

## SALVATION FOR THE DEAD

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(Inaudible) . . . on the subject of marriage. We have been given some consideration to plural marriage, and approaching it from the standpoint that the Lord's law of marriage has always been one wife for one husband, everlastingly such has been the case since the day of Adam to the present moment. And it will so continue except under those circumstances and for those periods of time when by revelation the Lord commands that plural marriage should be practiced. Well, Sister Alberta . . . (inaudible) . . . said that the question is growing out of that, but I said probably it is the answer for everyone. She referred to a purported revelation, one that is attributed to President John Taylor, which indicates that plural marriage is going to be practiced everlastingly and always, and that there is not a time when it will not be. And to the argument that some have made going out of that, that there will be people who will practice plural marriage always even though it is not practiced by the body of the Church.

Well, in that connection now, we ought to have a few simple principles clear in our minds. One of the things that we read last Friday from *The Teachings of the Prophet [Joseph Smith]* was that he had always taught that a man could have only one wife unless it was expressly commanded to the contrary. And unless, in effect for his day, he authorized it.

The way that these things work, and I think we will have a lesson on keys a little later on. But the way they work is this: There is Priesthood on the one hand, which is God's power and authority; and there are keys on the other hand, (and the keys are the right of presidency) which authorize the use of the Priesthood for a particular purpose. Peter, James, and John brought the priesthood, which is power and authority, and then somebody else came and gave keys, which authorized the Priesthood to be used for a particular purpose. Now, we can use the Priesthood today to baptize and to perform eternal marriages, to preach the gospel in the world, and to hold folks in faith. We cannot use the Priesthood today to resurrect somebody, because the keys have not been given; and so we are not authorized to use God's power for that purpose. Well, the way keys operate is that they center in one man at a time; and that man is the President of the Church. Now, they are conferred upon all the twelve but they lie dormant in them unless they become the senior apostle because the key to the right of the presidency and only one man can preside over all others. So you never can perform an act by the authority of the Priesthood alone. You have to have the authority of the Priesthood; and in addition you have to have the authorization to use the Priesthood for that purpose, which is keys. Now I hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, but I cannot go out and resurrect someone because no one on earth or in heaven has authorized me to use my priesthood for the purpose of resurrecting somebody. But when they do, I will be able to do that. But somebody has authorized me to use the Priesthood for the purpose of sealing couples in the temples in eternal marriage; and so I go to the temple and seal people together. Now, I did not always have that right until the one who has the keys gave me the right to use my Priesthood for that purpose. And since he has, I have been able to do it. Well, this is the way things operate. You take Priesthood and the keys and unless both of them are there

an ordinance cannot be performed, or an act cannot be performed, that is binding in heaven. So the Lord gives the keys to the President of the Church in their totality. And the President of the Church could say, "We will not preach the gospel to the world," and all missionaries would have to come home. Or the President of the Church could say, "We will not perform baptisms," and nobody could ever perform another valid baptism. Or he could say, "We will not perform any more plural marriages," and no one could perform a valid plural marriage. Or he could say, "Celestial Marriage itself will stop," and it would stop because he holds the keys and he gives the voice of God to the world. You never have anything that is valid and binding unless there is both Priesthood and keys. And so anybody that comes along and says, "I can perform a plural marriage here outside the church or someplace else," you just know automatically that it is dishonest and it is not true, because he cannot do it unless the prophet of God authorizes it. And this is the doctrine that just washes away from Priesthood all of the claims and all of the notions of all of the colors who think that they can do something that is contrary to present, established discipline and order of the Church.

In view of the question, which I was grateful to receive, I thought we ought to say that much before we leave last Friday's subject. Now any questions about this, or are we all together on that? It is a pure matter of keys. We will talk about this. We will spend a day on it later on in the week and see how these keys operate and all the fields that are involved. But if you do not have the authorization, you cannot do it.

Well, I put on the board the heading, "Salvation for the Dead." In many respects, this is one of the most glorious doctrines in the Church. Because it expands out the infinite mercy and wisdom of God to cover the whole human family and makes salvation available to everyone. But it also happens to be one of the doctrines in the Church, that almost as much as any other doctrine, gets out of perspective and out of relationship to other things with the consequence that many false notions prevail and strange concepts in the minds of people about salvation for the dead.

I had a family that lived across the street from us in Salt Lake once, a woman, was a member of the Church who had been converted in the mission field. And she was a reasonably faithful old sister, as well as her environmental circumstances permitted perhaps, but her husband did not belong to the Church. He had some habits that he had to forsake if he joined the Church, and he didn't have any inclination to forsake it. And she kept nagging him and saying, why don't you join the Church? One day he said to her, now look, just leave me alone, I'm not going to join the Church. I have absolutely no intention whatever of joining the Church. Leave me alone. If I joined the Church I'd have to give up my liquor and tobacco and I'm not going to do it. I won't be a hypocrite and join the Church knowing that I can't use these things. But, he said, this doesn't worry me at all. Because I know just as soon as I'm dead you will have somebody go to the temple and be baptized for me and have the rest of the ordinances performed and it will be the same in the end anyway. So I'm not worried about this, he said.

Well, I think that's true, part of it. Part of it he said that she'd have somebody run to the temple and have ordinances performed. But that's the only part of that, that's true and yet

this is a very common concept in the Church. That somebody's going to get the gospel offered to them in the Spirit World regardless of what their attitude may have been to it in this life. We get to thinking about the infinite mercy of God and we want to conclude that every living soul is going to be entitled to the gospel in the Spirit World if they didn't have it here and that a delinquent saint can repent. Everybody's going to repent and God's merciful and on and on. And out of it we get a perspective that is very strange and really doesn't accord with the revelation.

Now what I'd like to have you do with me this morning is take a historical approach to salvation for the dead. Let's take it from the standpoint of Joseph Smith. Let's each one of us suppose that we're in the position of the Prophet. And that we're getting the knowledge line upon line, and precept upon precept the way he got it. So we'll end up, hopefully, having the attitude and the view and the perspective toward the doctrine that he had.

Now our time won't permit us to read all of the passages that are involved. But we'll refer to enough of them to get us a proper setting. And we'll read some phrases out of them that will keep us oriented.

The first thing that Joseph Smith learned about salvation for the dead was on September 21, 1823. So open to the writings of Joseph Smith [History 1]:29-39. And what happens is this: Moroni comes. He'd had the First Vision. Now the First Vision told him nothing about salvation for the dead. But Moroni comes to him and you just scan down this column with me. Moroni comes and tells him about the Book of Mormon and then he begins quoting passages of scripture, notably from Malachi 4:5-6 and Acts 1-4, 26-6. He quoted the fifth verse thus:

Behold I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

(He also quoted the next verse differently:) And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming. (Joseph Smith 1:38-39.)

Now that happens to be a different translation of what's in the book of Malachi 4:5-6 which say, and you probably know this by heart: "Before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, he'll send Elijah the prophet . . . turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and so on."

Now put yourself in Joseph Smith's position. Do you think that the Prophet would have known anything about salvation for the dead as a result of what Moroni said? He would have heard Moroni's words and immediately he would have looked in the book of Malachi to see how they read there. So by this date he knows what Moroni said and he knows what Malachi wrote. And we're going to see that this is the fact as we go along.

But I suggest to you, now, that based on that he wouldn't have the faintest glimmering of salvation for the dead.

And furthermore, let's be a little fair with the sectarian world. I don't think that anybody in the sectarian world can read what Malachi says and be expected to know that it's talking about salvation for the dead. They could be expected to know that it's talking somehow about families, because the hearts of fathers are going to turn to children and children to fathers. But let's be fair with them without the spirit of revelation that's all they know and we're going to discover that that's all that Joseph Smith knew and yet he was getting revelation. He'd seen the Father and the Son and now he was entertaining angels. So taking it step by step, line upon line, here's the first revelation and he didn't know what it was talking about. He knew that Elijah was going to come. But that didn't mean salvation for the dead to him.

All right, 1829, is our next reference of import. And I just take that as a blanket date because now he's translating the Book of Mormon. And as he translates the Book of Mormon he begins for the first time to really learn what the doctrines of the Church are. I just read this to get a concept over:

(Christ) commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the Kingdom of God.

And if they will not repent and believe in his name and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel has spoken it. (2 Nephi 9:23-24.)

That's a sample of Book of Mormon doctrine. And what that doctrine is teaching the prophet is that ye either believe in Christ, and you repent, and you're baptized, and you endure in righteousness, or you're damned. He's being indoctrinated. Pretend you don't know anything about salvation for the dead. But you're being indoctrinated. Now we won't take time to read it but 2 Nephi 31:11-12, 16-21 is the sermon Nephi preaches about baptism and it's blunt and it's categorical and it's the same doctrine. You either get baptized and you live right, you're obedient and you're faithful after baptism, or you do not go to the Kingdom of God. Now this is what the prophet knew.

Well still in, 1829, as he translates the Book of Mormon, let's look at Alma 34:31-35. And here is an education of a prophet. Scan down that column, you should be familiar with it. We won't read it but notice phrases. "Now is the time and the day of your salvation, not in the Spirit World. Verse 32: this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God. The day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. There's no salvation for the dead. Verse 33: do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end."

Now you read any salvation for the dead into this if you can. "After this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold if we do improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed." I don't know how you can have language that was more express or more explicit that would

leave a concept in your heart that there's no such thing as salvation for the dead. The thought would never enter your mind, when you read this sort of thing, that there is such a thing as salvation for the dead.

All right let's take the next one and we're getting even more expressed and more specific. 3 Nephi the 12:20, this one deserves being read by all of us. This setting is Christ talking to the Nephites and he's inserting in the Sermon on the Mount something that is not in the version in the Bible.

Come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, (Now note.) that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no cask enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. (3 Nephi 12:20.)

Any salvation for the dead here? Just absolutely the doctrine is totally erased. In the first place he doesn't know anything about it. And in the second place it would never enter his mind that there could be such a doctrine, in view of the fact, that he is being taught that unless you keep the commandment than merits, you in no case can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. There is absolutely no hope whatever of salvation for the dead for these Nephites. They either lived the law or in no case could they be saved.

Well let's continue our historical approach, just have the picture before us. I may not be taking, by any means, all of the passages. Let's get down to the day the Church was organized. And what we're concerned with is the same doctrine that we've been reading in the Book of Mormon. And it's repeated over again that except you repent, you have faith, and are baptized, and get the Holy Ghost and live righteously, you're damned. Now the Prophet's being taught, and it's line upon line.

All right let's take one that we'll read together, you just need to be aware of that one. This is February 16, 1832, D&C 76:71. (Every once in awhile someone comes rushing to me and they say, "I read in Section 76 that you can't be saved by baptism for the dead." And what's all the use of all this work that we're doing? Well it says that; that you can't.) Now let's read it. This is the education of a prophet. It starts out about the terrestrial world those who die without law. Verse 73.

And also (go to terrestrial world) they who are the spirits of men kept in prison, (you'll recognize now he's just paraphrasing the language that's in Peter) 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 76:73-74.)

Now can you possibly do better than that? Here's a revelation that says you go to the Spirit World and somebody comes to you and preaches the gospel and you receive the gospel and you go to a Terrestrial Kingdom. Do you think there's any salvation for the dead? Do you think this thought would ever enter the mind of the Prophet? No salvation in the Celestial Kingdom. They go to the Spirit World, they accept the gospel there, they

believe it and where do they end up—Terrestrial Kingdom. They received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it.

All right the Prophet when he taught that, without any question, would have had a lot more interest and concern in what Peter said in 1 Peter 3:18-21 and 4:6. He would have equated those. The language of his revelation was what Peter had used. And he could not have escaped the inevitable conclusion that the gospel was preached in the Spirit World and that people who received it were going to go to a Terrestrial Kingdom.

Well now we're up to where the tenor of things changes. Now were up to the day January 21, 1836. Just before the coming of Elijah. We're going to change the tenor and tune of this. But let me ask if anyone here would think up to this point, in fairness, that Joseph Smith could have been expected to know anything about salvation for the dead? If you were in the position of the prophet, now, and you'd been getting revelation since, 1820. For 16 years, now, you've been seeing the face of God, and you've been having the ministering of angels, and you've been getting revelation, and you've even had a vision of the degrees of glory—do you know anything at all about salvation for the dead, really? Now you can look back and you can see that it's woven into some of these passages. But put yourself in his position, do you think that you would have had really any concept about salvation for the dead? Well I don't think you would and we're going to read in his language now that he didn't. We're going to show that he didn't.

Question: What about Joseph Smith's vision of Alvin his brother?

**BRM:** You just relax and we'll find out about it just now. We're up to this day (January 21, 1836). This is the day it happened. What you raised is precisely the point. Up to that day, what did he know about salvation for the dead? All right the setting of this revelation is the Kirkland Temple. They got a partial endowment. Kirkland Temple was built so the keys could be restored and not so that endowments and blessings could be given. And it fulfilled its purpose, and then they built the Nauvoo Temple so that endowments and blessings to individuals could come. But they were getting a partial endowment. They're in the upper room, one of the upper rooms, of the Kirkland temple. Joseph Smith is there, and his father is there, and the Presidency of the Church from Zion are there, I've forgotten everyone that was there—some of the apostles and seventies were there. There's quite a little group of them and they're administering ordinances, washing with anointings, in a preliminary way, and in the midst of that, this is what takes place. Now mind you his father is there. They've been giving each other some blessings. Joseph Smith says,

The heavens were opened upon us (Upon us this whole group, and a lot of them were seeing glorious things. Now he tells what he saw), and I beheld the Celestial Kingdom of God and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell. (This is a spiritual experience that can't be defined in mortal terms. This is what Paul said about one of his visions.) I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate, through which the heirs which of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire; also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son. I saw the beautiful streets of that

Kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold. I saw (now this is very interesting) Father Adam and Abraham, and my father and my mother, (now let's catch the vision of that: His mother outlived him. His father was sitting in the room with him. So here's a vision of something that's going to be in the future, not what presently is), my brother Alvin, that has long since slept, (Now Alvin died. I don't know when he died. I'm not sure that we know this but he died in either 1823 or 1824, it says in the Pearl of Great Price, if that date's correct when he died. But in any event he died five or six years before either John the Baptist, or Peter, James and John came back.) my brother Alvin, that has long since slept, (Now just to show that the prophet didn't have any idea about salvation for the dead, up to this point, notice what he says.) and marveled how it was that he had obtained an inheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to gather Israel the second time, and had not been baptized for the remission of sins. (TPJS, p. 106-107.)

Now here is a real problem. God and angels have been saying to Joseph Smith for 16 years, you can't go to the celestial world and, lo, there is Alvin. And Alvin hasn't been baptized. It's quite obvious why he'd marvel, isn't it?

Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me saying—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. And I also beheld that all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability, are saved in the Celestial Kingdom of Heaven. (JS Vision of the Celestial Kingdom 1-10.) (TPJS, p. 107.)

I have written down here that Oliver Cowdery, Father Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams, all of the presidency were present on this occasion, among others. Well here's a new revelation of salvation of the dead by any manner of means. You and I at this vantage point look back to this day and we say, well there is the first revelation on salvation for the dead. And we speak truth, that is. But as we have seen Joseph Smith didn't know it was a revelation on salvation for the dead. He was getting things line upon line and precept upon precept. And it wasn't until this day in 1836, that he had advanced in spiritual things enough to catch a vision that somebody was going to the Celestial Kingdom who would be judged according to the intent of his heart. Now still he doesn't know anything about baptism for the dead. So far, all he "knows is people are going to be judged according to the intents of their hearts.

Well let's hurriedly finish our chronology so we'll have the historical picture before us. Now on April 3, 1836, Elijah comes. Keys of the sealing power. Section 110:13-16. Elijah comes. And I think by now, now that he's had this revelation and vision of Alvin, we can point to the fact that there's 1 Corinthians 15:29. Elijah's come and he's seen Alvin saved. He knows about salvation by the desire of one's heart, so he's beginning to catch a comprehension what that verse says or what it means. Now on January 19, 1841, he gets the revelation, Section 124 by noting verses 28-39, we discover that he's talking

by revelation now about baptism for the dead. They are already performing it. They're doing it in the rivers. They're not doing it the way the Lord eventually wants them to do it. And he already knows something about temple ordinances, because this revelation talks about them in a language that no one would understand unless he's also had the ordinances performed. Then in September, 1842, he writes that 127 Section of the Doctrine and Covenants. September 6, 1842, he writes Section 128. Now those two sections deal in some considerable detail with salvation for the dead and talk about baptism for the dead and quotes the scriptures and expounds the doctrine. And during this period, this general period here, in his sermons there are many things about salvation for the dead. But those sermons don't talk about salvation for the dead until after the coming of Elijah and until after that revelation where he sees Alvin in the Celestial Kingdom.

Well did we take a historical approach to this? Why did we try and put ourselves in the position of the prophet? What about this family that lives across the street from us, from me in Salt Lake? What happens to this man? What happens to this man who says, "Oh, I'm not worried, I know you're going to the temple and you're going to have the ordinances performed and it will be all right anyway."

Comment: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** I hope he does. I doubt it. But I hope he does. That's the best he can do in his case, he wasn't as good as he thought he was. That's why I said that. But the best he can do is the Terrestrial Kingdom. Now what a glorious thing salvation for the dead is. Salvation for the dead is just almost inconceivably glorious doctrine to think that the mercy of God and His justice and infinite goodness expands out to the point that every living soul is going to get an opportunity to be saved in Celestial Kingdom. But salvation for the dead is not a doctrine that offers somebody a second chance at salvation. You say is there a second chance, well a second chance at what? It depends on what you're talking about doesn't it. "Is there a second chance at salvation? Is there a second chance to hear the gospel? Well sure there may be second or hundredth chance to hear the gospel, that's of no particular moment. The question is, is there a second chance to go to the Celestial Kingdom?"

Now what we've read in that revelation was that people are eligible for celestial salvation on several bases. They're eligible for celestial salvation obviously if in this life while they're living here, they accept and live the gospel. There can't be any question about that. That's the whole tenor of all the revelations. Believe and obey today and you'll go to a Celestial Kingdom. You develop a celestial body. That's what the prophet knew until the vision of Alvin. Then he discovered that if people had righteous desires, if they're the kind of people who would have accepted the gospel with all their hearts when they heard it. If they're that category and kind, then they go to the Spirit World and they accept it there, and we do vicarious ordinances for them, and they become inheritors of the Celestial Kingdom. This is temple work.

What we discover from this revelation in Section 76 is that the people are going to go to a terrestrial salvation. We have an illustration of them. They're people who lived in the



days of Noah. To whom Noah preached. And the revelation says who received not the gospel in the flesh. So they reject the gospel and then they go into the Spirit World and they do a complete somersault. They just totally turn around and they accept the gospel. They believe the testimony of Jesus Christ in the Spirit World. And then the revelation says, "these are they of the terrestrial world." (D&C 76:70) And we come back to that 20<sup>th</sup> verse of the 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Third Nephi. "Except ye keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." (3 Nephi 12:20.) Of course you don't. If you don't accept it now, if you're not the kind of a person who would have received it with all your heart, then you don't go to a Celestial Kingdom.

Now this doctrine of salvation for the dead, we ought to get it in perspective. Let's quit thinking about the dead for a moment, let's think about us. Think of yourself ahead of the dead. You're more important to you than the dead. And so really the first great fundamental basic truth about salvation for the dead is that it doesn't apply to me. That's the first thing I ought to know about this doctrine. That it doesn't apply to me. I can't be saved by salvation for the dead. That's more important, really, to me than anything I can possibly know about this doctrine. Then after I learn that, what a glorious, glorious, concept it is to take the next step and discover that it does apply to my ancestors who would have received the gospel had they been permitted to tarry. Now in this connection we're not going to do ordinance work for the whole world.

There's not such a thing as doing ordinance work for everybody. I went to a sacrament meeting and I sat there and listened to somebody speak and he had all the population of the earth figured out and he was figuring out how long it would take us to do all the ordinance work for everybody that ever lived. You've got to do all this work, let's get busy and do genealogical research and do ordinance work. Well occasionally things get said in sacrament meeting that aren't exactly so. We're not going to do the ordinance work for people, all the people who ever lived. It's just pure nonsense. The people we do ordinance work for are our ancestors in the House of Israel. We get busy and we go back on the lines than go back from us and we search them out and we do the work for them. And we tie them into the family unit. Well if we started doing ordinance work for all the people that lived it would be the most futile useless thing there is. Because those people in the main are going to a Telestial Kingdom as the revelation says. Where their number is like the sand upon the seashore. And you don't need to be baptized to go to a Telestial Kingdom or to a terrestrial. The prophet's language is, "a man can be saved in the Terrestrial Kingdom or the Telestial Kingdom after the judgment without baptism. But he can never see the Celestial Kingdom of God except he is born of water and of the spirit." (TPJS, p 12.) Baptism only applies to the Celestial Kingdom. We're not going to do the ordinance work for the whole masses of mankind. We're going no do it for our ancestors. Now we're born in the House of Israel. And in general, with some exceptions, but in general the spirits who will accept the gospel in the Spirit World are those in the lineage of Israel. They're born with this spiritual inheritance that we talked about the first day or so in our classes. And so when we do ordinance work it's obvious that the generality of the people we do it for are going to be very interested in it. And hopefully most of them will accept and be heirs of salvation. Buy it's because we're not doing it promiscuously,

we're doing it within the established framework and the lineage where the believing blood is involved. Well, in order to get this concept, I've done most of the talking now. What comment or question is there now about what we're saying here?

Comment: One question. The Savior said, "Ye hear my voice" you know that some people hear the gospel and years later they'll eventually accept.

**BRM:** Well you're talking of course about this life aren't you? And there's lots of people like that, that don't accept it immediately in this life but later in this life they do. So what you run up against squarely is this statement of Amulek in the 34<sup>th</sup> chapter of Alma. "This time is the day to prepare for eternity, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed" (Alma 34:32-33). So if someone has opportunity to accept the gospel in this life, they have to take it. And the only issue that anybody can ever raise is: did this individual really have the opportunity? Maybe he had a tumor and he wasn't balanced and he couldn't think right and we didn't know it. And so we get real charitable and we do the work for him in the temple. You and I would do it the same way. We'd be liberal and get the Lord be the judge because we'd think maybe there was something we don't know about him that's prevented him from being spiritually balanced. We have to leave judgment to the Lord, but we ought to know what this principle is. Barring something we don't comprehend in the personality of the individual, it looks to us that this law applies.

Comment: Will you comment on the idea that you hear all the time about people in the Spirit World that have accepted the gospel or are depending on us to do the work. Is there any doctrinal basis . . . (inaudible)?

**BRM:** I think that's true. I think tomorrow will take a lesson on the patriarchal order and show how it operates clear down into the Spirit World and talk about that very thing.

Comment: (Inaudible.).

**BRM:** No, now this is true in the perspective and setting in which he said it. Now you have to understand that when he says that this is the main thing for us to do that he's saying, he doesn't say those very words, but that's the thought. He is assuming that there is something else exempt from that. Like if I would say that Lincoln is the greatest man that ever lived, everybody knows that I'm accepting Christ without even saying so. Now really the most important thing for any of us to do is to live the gospel here and now. To keep the commandments and be faithful and true. It's more important to live the gospel as a living person than to seek after our dead. But assuming that we're keeping the standards and doing what we ought then we have a tremendous obligation to go search out our ancestors of the House of Israel.

Comment: I've heard the statement made from time to time, the prime purpose of the millennium is to do temple work. Is this true or false?

**BRM:** I guess it must be true. I don't understand it, but it must be true. That's what the Brethren have said. That these ordinances are going to be done. How this operates is totally beyond me, but in any event we're going to be doing that sort of a thing during the millennium.

Question: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** That's what we're going to talk about tomorrow. We're going to start tomorrow, maybe not start with it, but weave in that I will "reveal unto thee the Priesthood" and spent considerable time on it.

Question: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** Well sure, this isn't our lesson today. But the Terrestrial Kingdom is going to be composed of people who are honorable men of the earth. Who were deceived by the craftiness of men. Of people who reject the gospel in this life and receive it in the Spirit World, of people who are not valiant in their testimony of Jesus, that is, members of the Church who are lukewarm, those who die without law, this is set forth just as, in some respects better than any kingdom where the terrestrial is concerned. Those four categories of people go to the Terrestrial Kingdom. Well honorable men of the earth are the decent and the upright and those with integrity, the good citizens, the kind of people that were happy to have represent us in Congress, that we're happy to do business with in the business world and yet they don't have sufficient spiritual endowment to recognize and believe the gospel. But they're honest and fair. They're deceived by the Craftiness of men and they're deceived and think that the Catholic church is true. Or they're deceived and they think that you can be saved by faith only in the Lutheran Church or something else. But they're honest good people. They're decent and reputable. They're clean, they're not immoral. Well these are they of the Terrestrial Kingdom.

Question: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** Yes. And I don't understand that. I just totally just find it impossible to understand that why the statement was made and when his cause is just we'll do his. I don't understand how that can operate. Now maybe somebody knows more than I do and know what they're doing when they say this but I don't.

Comment: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** Some of them. Now presumably that they'll be heirs to the Celestial. Here's Washington and so on, here's Lincoln. I don't think Lincoln had a chance to accept the gospel. I haven't the faintest doubt, really, but Washington is in the Church and he's over there working at it now. That he's an heir to the Celestial Kingdom. I think that the reason he came to Wilford Woodruff in the temple and said, "Do my work." Because they'd heard about it in the Spirit World and they knew they were suppose to accept it. Now I'm

sorry, I can't say the same about some presidents. Martin VanBuren or somebody else, but these men of integrity, yes.

Question: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** I don't know who they are. I think that based on the statement along in about the third or fourth Chapter of Mosiah that those who die without law are people who don't have any of the gospel law that the generality of the sectarian Christians have. Because he says there, "when the knowledge of God begins to spread throughout every nation and kindred then there will be none blameless except little children." (Mosiah 3:13-16.) Now I think the people who die without law are the people who don't have the New Testament and the Bible and the opportunity to come to a knowledge of true Christianity when the occasion arises. But I don't know who the people who died without law are. That's too difficult for me.

Question: Do all little children who die before the age of eight go to the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom?

**BRM:** I don't know the answer to that. I suspect they may. I'm sorry we never got around to that but the prophet's statement seems to say that all little children will get the fulness of the kingdom. But whether he means all or whether he doesn't I don't know. But you'll find that in the *Teachings of the Prophet [Joseph Smith]*. It's a categorical thing that we do know that without reservation is that they will all go to the Celestial Kingdom. But, of course, you raised the problem, well what about Negro children or something else. If we're suppose to know it, I don't happen to know it is all.

Question: (Inaudible.)

**BRM:** I don't think this is any problem. Now let me remind you of a phrase that Paul used on Mars Hill when he talked about the nature and being that God was. He said this: "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men to repent." (Act 17:30.) So if people lived in a day when knowledge is not had that we have God is going to judge them on the basis of their environmental circumstances, not ours. And this is even true in the Church within this dispensation. In the beginning days when the Word of Wisdom was had it wasn't nearly as serious to violate it as it is today. Because we've grown up into it and been taught it and know more and better now what we ought to live. There are probably a lot of things that we do that God winks at which in some more spiritually inclined descendants of ours, get the kingdom more perfected more than we have, He won't wink at anymore. We get judged by the environmental circumstances in which we live. And God's going to be charitable, just, and merciful to a lot of people who lived in the Middle Ages when they didn't have any where near the opportunity that we have to live right. He's going to wink at, so to speak, or overlook things that they did which he won't overlook in us. It's just this old principle where there is more light there is more condemnation. And he that sins against the greater light receives the greater condemnation. (James 3:1.)

Comment: 1 Peter 3:18 it seems to me in the mission field was used to illustrate that all these people who lived in the days of Noah will have their baptism done and then they'll be saved in their celestial glory. This evidently, of course, is untrue.

**BRM:** No, that's not true.

Question: But it seems to be usual usage . . . (inaudible).

**BRM:** Well maybe it is the usual usage. The way it ought to be used is to show that the gospel is preached in the Spirit World. Now that's what it establishes. And since the gospel is preached in the Spirit World and since Paul said that there is baptism for the dead, we, therefore, have a doctrine that the gospel can save people after death. Now the expressed point is the very people who lived in Noah's day we just read in so many words, "these are they of the terrestrial world." It's just a matter of using care and discretion in presenting the scriptures.

Well I think that this is a wholesome perspective of salvation for the dead for us to have because it ought to give us the encouragement and indication that we live right on our own here and no. And then the Lord be praised that these glorious things that we have extend on out. Maybe we should just add this word. Everything that we say in connection with salvation for the dead (end of tape).