

Companionship 1—Alma 40:6–14

Begin your lesson by explaining that when we die, our spirits are separated from our physical bodies.

Invite one of the people you are teaching to read Alma 40:6–7, 11 aloud. Ask the others to follow along, looking for what happens to our spirits when we die. (Explain that in these verses the words *soul* and *souls* refer to our spirits.)

- According to verse 11, where did Alma say the spirits of all people go between death and the Resurrection?

Explain that the words “taken home to that God who gave them life” in Alma 40:11 do not mean that we will be brought into God’s presence immediately after we die. To clarify the meaning of this phrase, read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972):

“These words of Alma [Alma 40:11–14] as I understand them, do not intend to convey the thought that all spirits [immediately] go back into the presence of God. . . . ‘Taken home to God’ [compare Ecclesiastes 12:7], simply means that their mortal existence has come to an end, and they have returned to the world of spirits, where they are assigned to a place according to their works with the just or with the unjust, there to await the resurrection” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr. [1958], 2:85).

Invite one of the people you are teaching to read Alma 40:12 aloud. Ask the others to follow along, looking for where the spirits of the righteous go after death.

- According to verse 12, where do the spirits of the righteous go? (Help those you are teaching identify the following doctrine: **Between death and resurrection, the spirits of the righteous dwell in paradise. You may want to mark the phrases in** verse 12 that teach this doctrine and invite those you teach to do the same.)
- What words or phrases in verse 12 describe what paradise is like?

Invite one of the people you are teaching to read Alma 40:13–14 aloud. Ask the others to follow along, looking for where the spirits of the wicked go after death.

- According to verse 13, where do the spirits of the wicked go after death?

Point out that when Alma used the phrase “outer darkness,” he did not refer to the final state of Satan and those who are damned. He referred to the state of the wicked between the time of their death and the time of their resurrection. Today, we usually refer to this state as spirit prison (see verse 13, footnote a). Invite those you are teaching to consider writing “spirit prison” in their scriptures near verses 13–14.

Explain that from Alma 40:13–14 we learn the following doctrine: Between death and resurrection, the spirits of the wicked dwell in spirit prison.

- According to verses 13–14, what is spirit prison like?

Ask those you teach how their understanding of life after death has helped them.

Testify of the truths you have taught.

