

which Prophets, Apostles and righteous men have made their theme from the earliest periods of this earth's history, viz., the second coming of Christ, at which time will be developed powers in connection with the great principle of the resurrection that are altogether beyond our conception. For then not only will the worthy dead be raised, but the Saints who are alive will be quickened, so as to enable them to meet Him in the air as He shall descend with an innumerable throng composed of those who have been valiant for the truth in all the ages past, and have already received their resurrection. The signs of the near approach of the coming of our Savior are certainly unmistakable; but the exact time we cannot determine. Some Latter-day Saints have expressed themselves in a very positive manner upon this point, and have based their sayings upon statements made by Joseph the Prophet, to which we will refer.

On the fourteenth day of February, 1835, the members of Zion's Camp assembled in Kirtland by the commandment of God and were then addressed by Joseph Smith, who, among other things, said: "it was the will of God that they should be ordained to the ministry, and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or the coming of the Lord, which was, nigh, even fifty-six years should wind up the scene." At one time, Joseph says, he was praying to know concerning the coming of the Son of Man, when he heard a voice repeat the following words: "Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man; therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter." Joseph says concerning this: "I was left thus in doubt, without being able to decide whether this coming referred to the beginning of the Millennium, or to some previous appearing, or whether I should die and thus see His face. I believe the coming of the Son of Man will not be any sooner than that time." Had Joseph lived until December 23rd, 1890, he would then have been eighty-five years of age. The fifty-six years spoken of that should wind up the scene will terminate February 14th, 1891.

While these are very important sayings, they are to some extent ambiguous, and require further explanation, if not further revelation, to make them plain. And when the Prophet himself expresses doubt upon one of them, as to what was

really meant; it would certainly be presumptuous on my part to conclude that it is sufficiently explicit to base a decision upon. In regard to the fifty-six years just alluded to might it not be interpreted to mean that the fulness of the Gentiles should then come in; or does the expression refer only to the second coming of Christ? These are questions I do not feel myself competent to answer. Jesus says: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in heaven, but my Father only." (Matt. 24: 36.) The new translation says, "Neither the Son but the Father only."

We come now to the question: "Is the resurrection that will take place at the second coming of Christ anything more than a continuation of the first resurrection, and not separate from that which took place when He Himself came forth from the tomb and afterwards?" For all our blessings relate to "the first resurrection." John says: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." This certainly refers to all the faithful, irrespective of the time they lived upon the earth. Of the wicked it is said: "They shall not have part in the first resurrection." We therefore conclude that the resurrection at the second coming of Christ is a continuation of the same resurrection which took place at his first coming, and relates to all His faithful Saints as well as those who have died without law. Of those who died without law previous to Christ's first coming, King Mosiah says: "And thus the Lord bringeth to pass the redemption of those, and they shall have part in the first resurrection, or have eternal life, being redeemed of the Lord." The Lord, in speaking to Joseph in regard to the redemption of this class of individuals who have lived and died since the time of our Savior, uses the following language: "And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed; and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them." (Doc. and Cov., Sec. xlv, 54.)

The spirits to whom Jesus preached after His death, are said to have been those who were disobedient in the days of Noah; consequently, they could not have been ignorant of the law while they lived. As to what time subsequent to their receiving the Gospel and the ordinances vicariously administered they were worthy to be resurrected, the Scriptures are silent; but late revelations makes the subject very

plain. Peter says concerning them, that they might be judged as if they were in the flesh, "but live according to God in the spirit." This expression would seem to infer that their resurrection had not taken place at least in his days.

The two resurrections spoken of as distinct from each other are named, one as "the resurrection of the just;" the other as "the resurrection of the unjust." The sealing ordinances which we receive relate to our coming forth in the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the just. At Christ's second coming there would seem to be a general resurrection of all Saints; for the Lord revealed to Joseph the following: "And the Saints that are upon the earth who are alive shall be quickened, and be caught up to meet Him." "And they who have slept in their graves shall come forth; for their graves shall be opened, and they also shall be caught up to meet Him in the pillar of heaven." (Doc. and Cov., sec. 88, ver. 90-97.) The others who will receive their resurrection at this time are thus described, (vers. 99): "And after this another angel shall sound, which is the second trumpet; and then cometh the redemption of those who are Christ's at His coming; who have received their part in that prison which was prepared for them, that they might receive the gospel, and be judged according to men in the flesh."

Those who have to remain are thus described (ver. 100-101): "Then cometh 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."

There still remains another class, who seem to have no part either in the first or last resurrection, at least to inherit any degree of glory. When they are brought up it will only be to receive a greater condemnation. These are also the only ones upon whom the second death shall have any power. For a full description of this class I will refer you to the Doc. and Cov., Sec. 78, ver. 31-44, inclusive. In another revelation it is said that "they remain filthy still." Joseph said of them: "Those who commit the unpardonable sin are doomed to Gnom, to dwell in hell, worlds without end. As they commit scenes of bloodshed in this world, so they shall rise to that resurrection which is as the lake of fire and brimstone. Some shall rise to