

## 5 Proofs That Post-Mortem Evangelization Is Unbiblical

### 1. Judgment follows death, not evangelization.

#### Hebrews 9:27 NIV

<sup>27</sup> Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

**Comment.** Although judgment is not said here to occur immediately after death, the order is explicit: death first and judgment second—*not evangelization.*

### 2. Repentance is useless between death and judgment.

#### Luke 16:19-31 NIV

<sup>19</sup> "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

<sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores

<sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

<sup>22</sup> "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.

<sup>23</sup> In hell [hades], where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

<sup>24</sup> So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

<sup>25</sup> "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

<sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

**Comment 1.** (v. 26)—Despite the rich man's plea for mercy (v. 24) Abraham neither ministered to him *nor encouraged his repentance.*

Moreover, we may infer from Heb. 9:27 that because "the great chasm has been fixed" the rich man was to *remain in hell* until the judgment. This is confirmed in 2 Pt. 2:4-9 below.

<sup>27</sup> "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house,  
<sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

<sup>29</sup> "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

<sup>30</sup> "'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

<sup>31</sup> "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

**Comment 2.** (vv. 27- 28)–Note that the time limit for avoiding “hell” (v. 23) was prior to, NOT AFTER, physical death.

**Comment 3.** (v. 30)–Note that what the rich man wanted his brothers to do in life was the very thing *he could not do* after death—“repent.”

### 3. Hell is a prison, not a halfway house.

#### 2 Peter 2:4-9 NIV

<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell [tartarus], putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;

<sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others;

<sup>6</sup> if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;

<sup>7</sup> and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men

**Comment 1.** Note that hell is a place “to be held for judgment” as is death row until the death penalty is carried out.

**Comment 2.** (vv. 5-6)–Note that for “the ancient world” and “Sodom and Gomorrah” physical death marked *the boundary for opportunity* and this as “an example” for all the ungodly.

<sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)--

<sup>9</sup> if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

**Comment 3.** (vv. 7-9)–Note that Lot was “rescued” *in this life* (as are “godly men”); by contrast the unrighteous dead are bound and punished *until the day of the Lord’s judgment*.

#### **4. To die in disbelief is to die with our fate sealed.**

##### **Hebrews 3:12-19 NIV**

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

<sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

<sup>15</sup> As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”

<sup>16</sup> Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt?

<sup>17</sup> And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert?

<sup>18</sup> And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed?

<sup>19</sup> So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

**Comment 1.** (v. 12-16)–Note *the emphasis* that is put on “Today” as the time for repentance both for Christians in the NT (v. 13) and for the Israelites in the OT (v. 15 quoting Ps. 95:7, 8).

**Comment 2.** (v. 17)–Note *the urgency* that is put on “Today” (v. 15) as defined by the time limit of physical death (“whose bodies fell in the desert”).

**Comment 3.** (v. 18-19)–Note that *never entering God’s “rest”* (i.e. the promised land) in Moses’ day is a metaphor for *unbelief “in Christ” today* (see vv. 13-15).

## 5. To die in our sins is to be condemned already.

### John 8:24 NIV

<sup>24</sup> "I [Jesus] told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins."

### John 3:18 NIV

<sup>18</sup> "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

**Comment 1.** (v. 24)–Question: What is the significance and tragedy of dying “in [our] sins” if our sins can be forgiven after death?

**Comment 2.** (v. 18)–Answer: Rejecting Christ’s identity *in this life* results in our being “condemned already” irrespective of a change of heart *in the afterlife!*

## Evaluating LDS Biblical Proof Texts for PME

### Isaiah 42:7 (see also 61:1)

#### A Biblical Perspective

1. Although the LDS proof text usually does not include verse 6, verse 6 indicates that the one “called” by the LORD is Israel (see also 49:5-6) and that “the prisoners” (v. 7) are “the Gentiles.”
2. Quoting Isaiah 42:6 Simeon declares that Christ is “a light for revelation to the Gentiles” (Lk. 2:32 NIV); quoting Isaiah 49:6 the apostles Paul and Barnabas were “made a light for the Gentiles” subsequent to the Jews rejecting the Gospel (Acts 13:47 NIV).
3. “[T]he Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin” (Gal. 3:22 NIV). Therefore, the Gentiles (not being included in God’s old covenant people) were blind and in bondage to sin until the “light of the gospel” (2 Cor. 4:4 NIV) under the new “covenant” (v. 6) had been mercifully extended to them by the LORD (see also Eph. 3:6).

<sup>6</sup> I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;  
<sup>7</sup> To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house [Gr. *phylakē*]. (Isaiah 42:7 KJV)

### Matthew 12:31-32

#### A Biblical Perspective

1. “Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost” is distinct from *speaking against the Son of Man* (Christ) on the basis of *culpability* (see also Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31). These Pharisees witnessed Jesus’ miracles (not least the exorcism of demons) yet knowingly rejected the Spirit’s work and attributed it to Satan (see 12:22-28).
2. Arguing that some sins may be forgiven “in the world to come” merely because another IS NOT commits *the fallacy of begging the question*. Moreover, it fails to recognize Jesus’ use of Jewish hyperbole and contradicts Hebrews 9:27; 3:12-19; Luke 16:19-21; 2 Peter 2:4-9 and Jn. 3:18; 8:24.

<sup>31</sup> Wherefore I [Jesus] say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.  
<sup>32</sup> And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. (Mt. 12:32 KJV)

## Evaluating LDS Biblical Proof Texts for PME

### John 5:25, 28-29

#### A Biblical Perspective

1. Verse 25 addresses unbelievers *in this age* who are physically alive, but spiritually “dead” (see Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13). And when unbelievers place their faith in Christ they are “made ... alive” spiritually or “born of the Spirit” (respectively, Eph. 2:5; Jn. 3:8 NIV).
2. “[T]he voice of the Son of God” that gives *life* is His “word”—both spoken (5:24) and “written” (20:31).
3. Verses 28 and 29 speak to *future* resurrections—the bodies of believers (“they that have done good”) will be *raised to life* “at the last day” (Jn. 6:40, 54 NIV); and the unbelieving dead (“they that have done evil”) will be raised to “the second death” (Rev. 20:11-15 NIV).

### 1 Corinthians 15:29

#### A Biblical Perspective

1. The Bible nowhere else mentions baptism for the dead. Moreover, doctrine should not be based on an obscure passage that contradicts *more explicit* biblical passages.
2. There is no evidence that baptism for the dead was practiced in Corinth or by any orthodox Christian community in the early church.
3. “Else what shall they do?”—This is a rare instance in the letter where Paul addresses his audience in the *third person*—rather than the *second person* (“some among you”—15:12) indicating that vicarious baptism was *unusual* among the Corinthians.
4. Baptism for the dead assumes that there will be a future resurrection of the dead. Paul merely cites *the irony* of this practice if, as some in Corinth believed, “there is no resurrection of the dead” (15:12 NIV).

<sup>25</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (John 5:25 KJV)

<sup>28</sup> Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves [mnemeion] shall hear his voice,

<sup>29</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (Jn. 5:25, 28-29 KJV)

<sup>29</sup> 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? (1 Corinthians 15:29 KJV)

# Evaluating LDS Biblical Proof Texts for PME

## 1 Peter 3:18-20

### A Biblical Perspective

1. The plural "spirits" (*pneumata*) in the NT overwhelmingly refers to ungodly, nonhuman spiritual beings *unless qualified* (here it is not). Normally deceased humans are referred to as "souls" (*psychē*), not "spirits" (see Rev. 6:9).
2. *The spirits who disobeyed* "in the days of Noah" (v. 20) are likely "the sons of God" described in Genesis 6:1-4. The early Jewish writing 1 Enoch, alluded to here by Peter (see also 2 Pt. 2:4; Jude 6), identifies THESE *sons of God* as fallen angels who disobeyed God and were put in prison (1 En. 12-16, 21).
3. Although the verb "preached" (*kēryssō*) is often used for preaching the Gospel, it is also used to "proclaim" or "announce" in the NT (see Lk. 4:19; Rev. 5:2). The verb more specific to preaching the Gospel (*euangelizomai*) is NOT used here of Christ's proclamation.

Interestingly, Peter uses the verb *euangelizomai* three times for the proclamation of the Gospel, but never uses *kēryssō* to do so (see 1 Peter 1:12, 25; 4:6)!

4. Although the NT never speaks of anyone *evangelizing* spirits, it does speak of Christ's *victory over evil spirits* (see Col. 2:15). Furthermore, 1 Enoch also has a proclamation to spirits in prison (16:3), *and it is a proclamation of judgment*.
5. Therefore, although we can't be certain as to precisely WHEN Christ preached to these spirits or precisely WHAT He proclaimed, we can be relatively sure He *did not* offer salvation to humans after death.

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

<sup>19</sup> By which also he went and preached [*kēryssō*] unto the spirits (*pneumata*) in prison;

<sup>20</sup> Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:18-20 KJV)

# Evaluating LDS Biblical Proof Texts for PME

## 1 Peter 4:6

### A Biblical Perspective

1. Attempting to link 1 Peter 4:6 here to 1 Peter 3:19 above (as the LDS Church does) fails for two reasons:
  - 1 Peter 3:19 does not refer to *evangelizing* with the Gospel (as it does here) but to a *proclamation* of triumph over demonic powers;
  - the preaching in 1 Peter 3:19 is done *by Christ*—here, because the verb “preached” is passive, the preaching is done by others *about Christ*.
2. The “dead” are those who had died physically, but heard and received the Gospel when they were alive.
3. Because Peter was writing to Christians who were suffering greatly for their faith (see 1:6; 3:13, 15) he could reassure them that although believers die physically (“judged according to men in the flesh”) they will be raised to life (“live according to God in the spirit”).

<sup>6</sup> For for this cause was the gospel preached (euangelizomai) also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Peter 4:6 KJV)