

There was an anxiety among the people in this church for many years, in relation to what would become of their ancestors and the world at large who were not acquainted with the Gospel, until the Lord condescended to give a revelation in which this doctrine was explained. By turning to the first epistle to the Corinthians, you will find there that the Apostle Paul, in reasoning upon the resurrection, advanced an idea which is not generally understood. In the 15th chapter and 29th verse of that epistle the Apostle uses this language: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Now, among other arguments which he brought forth to convince the Corinthians that there was such a thing as a resurrection he appeals to the fact that there was such a doctrine as baptism for the dead in the Church and practiced by the former-day Saints, and to enforce the doctrine he uses the words I have read, one of the most powerful arguments that he could adduce in favor of the resurrection. How useless it would be for men and women to be baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all; but the dead do rise, and the Saints are baptized for them. I might paraphrase his words and reason upon them in this way. The dead are baptized, for we are baptized for them, and they do rise or else all our labor would be in vain in going forth and being baptized for them. Now, here is a doctrine that has been hidden. True, it is only a slight allusion, but it is sufficient to show that there was in the ancient Church such a doctrine believed in and practiced by the Saints of God.

"Oh," but says one, "how can the dead be born of the water and the Spirit; suppose that Jesus went and

preached to the spirits in prison, and among the rest to the thief who was on the cross when he got to paradise, as you explain the Gospel, how could he, in the spirit world, be born of the water and of the Spirit?" A very serious question, but here is the explanation: those who are alive in the flesh can go forth and be baptized for them. "What! Be baptized for the dead? And will that stand?" I would ask those who object to this, how is it that the death of Jesus, the Son of God, affects our salvation? He acts for us vicariously; by his vicarious atonement he redeems us from the effects of the transgression of our first parents. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Death came into the world by Adam. Adam did not die to redeem the world, but Jesus came forward, vicariously, as the Savior of the world, and died to redeem us from Adam's sin. Through his death Adam's sin is atoned for. In like manner, Malachi says, in speaking of the Prophet Elijah coming before the great and terrible day of the Lord: "The hearts of the fathers shall be turned to the children." What for? Because the children can act vicariously for them; "and the hearts of the children shall be turned to the fathers," because the children will feel after their fathers; they will search for their genealogies, and learn of their ancestors, and they will go forth and perform ordinances in the flesh for their dead, which the dead cannot perform for themselves, and act vicariously for them, and so fulfil the saying of the Prophet Obadiah, where he says, "There shall be saviors in the last days on mount Zion." They shall stand as ministers of salvation. There shall be saviors in the last days, acting in a lesser capacity, it is true, but still somewhat in the capacity of our Lord