

The Plan of Salvation

In the premortal existence, Heavenly Father prepared a plan to enable us to become like Him and receive a fulness of joy. The scriptures refer to this plan as “the plan of salvation” (Alma 24:14; Moses 6:62), “the great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8), “the plan of redemption” (Jacob 6:8; Alma 12:30), and “the plan of mercy” (Alma 42:15).

The plan of salvation is the fulness of the gospel. It includes the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and all the laws, ordinances, and doctrines of the gospel. Moral agency, the ability to choose and act for ourselves, is also essential in Heavenly Father’s plan. Because of this plan, we can be perfected through the Atonement, receive a fulness of joy, and live forever in the presence of God. Our family relationships can last throughout the eternities.

You are a participant in Heavenly Father’s plan, and your eternal experience can be divided into three main parts: premortal life, mortal life, and life after death. As you come to understand the plan, you find answers to questions asked by so many: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where do we go after this life?

PREMORTAL LIFE

Before you were born on the earth, you lived in the presence of your Heavenly Father as one of His spirit children. In this premortal existence, you attended a council with Heavenly Father’s other spirit children. At that council, Heavenly Father presented His great plan of happiness (see Abraham 3:22–26).

In harmony with the plan of happiness, the premortal Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of the Father in the spirit, covenanted to be the Savior (see Moses 4:2; Abraham 3:27). Those who followed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were permitted to come to the earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. Lucifer, another spirit son of God, rebelled against the plan and “sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3). He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of heaven and denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality (see Moses 4:4; Abraham 3:27–28).

Throughout your premortal life, you developed your identity and increased your spiritual capabilities. Blessed with the gift of agency, you made important decisions, such as the decision to follow Heavenly Father’s plan. These decisions affected your life then and now. You grew in intelligence and learned to love the truth, and you prepared to come to the earth, where you could continue to progress.

MORTAL LIFE

You are now experiencing mortal life. Your spirit is united with your body, giving you opportunities to grow and develop in ways that were not possible in your premortal life. This part of your existence is a time of learning in which you can prove yourself, choose to come unto Christ, and prepare to be worthy of eternal life. It is also a time when you can help others find the truth and gain a testimony of the plan of salvation.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

When you die, your spirit will enter the spirit world and await the resurrection. At the time of the resurrection, your spirit and body will reunite, and you will be judged and received into a kingdom of glory. The glory you inherit will depend on the depth of your conversion and your obedience to the Lord’s commandments (see “Kingdoms of Glory,” pages 92–95). It will depend on the manner in which you have “received the testimony of Jesus” (D&C 76:51; see also verses 74, 79, 101).

BLESSINGS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN

A testimony of the plan of salvation can give you hope and purpose as you wrestle with the challenges of life. You can find reassurance in the knowledge that you are a child of God and that you lived in His presence before you were born on the earth. You can find meaning in your present life, knowing that your actions during mortality influence your eternal destiny. With this knowledge, you can base important decisions on eternal truths rather than on the changing circumstances of life. You can continually improve your relationship with family members, rejoicing in the promise that your family can be eternal. You can find joy in your testimony of the Atonement and the Lord’s commandments, ordinances, covenants, and doctrines, knowing that “he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

Additional references: 2 Nephi 2:5–30; 10:23–25; Alma 12:24–37; 22:12–14; 42; Moses 6:47–62
See also Agency; Atonement of Jesus Christ; Creation; Death, Physical; Death, Spiritual; Fall; God the Father; Gospel; Heaven; Hell; Jesus Christ; Kingdoms of Glory; Paradise; Resurrection

The Plan of Salvation

In the premortal existence, Heavenly Father prepared a plan to enable us to become like Him and receive a fulness of joy. The scriptures refer to this plan as “the plan of salvation” (Alma 24:14; Moses 6:62), “the great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8), “the plan of redemption” (Jacob 6:8; Alma 12:30), and “the plan of mercy” (Alma 42:15).

The plan of salvation is the fulness of the gospel. It includes the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and all the laws, ordinances, and doctrines of the gospel. Moral agency, the ability to choose and act for ourselves, is also essential in Heavenly Father’s plan. Because of this plan, we can be perfected through the Atonement, receive a fulness of joy, and live forever in the presence of God. Our family relationships can last throughout the eternities.

You are a participant in Heavenly Father’s plan, and your eternal experience can be divided into three main parts: premortal life, mortal life, and life after death. As you come to understand the plan, you find answers to questions asked by so many: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where do we go after this life?

PREMORTAL LIFE

Before you were born on the earth, you lived in the presence of your Heavenly Father as one of His spirit children. In this premortal existence, you attended a council with Heavenly Father’s other spirit children. At that council, Heavenly Father presented His great plan of happiness (see Abraham 3:22–26).

In harmony with the plan of happiness, the premortal Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of the Father in the spirit, covenanted to be the Savior (see Moses 4:2; Abraham 3:27). Those who followed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were permitted to come to the earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. Lucifer, another spirit son of God, rebelled against the plan and “sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3). He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of heaven and denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality (see Moses 4:4; Abraham 3:27–28).

Throughout your premortal life, you developed your identity and increased your spiritual capabilities. Blessed with the gift of agency, you made important decisions, such as the decision to follow Heavenly Father’s plan. These decisions affected your life then and now. You grew in intelligence and learned to love the truth, and you prepared to come to the earth, where you could continue to progress.

MORTAL LIFE

You are now experiencing mortal life. Your spirit is united with your body, giving you opportunities to grow and develop in ways that were not possible in your premortal life. This part of your existence is a time of learning in which you can prove yourself, choose to come unto Christ, and prepare to be worthy of eternal life. It is also a time when you can help others find the truth and gain a testimony of the plan of salvation.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

When you die, your spirit will enter the spirit world and await the resurrection. At the time of the resurrection, your spirit and body will reunite, and you will be judged and received into a kingdom of glory. The glory you inherit will depend on the depth of your conversion and your obedience to the Lord’s commandments (see “Kingdoms of Glory,” pages 92–95). It will depend on the manner in which you have “received the testimony of Jesus” (D&C 76:51; see also verses 74, 79, 101).

BLESSINGS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN

A testimony of the plan of salvation can give you hope and purpose as you wrestle with the challenges of life. You can find reassurance in the knowledge that you are a child of God and that you lived in His presence before you were born on the earth. You can find meaning in your present life, knowing that your actions during mortality influence your eternal destiny. With this knowledge, you can base important decisions on eternal truths rather than on the changing circumstances of life. You can continually improve your relationship with family members, rejoicing in the promise that your family can be eternal. You can find joy in your testimony of the Atonement and the Lord’s commandments, ordinances, covenants, and doctrines, knowing that “he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

Additional references: 2 Nephi 2:5–30; 10:23–25; Alma 12:24–37; 22:12–14; 42; Moses 6:47–62
See also Agency; Atonement of Jesus Christ; Creation; Death, Physical; Death, Spiritual; Fall; God the Father; Gospel; Heaven; Hell; Jesus Christ; Kingdoms of Glory; Paradise; Resurrection