

2b Matt. 20:28. TG Jesus Christ, Atonement through.

2c TG Sacrifice.

2d TG Redemption.

3a John 3:16 (14–17). TG God, Love of.

3b Isa. 63:9 (1–9). TG Jesus Christ, Redeemer.

4a 2 Ne. 25:23; A of F 1:3.

4b Matt. 7:21 (21–27). TG Obedience.

5a IE former-day saints.

5b 1 Pet. 1:1.

5c Acts 16:6 (6–9); 19:26 (10–26).

6a See 1 Pet. 3:18–20 and 4:6 in the New Testament for additional notes and cross-references.

6b JS—H 1:12 (11–13).

8a Isa. 61:1 (1–2); Luke 4:18 (18–21); D&C 76:73 (73–74); 88:99.

11a D&C 76:19.

11b TG Scriptures, Value of.

11c Luke 24:31; Eph. 1:18; D&C 76:12 (10, 12, 19); 110:1.

11d TG Understanding.

11e Num. 11:25; Isa. 11:2.

11f TG Spirits, Disembodied.

12a Ezek. 18:9 (5–9); D&C 76:69 (69–70).

12b D&C 6:13; 51:19; 76:52 (51–53).

12c TG Testimony.

13a TG Sacrifice.

13b TG Jesus Christ, Types of, in Anticipation; Jesus Christ, Types of, in Memory.

- 13c TG Persecution; Tribulation.
- 13d Matt. 5:11 (10–12).
- 14a 1 Cor. 15:19 (18–21); Ether 12:4; Moro. 7:41 (3, 40–48).
- 14b TG Resurrection.
- 14c TG Grace.
- 14d TG God the Father, Elohim.
- 14e TG Jesus Christ, Mission of.
- 15a Isa. 51:11; Alma 40:12 (11–13).
- 15b TG Salvation.
- 16a Luke 23:43; Alma 40:20 (20–21). TG Paradise.
- 16b TG Redemption.
- 16c Alma 36:18; Morm. 9:13.
- 17a Job 34:15.
- 17b 2 Ne. 9:13 (10–13); Alma 41:4 (3–5).
- 17c TG Perfection.
- 17d Ezek. 37:7 (1–14).
- 17e D&C 93:33 (33–34).
- 17f TG Joy.
- 18a 2 Ne. 9:12.
- 18b TG Jesus Christ, Redeemer; Salvation for the Dead.
- 18c Isa. 61:1.
- 19a D&C 76:73 (72–74). TG Preaching.
- 19b TG Gospel.
- 19c 2 Ne. 9:13 (4–22).
- 19d TG Fall of Man.
- 19e TG Repent.
- 20a Alma 40:14 (13–14). TG Spirits in Prison; Wickedness.
- 20b 1 Ne. 10:21; D&C 138:37; Moses 6:57.
- 21a Matt. 23:37. TG Rebellion.
- 21b D&C 76:82.
- 21c TG Prophets, Rejection of.
- 21d Moses 6:57.
- 22a TG Darkness, Spiritual.
- 22b TG Peace of God.
- 23a Heb. 9:12 (11–15). TG Joy; Redemption.

- 23b Rom. 14:11; Mosiah 27:31.
- 23c Alma 5:7.
- 23d TG Hell.
- 24a Ex. 34:30 (29–30, 35); Hel. 5:36 (23–48); JS—H 1:32 (31–32). TG Light [noun].
- 24b Ps. 104:2; Isa. 60:19; Rev. 22:5; JS—H 1:17.
- 24c 2 Chr. 29:30. TG Singing; Worship.
- 25a TG Jesus Christ, Mission of.
- 25b TG Teaching.
- 26a 1 Ne. 11:28 (28, 31).
- 26b Matt. 7:14 (13–14); 1 Ne. 11:31 (28–32); 14:12.
- 27a Mark 8:31.
- 28a TG Spirits in Prison.
- 29a D&C 76:12.
- 29b D&C 138:20.
- 30a TG Kingdom of God, in Heaven.
- 30b TG Missionary Work.
- 30c Luke 24:49. TG Delegation of Responsibility; Priesthood, Authority; Priesthood, Power of.
- 30d D&C 20:73.
- 30e TG Darkness, Spiritual.
- 30f D&C 1:2 (2, 11).
- 31a Isa. 61:2; Luke 4:19.
- 31b TG Liberty.
- 31c TG Repent; Teachable.
- 32a John 8:24 (21–24).
- 32b D&C 128:5. TG Knowledge.
- 32c TG Transgress.
- 32d D&C 76:74 (73–74).
- 33a A of F 1:4. TG Faith.
- 33b D&C 124:33 (28–39). TG Baptism, Essential; Baptism for the Dead.
- 33c TG Remission of Sins.
- 33d TG Holy Ghost, Gift of.
- 34a 1 Pet. 4:6. TG Judgment, the Last; Justice.
- 35a Alma 34:14 (9–16). TG Jesus Christ, Atonement through; Sacrifice.
- TG Jesus Christ, Qualification of

- 35b TG Jesus Christ, Crucifixion of.
- 36a TG Paradise.
- 36b TG Prophets, Mission of.
- 37a 1 Ne. 10:21; D&C 138:20; Moses 6:57.
- 38a Abr. 3:22 (22–26).
- 38b Moses 1:34. TG Adam.
- 38c Dan. 7:9 (9–14); 2 Ne. 2:20; D&C 27:11.
- 39a Moses 4:26.
- 39b Gen. 3:20; Moses 5:12 (4, 11–12).
- 39c Moses 5:2 (2–3). TG Sons and Daughters of God; Woman.
- 40a Gen. 4:2 (1–8); Moses 5:17 (17–32).
- 40b TG Martyrdom.
- 40c Gen. 4:25 (25–26); Moses 6:3 (2–13).
- 40d Gen. 5:3; Moses 6:10.
- 41a Gen. 6:8 (1–22); Moses 8:13 (8–30).
- 41b Gen. 5:32.
- 41c TG High Priest, Melchizedek Priesthood; Priesthood, Melchizedek.
- 41d Gen. 17:5 (1–27).
- 41e Gen. 21:3 (1–8).
- 41f Gen. 35:10 (1–29).
- 41g TG Law of Moses.
- 42a Isa. 1:1.
- 42b Isa. 61:1 (1–2).
- 42c TG Spirits in Prison.
- 43a Ezek. 1:3; 37:1 (1–14).
- 43b TG Resurrection.
- 44a Dan. 2:44 (44–45). TG Kingdom of God, on Earth.
- 45a BD Elias.
- 46a Mal. 4:5 (5–6); JS—H 1:38 (36–39).
- 46b 1 Kgs. 17:1 (1–24); D&C 110:13 (13–15).
- 46c TG Day of the Lord.
- 47a Mal. 4:6 (5–6); D&C 128:17; JS—H 1:39 (36–39).
- 48a TG Genealogy and Temple Work; Salvation for the Dead.
- 48b TG Dispensations.
- 48c TG Family, Eternal; Sealing.



- 49a TG Jesus Christ, Prophecies about.
- 49b Hel. 8:22 (19–22).
- 50a Luke 1:79.
- 50b TG Spirits, Disembodied.
- 50c D&C 45:17.
- 51a Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; Alma 40:20 (19–21).
- 51b D&C 29:43. TG Eternal Life.
- 52a Deut. 7:13 (6–14); Isa. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9. TG Blessing.
- 53a TG Man, Antemortal Existence of.
- 53b TG Foreordination.
- 53c D&C 128:18.
- 53d D&C 64:33.
- 54a TG Temple.
- 54b TG Salvation for the Dead.
- 55a Abr. 3:22 (22–24).
- 55b TG Foreordination.
- 56a TG Earth, Purpose of; Learn.
- 56b Job 38:7 (1–7); Alma 13:3 (3–7).
- 56c Acts 17:26.
- 56d Jacob 6:2 (2–3).
- 57a TG Elder, Melchizedek Priesthood; Missionary Work.
- 57b TG Mission of Latter-day Saints.
- 57c TG Gospel.
- 57d TG Spirits in Prison.
- 58a TG Redemption; Repent.
- 58b Matt. 16:19. TG Covenants; Ordinance.
- 59a TG Punish.
- 59b Alma 5:21 (17–22). TG Forgive.
- 59c TG Justice; Reward.
- 59d TG Good Works.
- 60a Rev. 20:12.
- 60b TG Testimony.
- 60c John 21:24. TG True.