

Resurrection and judgement, LeGrand Baker

10 Even this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruption shall put on incorruption, and shall be brought to stand before the bar of God, to be judged of him according to their works whether they be good or whether they be evil—

11 If they be good, to the resurrection of endless life and happiness; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of endless damnation, being delivered up to the devil, who hath subjected them, which is damnation -

Some of the things Abinadi says, seemingly almost in passing, show a profound understanding of the gospel. These two verses are an example of that. If read quickly they simply say that people will be resurrected and judged according to their works. But that is precisely my point. He does not say “judged then resurrected,” the sequence he uses is “resurrected then judged.”

Before Abinadi, Jacob had also taught that the final judgment will follow resurrection

And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. (2 Nephi 9:22.)

After Abinadi, Alma taught the same thing.

Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God to be judged according to the deeds which have been done in the mortal body? (Alma 5:15.)

In another place Alma was even more explicit. This verse is a classic example of a scripture where the conjunctions create a logical string of ideas that is critical to understanding the meaning of the text. Another example is the conjunction “that” in the sacrament prayers. If you want to do an interesting experiment, recite those prayers without the word “that” and see what the prayers suddenly do not say. Let me show you what “that” and other conjunctions do in this verse.

If so, we shall come upon you;
BUT if not so, then cast about your eyes and
BEGIN TO BELIEVE in the Son of God, and
THAT he will come to redeem his people, and
THAT he shall suffer and die to atone for their sins;
THAT he shall rise again from the dead,
WHICH SHALL BRING to pass the resurrection,
THAT all men shall stand before him,
TO BE JUDGED at the last and judgment day,
according to their works. (Alma 33:22)

Mormon was also very exacting about the relationship of the resurrection and the judgement.

5 Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God, and that he was slain by the Jews, and by the power of the Father he hath risen again, whereby he hath gained the victory over the grave; and also in him is the sting of death swallowed up.

6 And he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead, whereby man must be raised to stand before his judgment-seat.

7 And he hath brought to pass the redemption of the world, whereby he that is found guiltless before him at the judgment day hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end. (Mormon 7:5-7)

I suppose one of the reasons that sequence first caught my attention is because I was taught something different from that when I was a boy. Then I learned that one would be assigned to the Celestial, terrestrial, or telestial kingdom after, and as a consequence of, the final judgement. So when I found several statements in the scriptures that reversed that order of things, I asked what other implications that sequence might suggest. And that introduced my mind to even more questions. If one is resurrected before the final judgement, then what are the criteria that determines one's resurrected glory? And after that is determined, what criteria are used to determine one's final judgement? The answer to that last question, is one's "works," but what does that mean? And, is it possible that the quality of the resurrected body one has received before one stands before the Saviour at the final judgement is one of the criterion by which a person will be judged?

As far as I know, the scriptures do not explicitly answer the first of those questions, except by the inferences I have already quoted. But the last question may be answered in section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants. In these verses, it is the tense of the verbs, rather than the conjunctions that provide the key to meaning.

14 Now, verily I say unto you, that through the redemption which is made for you is brought to pass the resurrection from the dead.

15 And the spirit and the body are the soul of man.

16 And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul.

17 And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickeneth all things, in whose bosom it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it.

18 Therefore, it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be

prepared for the celestial glory;

19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father;

20 That bodies who ARE [present tense] of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it [the earth] made and created, and for this intent are they [those of the celestial world] sanctified.

21 And they who are not sanctified [present tense] through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit [future tense] another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom.

22 For he who is not able [present tense] to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide [present tense] a celestial glory.

23 And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory.

24 And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom cannot abide a telestial glory; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory.

25 And again, verily I say unto you, the earth abideth [present tense] the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law—

26 Wherefore, it [the earth] shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the righteous shall inherit it. [all future tense]

27 For notwithstanding they die, they also shall rise again [future tense], a spiritual [resurrected] body.

28 They who are [present tense] of a celestial spirit shall receive [future tense] the same body which was [past tense] a natural body; even ye shall receive [future tense] your bodies, and your glory shall be [future tense] that glory by which your bodies are [present tense] quickened.

29 Ye who are quickened [present tense] by a portion of the celestial glory shall then receive [future tense] of the same, even a fulness.

30 And they who are [present tense] quickened by a portion of the terrestrial glory shall then receive [future tense] of the same, even a fulness.

31 And also they who are quickened by a portion of the telestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

32 And they who remain shall also be quickened; nevertheless, they shall return again to their own place, to enjoy that which they are willing to receive, because they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received.

33 For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift.

34 And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed [present tense] by law is also preserved [present tense] by law and [is] perfected and [is] sanctified by the same.

35 That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still.

36 All kingdoms have a law given;

37 And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.

38 And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.

39 All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified.

[What follows seems to be a list of the criteria by which one is finally judged - after the power of the resurrection has cleansed one's body to the quality of love by which one was quickened during this mortal probation.]

40 For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; mercy hath compassion on mercy and claimeth her own; justice continueth its course and claimeth its own; JUDGMENT goeth before the face of him who sitteth upon the throne and governeth and executeth all things.

41 He comprehendeth all things, and all things are before him, and all things are round about him; and he is above all things, and in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things; and all things are by him, and of him, even God, forever and ever. (D&C 88: 14 - 41)