

A hand is shown in the lower-left quadrant, reaching out towards the right. The hand is rendered in a soft, painterly style with warm tones of orange, red, and brown. The background is a vast, textured sky with soft, blended colors of blue, yellow, and white, suggesting a cloudy or hazy atmosphere. The overall composition is serene and contemplative.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

It's a basic question, and through ancient and modern prophets, God has given us answers.

Our loving Heavenly Father has given us some knowledge of what we can expect once we pass beyond this life. Here are truths that may help you understand where your departed loved ones are now and where all of us eventually will be.

What Do We Know about the Spirit World?

Where is the spirit world?

President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught that the spirits of those who once lived on earth remain around us on this earth, though we can't see them.¹

What is the spirit world like?

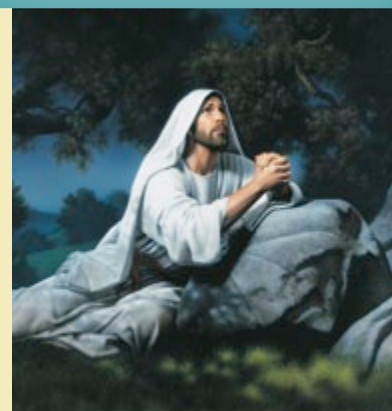
That depends. The righteous will experience paradise—happiness, rest, and peace, without troubles, care, and sorrow (see Alma 40:12). The wicked will experience hell (see Alma 40:13–14). Hell may be defined as “the torment of disappointment in the mind of man.”²



SUNDAY LESSONS

This Month's Topic:
**The Atonement of
Jesus Christ**

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



Throughout March you'll be studying the Atonement of Jesus Christ in your priesthood quorums and Young Women and Sunday School classes. One of the many blessings of the Atonement is that through it, we will all be resurrected. Think about how a knowledge of the Atonement and resurrection changes your perspective during difficult times. Try to recall a particular situation and how your testimony of the Atonement and resurrection blessed you, and consider sharing that experience with your family or in an upcoming Church lesson on Sunday.

What do spirits look like?

People's spirits had an adult form in premortal life and will have that same form in the spirit world, even if they die as infants or children.³

Can spirits in the spirit world see us?

Yes, when needed. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) said that those in the spirit world can see us more clearly than we can see them and that “their solicitude for us and their love for us and their desire for our well being must be greater than that which we feel for ourselves.”⁴

Can spirits in the spirit world still be tempted?

If you are faithful during this life, Satan will have no power over you

in the spirit world. The wicked will be subject to Satan there just as they were on earth.⁵ As Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained, this life is the time to repent, because “it is when we are here in mortality that the body and the spirit can learn together.”⁶

What are spirits in the spirit world doing?

For one thing, we know that the spirits of the faithful who have not yet been resurrected are doing missionary work among the spirits in prison.⁷ We also know that among those who were faithful, family structure and a Church organization exist.⁸



MEANING, MOTIVATION, AND HOPE

“The resurrection is a pillar of our faith. It adds meaning to our doctrine, motivation to our behavior, and hope for our future.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
“Resurrection,” *Liahona*, July 2000, 16; *Ensign*, May 2000, 14.



What Do We Know about the Resurrection?

How many people will be resurrected?

All people who ever lived on earth will be resurrected (see 1 Corinthians 15:21–23).

What will a resurrected body be like?

A resurrected body will be:

- **Immortal.** “This mortal body is raised to an immortal body, . . . that they can die no more” (Alma 11:45).
- **Perfect.** “The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form” (Alma 11:43). President Joseph F. Smith explained, “Deformity

will be removed; defects will be eliminated, and men and women shall attain to the perfection of their spirits, to the perfection that God designed in the beginning.”⁹

- **Beautiful.** President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) said, “There is nothing more beautiful to look upon than a resurrected man or woman.”¹⁰
- **Glorious.** President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said: “Your spirit is young and vibrant and beautiful. Even if your body is old and diseased or crippled or disabled in any way, when the spirit and body are put together in the Resurrection, then you will be glorious; then you will be glorified.”¹¹
- **Without sorrow or pain.** “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain” (Revelation 21:4).

What will happen to people who died as children?

According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the parents of a child who died in childhood “will have the joy, the pleasure and satisfaction of nurturing [it], after its resurrection, until it reaches the full stature of its spirit.”¹²

What will happen to people who were cremated or weren’t buried?

Though the Church does not encourage cremation, we believe that no matter what, all people will be resurrected with a perfect body. President Brigham Young taught that in the resurrection “the peculiar fundamental particles that organized our bodies here, if we do honor to them, though they be deposited in the depths of the sea, and though one particle is in the north, another in the south, another in the east, and another in the west, will be brought together again in the twinkling of an eye, and our spirits will take possession of them.”¹³

Who will be resurrected, and when?

FIRST RESURRECTION, OR “RESURRECTION OF THE JUST” (D&C 76:17)

▲ At Christ’s Resurrection

Prophets and certain other righteous people who will receive a celestial glory (see Mosiah 15:21–25).

▲ At Christ’s Second Coming

Those who will receive a celestial glory (see D&C 76:50–70; 88:96–98).

▲ At the Beginning of the Millennium

Those who will receive a terrestrial glory (see D&C 88:99).

SECOND RESURRECTION, OR “RESURRECTION OF THE UNJUST” (D&C 76:17)

▲ At the End of the Millennium

Those who will receive a telestial glory (see D&C 76:85; 88:100–101).	Sons of perdition (see D&C 76:43–48; 88:102).
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Why a Physical Resurrection?

The physical resurrection is part of God's plan and has been taught by prophets since the days of Adam (see Moses 5:10). But "the devil has no body, and herein is his punishment,"¹⁴ so he distorts this teaching so that people do not believe in a physical resurrection.

Many people believe that a physical body is like a prison for the spirit and that we can be truly happy only when the spirit is liberated from the body, but this is not true. The Lord has revealed that a physical resurrection is necessary because:

- ***It is how we receive a fulness of joy.*** Only "spirit and element [a physical body], inseparably connected, receive a fulness of

joy" (D&C 93:33). We also know that those who had died and were waiting in the spirit world for Christ's Resurrection "had looked upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage" (D&C 138:50).

- ***It is a blessing of our having chosen Heavenly Father's plan.***

Before we were born on earth, all spirits who would ever live on earth chose to follow our Heavenly Father's plan rather than Satan's rebellion (see Abraham 3:23–28). As a result, we received a mortal body and, through the gift of Christ's Resurrection, will be resurrected with an immortal body. Those who followed Satan in the premortal world

will never receive any kind of physical body.

- ***It brings us back into God's presence to be judged.***

The Book of Mormon clearly teaches that it is the power of the resurrection that allows us to enter God's presence to be judged according to our works.¹⁵

- ***It is required for salvation.***

Joseph Smith taught, "No person can have . . . salvation except through a tabernacle [a physical body]."¹⁶

- ***It is how we become like Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.***

"The Father has a body of flesh and bones, as tangible as man's; the Son also" (D&C 130:22). ■

NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 279.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 224.
3. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 131–32.
4. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 430–31.
5. See *Teachings: Brigham Young*, 282; Alma 34:34–35.
6. M. Russell Ballard, "Is It Worth It?" *New Era*, June 1984, 42.
7. See D&C 138:30; see also *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 474.
8. See *Gospel Principles* (2009), 243; for more on the spirit world, see Dale C. Mouritsen, "The Spirit World, Our Next Home," *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 46–51.
9. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 23.
10. Lorenzo Snow, *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 99.
11. Boyd K. Packer, "The 20-Mark Note," *Liahona*, June 2009, 23; *New Era*, June 2009, 5.
12. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 177.
13. *Teachings: Brigham Young*, 276.
14. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 211.
15. See 2 Nephi 9:22; Jacob 6:9; Mosiah 16:8–10; Alma 11:41; 33:22; 40:21; Helaman 14:17; Mormon 7:6; 9:13.
16. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 212.

