

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
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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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and displayed and upon which a tone is struck on the hour each hour of the day. The bell had originally hung in the NAUVOO TEMPLE and was brought to Utah by oxteam in 1847.

Visitors may choose to walk through the grounds and visitors centers at their leisure or may request a guide to accompany them. Guides are familiar with the state's pioneer history as well as the teachings and culture of the Church. Foreign visitors are provided, when possible, with guides who speak their language.

At every season, the temple grounds are colorful. Long before spring, workmen are trimming, planting, and cultivating flowers, shrubs, and trees. Since 1969, the limbs of almost every tree have been wrapped in lights for the Christmas season. On the day after Thanksgiving, a special program inaugurates the celebration and the lights are turned on. They remain on until New Year's Day.

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TEMPTATION

"Temptation" and related terms in the Old Testament are translated from the Hebrew *nasah*, meaning "to try" or "to test." Such a test elicits responses demonstrating a person's disposition and will rather than abilities. In this sense God is said to "tempt" human beings. Thus did "God tempt" Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22:1). In Abraham's account of creation in the Pearl of Great Price, the Lord indicates that mortal experience constitutes such a test (Abr. 3:25). In other latter-day scriptures, temptation usually refers to the enticement of human beings into attitudes and actions that alienate them from God and jeopardize their salvation. The Lord taught people to shun this kind of temptation: "And lead us not into temptation" (Luke 11:4; cf. JST). Although in this kind of temptation the individual is usually enticed from without (whether by human or nonhuman agents), the scriptures make clear the individual's responsibility and accountability:

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death [James 1:13–16].

Latter-day Saints believe that though God does not tempt human beings to do evil, he does, for benevolent purposes, allow them to be tempted. If people were not confronted with opposing possibilities and inclinations, they would not be able to exercise their AGENCY, and, thus, their opportunity for moral and spiritual growth would be diminished. The prophet Lehi explained:

To bring about [God's] eternal purposes in the end of man, after he had created our first parents, . . . it must needs be that there was an opposition; even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter. Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other [2 Ne. 2:15–16].

Though confronting temptation is an essential and unavoidable element of mortal experience, God mercifully limits the extent to which people can be tempted. For example, he does not allow Satan or his hosts to tempt little children until they begin to be accountable (D&C 29:47), nor anyone beyond his or her capacity to endure (1 Cor. 10:13). During the Millennium, Satan and his angels will be bound so that they cannot tempt humankind (1 Ne. 22:26; 4 Ne. 1:15). Satan will be loosed for "a little season" following the Millennium, and will finally be banished with his angels as part of the final judgment (D&C 88:110–15).

Since God knew that all humans would yield in some degree to temptation and become sinners, he planned from the beginning and carried out through Jesus Christ an ATONEMENT whereby people can be forgiven of their SINS and obtain power to resist temptation in the future, when they accept and follow his gospel.

The language of temptation in the scriptures can also refer to the various trials that humans experience in mortality. While these trials may become stumbling blocks, they may also become opportunities for moral and spiritual growth. Regarding such temptations, James counsels,

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your

faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. . . . Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him [James 1:2–4, 12].

Sometimes the scriptures speak of people tempting God or of sinful human ways of responding or relating to God. People may “tempt God” by complaining against him or by challenging him in unbelief (cf. Ex. 17:1–7; 1 Cor. 10:9), by defying him in disobedience (Heb. 3:8), or by demanding signs or miracles from him for an unworthy motive, such as to exalt themselves or to satisfy their curiosity (Matt. 12:39). Compare also Satan’s temptations of Jesus in the wilderness and the Lord’s rebuke: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matt. 4:1–11).

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TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ten Commandments or “decatalogue,” literally “ten words” (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4), are usually understood to be the divine injunctions revealed to Moses and recorded in Exodus 20:1–17 and Deuteronomy 5:6–21. These basic standards of behavior, part of the COVENANT made on Sinai between the Lord and the children of ISRAEL, have relevance transcending the DISPENSATION OF MOSES, and have been quoted (Mosiah 12:34–35; 13:12–24) and elaborated throughout later scripture (Matt. 5:21–37; D&C 42:18–28; 59:6).

The Ten Commandments encapsulate the basic tenets of the Torah, or LAW OF MOSES. Refugees from Egyptian bondage, the Israelites agreed to keep the law (Ex. 19:8), and in return the Lord promised to make them “a peculiar treasure . . . a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:5–6). Moses, realizing that keeping this covenant was essential to Israel’s successful establishment in Canaan, used the decatalogue to remind his people of their covenant as they prepared to enter the PROMISED LAND (Deut. 5:6–21).

In response to the Israelites’ worship of the golden calf, Moses shattered the original tablets on which the commandments were engraved (Ex. 32:19). Though a second set was produced (Ex. 34:1), the JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE (JST) indicates that the accompanying law was diminished. The second law was “not . . . according to the first . . . [but] after the law of a carnal commandment” (JST Ex. 34:1–2; JST Deut. 10:1–2).

Each set was made up of two stone “tables of testimony” (Ex. 31:18), reflecting the two classes of instructions they contained. The first group, or “table,” consists of commandments dealing with the relationship between God and his children. They forbid the worship of other gods and of idols, the misuse of the Lord’s name, and the desecration of the SABBATH DAY. These are elaborated with explanations and consequences. The second table, written in short, direct statements, deals with relationships among God’s children, containing commands to honor parents, and not to kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness, or covet.

These standards have been known in all DISPENSATIONS (*MD*, p. 782), but in the form received by Moses they were an important influence on later scripture. In the Book of Mormon, ABINADI, in his defense before King Noah, quotes the entire decatalogue from Exodus (Mosiah 12:34–35; 13:12–24). Christ, who fulfills the law, expands upon the terse second table in the SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Matt. 5:21–37; 3 Ne. 12:21–37). He warns of attitudes that lead to misdeeds, forbidding not only adultery, but lust, not only killing, but anger. The second table is likewise expanded in latter-day REVELATION. The Doctrine and Covenants forbids stealing, adultery, killing, or “anything like unto it” (59:6), while D&C 42:18–28 details the consequences of such actions.

Finally, Christ not only expands upon applications of the commandments, but reduces the two principal focuses of the decatalogue to their essence. Each of the two great commandments, to love the Lord (Matt. 22:37; Deut. 6:5) and to love one’s neighbor (Matt. 22:39; Lev. 19:18; Rom. 13:9), encapsulates one of the two tables of the Ten Commandments.

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