

This will answer your question

October 26, 1948

Dear Brother,

This morning I received your letter in relation to the discussion you are having regarding verses 26-27, in Section 132, of the Doctrine and Covenants; also in relation to the meaning of the expression, "Sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise."

I will make an explanation of the expression, "Sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise," first. This does not have reference to marriage for time and all eternity only; but to every ordinance and blessing of the Gospel. Baptism into the Church is sealed by this spirit; likewise confirmation, ordination, etc., as well as marriage for time and all eternity. The meaning of this expression is this: Every covenant, contract, bond, obligation, oath, vow, performance that man receives through covenant and blessing of the Gospel, is sealed by the Holy Spirit and with a promise. The promise is that the blessing will be obtained if those who seek it are true and faithful to the end. If they are not faithful, then the Holy Spirit will withdraw the blessing, and the promise comes to an end. See Sections 76:53-54. 88:3. 124:124. 132:7.

→ Verse 26 in Section 132, is the most abused passage in any scripture. The Lord has never promised any soul that he may be taken into exaltation without the spirit of repentance. While repentance is not stated in this passage, yet it is, and must be, implied. It is strange to me that everyone knows about verse 26; but it seems that they have never read or heard of Matthew 12:31-32, where the Lord tells us the same thing in substance as we find in verse 26, Section 132.

It is wrong to take one passage of scripture and isolate it from all other teachings dealing with the same subject. We should bring together all that has been said by authority on the question. If you were to make a photograph it would be necessary for all of your rays of light to be focused properly on the subject. If this were not done then a blurred picture would be the result. This is the case when we try to obtain a mental picture when we have only a portion of the facts dealing with the subject we are considering. Therefore we must find out what else has been said about salvation. The Lord has said definitely, by his own mouth.

"And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father. And this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words. And NO unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore, nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness to the end." 3 Nephi 27:17-19.

So we must conclude that those spoken of in verse 26, are those who, having sinned, have fully repented and are willing to pay the price of their sinning, else the blessings of exaltation will not follow. Repentance is absolutely necessary for the forgiveness, and the person having sinned must be cleansed. John said: "there is a sin unto death."

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: "I do not ask that he shall pray for it." 1 John 5:16.

The Lord in verse 27, has pointed out some sins unto death for which there is no forgiveness. It will do no good for one to pray for his brother for forgiveness from such a sin. All other sins, including blasphemy against the Son of God, may be forgiven men, ON THEIR TRUE REPENTANCE. If they do not repent then no matter what the sin may be, or the covenant violated, the guilty party or parties will never enter into the kingdom of God!

Here is something which those who contend that the Lord has granted to some, if they have received certain sealings by the Holy Spirit of promise, immunity from their sins, have overlooked in this passage. I call attention to these two things. If covenants are broken and enormous sins are committed, but not unto death, there are certain punishments to be inflicted. The mere confession are (1) to "be destroyed in the flesh," (2) "be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption."

Who in the world is so foolish as to wish to sin with the hope of forgiveness, if such a penalty is to be inflicted? No one but a fool! To be "destroyed in the flesh" means exactly that. We cannot destroy men in the flesh, because we do not control the lives of men and do not have power to pass sentence upon them which involves capital punishment. In the days when there was a theocracy on the earth, then this decree was enforced. What the Lord will do in lieu of this, because we cannot destroy in the flesh, I am unable to say, but it will have to be made up in some other way. Then to be turned over to the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption, which is the resurrection, must be something horrible in its nature. Who wishes to endure such torment? No one but a fool! I have seen their anguish. I have heard their pleadings for relief and their pitiful cries that they cannot endure the torment. This was in this life. Add to that, the torment in the spirit world before the redemption comes. All of this, mark you, coming after severe and humble repentance.

Some among us have the idea that to confess their sins with their lips and to turn away from them constitutes all that is required of the repentant. This is not always so. It is our duty to forgive, but the Lord may require a severe penalty after this humble repentance. David sorely repented; read some of his Psalms and realize how he cried in anguish for relief; yet we understand that he is paying the price to this day and will until the Son of God comes to relieve him.

I said that when the Lord ruled in a theocracy that punishment by death was the edict for certain crimes. Here is an example:

"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." Lev. 20:10. See also other crimes for which this penalty was exacted.

No, the Lord has not prepared for favoritism. He has not placed exemption upon some because they have received marriage for time and for all eternity and had it sealed by the "Holy Spirit of Promise," and thus given them the privilege of blaspheming his name, or committing any sin whatever, and they come forth to receive an exaltation. We should all be grateful for the wonderful principle of repentance. We all need it; but we must not lose sight of the fact that the celestial kingdom is reserved for those who are sanctified, and none others. Read Mormon 9:3-4.

Very sincerely,

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