

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



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*The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure
of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Macmillan Publishing Company
New York

Maxwell Macmillan Canada
Toronto

Maxwell Macmillan International
New York Oxford Singapore Sydney



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For those who convert to the Church as teenagers or adults, the period of greatest risk for inactivity is the first year or two after joining the Church (*see* CONVERSION). About 70 percent of the new Latter-day Saint converts in the United States who do become inactive stop attending within three to five years after joining the Church. Of those who drop out, 45 percent return to active participation in five to ten years. Activity among these converts is influenced by (1) the personal characteristics of the convert, such as religious background, age, and marital status; (2) how personally involved the convert was in the investigation process, such as experiencing the Spirit of God and attending Church worship services; and (3) the extent to which the convert developed social relationships with other Latter-day Saints both before and after baptism.

In any religious tradition, social relationships are critical in developing and maintaining religious activity. People's religious lives are acted out in the context of a network of social ties within the family, the congregation, and the community. In addition, social relationships are the means by which religious traditions are transmitted from one generation to the next and the medium through which religious practices are shared and expressed. LDS religious activity is centered in the family and in the congregation (*see* WARD). In these settings, children and new converts learn by instruction and example what it means to be an "active" Latter-day Saint (*see* VALUES, TRANSMISSION OF).

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ADAM

[This entry consists of two parts:

LDS Sources
Ancient Sources

The first article discusses LDS teachings about Adam. The second one offers several apocryphal and pseudepigraphic sources as points of comparison. For further information on Adam, see Adamic Language, Eve, Fall of Adam, Mortality, Original Sin, and Plan of Salvation; regarding the beginnings of earth life, see Creation, Earth, Evolution, Garden of Eden, Origin of Man, Purpose of Earth Life, and Worlds.]

LDS SOURCES

For Latter-day Saints, Adam stands as one of the noblest and greatest of all men. Information found in the scriptures and in declarations of latter-day apostles and prophets reveals details about Adam and his important roles in the pre-earth life, in Eden, in mortality, and in his postmortal life. They identify Adam by such names and titles as Michael (D&C 27:11; 29:26), archangel (D&C 88:112), and Ancient of Days (D&C 138:38).

The Prophet Joseph SMITH taught that Michael, spoken of in the Bible (Dan. 10:13; Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7), is Adam. In his PREMORTAL LIFE, Adam received the PRIESTHOOD (*TPJS*, p. 157), was taught the plan of God (*TPJS*, p. 167), and was appointed to be the head of the human family (*TPJS*, p. 158). He participated in the creation of the earth and occupied a position of authority next to Jesus Christ (*TPJS*, p. 158), under whose direction he at all times functions (D&C 78:16). He led the forces of righteousness against the devil "and his angels," who were overcome and expelled from heaven (*see* WAR IN HEAVEN).

Latter-day scriptures attest that Adam is a son of God, that his PHYSICAL BODY was created by the Gods in their own image and placed in the GARDEN



Adam and Eve Cast Out of the Garden of Eden, by Tiffany Studios, New York (1892, leaded stained glass, over 6 feet in diameter), inside the Salt Lake Temple, in the second floor corridor leading from the World Room to the Main Hall. Photograph by C. R. Savage, 1911.

OF EDEN (Moses 6:9, 22; Abr. 5:7–11; *TPJS*, p. 345–53; cf. 2 Ne. 2:14–19). In this physical-spiritual state in Eden, Adam was called the “first man” (Moses 1:34) and given responsibility to dress the garden and “open the way of the world” (*TPJS*, p. 12). He was given dominion and responsibility over the earth, and he gave names to its creatures (Moses 3:19). He was joined with EVE in marriage (Abr. 5:4–19), but in their premortal condition “they would have had no children” (2 Ne. 2:23). Adam received the KEYS OF THE PRIESTHOOD (Abr., Facsimile 2, Fig. 3), and its ordinances were confirmed upon Adam and Eve (cf. *TPJS*, p. 167).

In order to obey the command of God to multiply and people the earth, Adam and Eve transgressed the law. Their deliberate action resulted in their fall (see FALL OF ADAM), and they were expelled from the garden. “Adam fell that men might

be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25). Thus, their action precipitated, as God had planned, the mortal phase of the PLAN OF SALVATION.

In their mortal state, Adam and Eve were taught further about the plan of salvation by heavenly messengers (Moses 5:4–9; 6:50–54). They received the priesthood ordinances (Moses 5:59; 6:64–65) and all things necessary to teach their children (Moses 5:12). LDS sources indicate that with Eve, Adam had sons and daughters before Cain and Abel were born (Moses 5:2–3, 16–17). They suffered the effects of the temptations of the devil and experienced the sorrow of family dissension that led to murder and wickedness among some of their children (Moses 5:12–53).

Adam and Eve had a fully developed language and kept written records (Moses 6:5–9). They preserved their genealogical record and an account of the Creation. Three years before his death, Adam called his righteous posterity to ADAM-ONDI-AHMAN and gave them his final blessing (D&C 107:53).

As the first on this earth to receive priesthood keys, Adam continues to dispense authority to others and to watch over priesthood administration on the earth; those to whom keys have been given must return them or account for them to Adam, and he will in turn deliver them or give an accounting of them to Christ (*TPJS*, pp. 157, 167). This will occur when the Ancient of Days (Adam) attends a council at Adam-ondi-Ahman preliminary to the second coming of Christ (Dan. 7:9–10; cf. *TPJS*, p. 122).

At the end of the Millennium, Adam as Michael will again lead the righteous in battle against the devil and his armies. Michael and the hosts of heaven will again prevail (D&C 88:111–15). When Adam then sounds the trumpet, the graves will be opened and the remainder of the dead will come forth to be judged (D&C 29:26–27). Subject to the Father and Christ, Adam will then preside eternally over his posterity (*TPJS*, p. 157).

Adam’s various titles relate to particular phases of his mission. In his premortal and post-mortal roles, he is known as Michael and as the archangel (D&C 29:26). In Hebrew, *michael* means one “who is like God,” and in his powerful and leading role as archangel, Adam serves as the captain of the Lord’s hosts in battle against the devil and his forces. Adam was the name given him for mortality (Moses 1:34). In Hebrew, *’adam*

means “man” or “mankind.” In LDS sources, further meanings of the word include “first man” (D&C 84:16), “many” (Moses 1:34), and “first father” (Abr. 1:3), denoting his historical role as the “grand progenitor” of the entire human family (TPJS, p. 167). “Ancient of Days” appears to be his title because he is “the first and oldest of all” (TPJS, p. 167).

Adam has been highly esteemed by all the prophets, both ancient and modern. President Brigham YOUNG expressed the idea in 1852 and later years that Adam “is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do” (JD 1:50). This remark has led some to conjecture that Brigham Young meant that Adam, who was on earth as our progenitor, was in reality God the Father. However, this interpretation has been officially rejected as incorrect (Kimball, p. 77). Later in the same speech Brigham Young clearly stated “that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael” (JD 1:51). Additional information about Brigham Young’s feelings on Adam can also be found in a conference speech given October 8, 1854 (JD 1:50), clarifying somewhat his earlier statement. It is there implied that through a process known as divine investiture, God delegates his power to his children. Adam was the first on earth to receive this authority, which includes all essential keys, titles, and dominions possessed by the Father (D&C 84:38; cf. 88:107). Thus, he had conferred upon him all things that were necessary for the accomplishment of his manifold responsibilities, and Adam is a name-title signifying that he is the first man and father of all.

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ANCIENT SOURCES

Adam is portrayed in ancient Jewish and Christian sources as the first human and progenitor of the

race. Many apocryphal texts rework the Old Testament Adamic narrative and contain or reflect valuable ancient traditions. Some Latter-day Saints have profitably compared a few of these views with certain concepts about Adam given in Latter-day Saint sources.

In Judaism, Genesis 1–2 is used as a basis for understanding mankind’s relationship to God. Adam’s posterity inherited his fallen nature, yet Adam is regarded as the archetypal model for mankind—as indicated in texts that date back at least to Hellenistic times (second century B.C.) and is amplified in medieval Jewish philosophy. Philo, following a Platonic model, saw in the two creation narratives of Genesis a distinction between a heavenly or spiritual man, created first spiritually in the image of God (Gen. 1:27; cf. Moses 3:5), and a second, earthly man, formed out of the dust (Gen. 2:7). Most early Jewish exegetes accepted the historicity of the biblical account, though Genesis 2:8–3:24 was often interpreted allegorically. The Talmud and the Aggadah supplied rich details to the Adamic story, including an impressive description of how all future generations—and their PROPHETS—passed before Adam and were viewed by him (Sanh. 38b; Av. Zar. 5a; Gen. R. 24:2; cf. D&C 107:55–57). Adam was given the Noachian laws (Sanh. 56b) and the law of the SABBATH (Mid. Ps. to 92:6). He was the first man to offer sacrifice (Av. Zar. 8a; cf. Moses 5:5). The medieval cabalists added mystical interpretations as well, although Adam is never identified here as Michael, as in the Latter-day Saint scripture (see D&C 27:11; 107:54; 128:21).

Orthodox Christian theology, articulated during the second century by Irenaeus and others in response to the challenges posed by gnosticism, faithfully saw the Old Testament through the role of Christ. Early Christianity regarded the incarnation and ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST as the fulfillment of the work begun by Adam. While Adam was the prototype of the old, mortal man, Christ became the prototype of the new man, blessed with the promise of immortality. Jesus became the “second Adam,” whose atonement enabled mankind to overcome the effects of the Fall (1 Cor. 15:22, 45).

The creation story and the Adamic narrative in Genesis were especially important in gnosticism, which interpreted the Fall as the downfall of the divine principle into the material world. This contributed to gnosticism’s negative attitude to-

ward the physical creation. Several Gnostic writings deal with Adam. One of these, the *Apocalypse of Adam*, found at Nag Hammadi, is heavily dependent upon Jewish apocalyptic traditions and contains no explicit Christian doctrines. It purports to be a revelation given to Adam after the Fall by three heavenly messengers, explaining the nature and extent of the Fall and providing the promise of a future Redeemer. This knowledge is then passed by Adam to SETH and his descendants (cf. D&C 107:41–57).

The Life of Adam and Eve is a significant apocryphal work dealing with the life and death of Adam. It was probably written in Palestine between 100 B.C. and A.D. 200. It has been preserved in Greek, Latin, and Slavonic recensions, each considerably different from the others. This work describes Adam's and Eve's repentance after leaving the Garden of Eden at length (cf. Moses 6:50–68). No clear and central doctrine emerges, but the text stresses the ideas of final JUDGMENT and RESURRECTION. Other eschatological features are missing. It conveys no hint of the traditional doctrine of ORIGINAL SIN. Adam is perfect; EVE, weak but not wicked, deplors her own shortcomings while loving and obeying Adam.

A central feature of the *Cave of Treasures*, a Syriac work, is its story of a cave where Adam lived and was buried. His body was retrieved by Noah, who took it into the ark and afterward reinterred it on Golgotha. By this account, the redemptive blood of Jesus, also called the "last Adam," shed at the Crucifixion first flowed on the grave of Adam, demonstrating an inexorable link between the FALL OF ADAM and the atonement of Christ. Thus, in the *Gospel of Bartholomew* 1:22, Jesus says to Adam, "I was hung upon the cross for thee and for thy children's sake," and in 2 *Enoch* 42, Adam in Paradise is brought out "together with the ancestors . . . so that they may be filled with joy" and eternal riches.

Many ancient texts about Adam exist, notably the Ethiopic *Book of Adam and Eve*, and the Armenian books of *Death of Adam*, *History of Adam's Expulsion from Paradise*, *History of Cain and Abel*, *Adam's Sons*, and *Concerning the Good Tidings of Seth*.

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ADAM-GOD

See: Young, Brigham: Teachings of Brigham Young

ADAMIC LANGUAGE

The concept of the Adamic language grew among Latter-day Saints out of statements from scripture, comments of early Church leaders, and subsequent tradition. It does not play a central doctrinal role, and there is no official Church position delineating its nature or status.

The scriptures state that this language, written and spoken by ADAM and his children, was "pure and undefiled" (Moses 6:5–6). Brigham YOUNG taught that it continued from Adam to Babel, at which time the Lord "caused the people to forget their own mother tongue, . . . scatter[ing] them abroad upon the face of the whole earth," except possibly for Jared and his family in the Book of Mormon (*JD* 3:100; cf. Gen. 11:1–9; Mosiah 28:17). This statement reflects the widely held Mormon belief that the founding members of the JAREDITE civilization preserved the Adamic language at their immigration to the new world (Ether 1:33–43; 3:24–28). Thus, the description by the brother of Jared of his apocalyptic vision was rendered linguistically inaccessible without divine interpretive help, since "the language which ye shall write I [God] have confounded" (Ether 3:21–28).

In the early years of the Church, some words of the Adamic language may have been revealed to Joseph Smith (*JD* 2:342), and other early Church leaders, including Brigham Young (*HC* 1:297) and Elizabeth Ann Whitney (*Woman's Exponent* 7 [Nov. 1, 1878], p. 83), who were said to have spoken it in tongues. More recently President Ezra Taft BENSON alluded to its possible universal rein-