

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
Daniel H. Ludlow

*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



Copyright Brigham Young University, 1992.

Archived at Book of Mormon Central by Permission.

D



DAMNATION

“Damnation” is a term derived from the Latin *damnum*, meaning “injury” and “loss,” and often connotes deprivation of what should have been possessed. Just as there are varying degrees and types of SALVATION, coupled with ETERNAL PROGRESSION in some areas (D&C 76:96–98; 131:1–4), so are there varying degrees and types of damnation. In LDS doctrine, to be damned means to be stopped, blocked, or limited in one’s progress. Individuals are damned whenever they are prevented from reaching their full potential as children of God. Damnation is falling short of what one might have enjoyed if one had received and been faithful to the whole law of the gospel. In this sense, all who do not achieve the highest degree of the CELESTIAL KINGDOM are damned, even though they are saved in some degree of glory. They are damned in the sense that they will not enjoy an ETERNAL INCREASE or the continuation of the family unit in eternity (D&C 132:4, 19). In this context, damnation does not necessarily refer to eternal suffering in hell with the devil, for loss of blessings is in itself a type of hell and damnation. LDS perspectives on this subject include biblical scriptures enriched and clarified by additional revelation; hence, damnation has a wider application than may seem apparent in modern usage (*see* DEGREES OF GLORY; EXALTATION; HEIRS).

In the scriptures, damnation usually refers to the judgment or condemnation that will be pronounced by Jesus Christ on the wicked at the end of the world (Matt. 25:41–46). “Damnation” is an English equivalent of the Hebrew *rasha*, which implies being wicked, impious, ungodly, or guilty, and the Greek *krino*, which implies being put under condemnation. While the word “damnation” appears regularly in the King James Version of the Bible, (i.e., in the New Testament) it is not found in several modern versions, which use words like “doom” or “condemnation” instead.

Many Jews and Christians reject the idea of damnation as an outmoded theological concept, but some Orthodox Jews and conservative Christians hold to a belief in final and eternal damnation. Conservative Christians generally believe that God himself will condemn unrepentant sinners based on justice as merited by the recipients (Matt. 12:41–42; John 12:48; Rom. 3:8). They hold, further, that Christ, the Redeemer, came to save rather than to condemn (John 3:17) and that he alone frees the individual from final damnation (Rom. 8:1–2).

Damnation comes as the result of not believing in the gospel (Mark 16:16), of not accepting additional light and knowledge (Alma 12:9–11), of believing in false doctrines (2 Pet. 2:1), of being slothful and having to be commanded in all things (D&C 58:26–29), and of refusing to humble one-

self, repent, and live according to gospel principles. The Prophet Joseph SMITH explained, "God had decreed that all who will not obey His voice shall not escape the damnation of hell. What is the damnation of hell? To go with that society who have not obeyed His commands" (*TPJS*, p. 198; cf. pp. 322–23).

Damnation also results from partaking of the Lord's sacrament unworthily (1 Cor. 11:29), taking pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thes. 2:12), engaging in adulterous relationships (1 Tim. 5:11–12), rejecting the law of the Church (D&C 42:60), neglecting the covenant of eternal marriage (D&C 132:4), altering the holy word of God (Morm. 8:33), and rejecting Jesus Christ (D&C 49:5). If persons do these things and do not repent, they are left without the protection of the law of God and without the spiritual nourishment that they could have enjoyed, and as a result they suffer damnation.

Damnation is not to be equated with never-ending torment or punishment. An early revelation to Joseph Smith explains, "It is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written *endless torment*. Again, it is written *eternal damnation*; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men" (D&C 19:6–7; see also ENDLESS AND ETERNAL). President Brigham YOUNG explained, "We believe that all will be damned who do not receive the gospel of Jesus Christ; but we do not believe that they will go into a lake which burns with brimstone and fire, and suffer unnamed and unheard of torments, inflicted by cruel and malicious devils to all eternity. The sectarian doctrine of final rewards and punishments is as strange to me as their bodiless, partless, and passionless God. Every man will receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad. All men, excepting those who sin against the Holy Ghost, who shed innocent blood or who consent thereto, will be saved in some kingdom; for in my father's house, says Jesus, are many mansions" (*JD* 11:125–26).

Ultimate and total damnation comes only to the devil and his angels, who rebelled in the FIRST ESTATE, and to the SONS OF PERDITION, who are damned eternally and denied entrance into any kingdom of glory hereafter (D&C 76:32–34). The sons of perdition are those guilty of unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost (D&C 132:27; cf. Mark 3:29), which includes the willful denial of the

"Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame" (D&C 76:35).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kimball, Spencer W. "Marriage and Divorce." In *1976 Speeches of the Year*, p. 154. Provo, Utah, 1977.
- Lee, Harold B. "Spiritual Rebirth and Death." *IE* 50 (Nov. 1947):716, 752, 754.
- Stuy, Brian, ed. Discourse by George Q. Cannon. In *Collected Discourses*, 3 vols.; Vol. 2, pp. 64–76. Sandy, Utah, 1987–1989.

RICHARD NEITZEL HOLZAPFEL

DANCE

In 1830 when the Church was organized, many Christian denominations were hostile toward recreation and play, particularly dance. However, the Prophet Joseph SMITH and his successors advocated dance and participated in recreational dancing. Joseph Smith was a skillful dancer and enjoyed hosting dances in his home (Holbrook, p. 122). Brigham YOUNG and the Quorum of the Twelve "danced before the Lord" to the music of a small orchestra in the Nauvoo Temple after long days of joyous participation in temple ordinances (*HC* 7:557, 566; Holbrook, p. 123).

The revealed doctrine that the body and spirit together comprise the soul tends to encourage physical activity (D&C 88:15). Early Latter-day Saints commended dancing as healthful to body and mind, but only when conducted in accordance with Church principles. Emphasis was on propriety, good company, and the spirit of praising the Lord. During their difficult trek west, the pioneers danced as "camps of Israel." President Brigham Young said "I want you to sing and dance and forget your troubles. . . . Let's have some music and all of you dance" (Holbrook, p. 125). Around the campfires they danced polkas, Scotch reels, quadrilles, French fours, and other figures.

In the West, the Saints continued to enjoy dancing. Brigham Young emphasized that fiddling and dancing were not to be part of formal worship (Holbrook, p. 131), and he counseled that those who cannot serve God with a pure heart in the dance should not dance. Under these guidelines, dance continued as an integral part of Mormon culture.