

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
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of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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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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DAVID L. PAULSEN

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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BRUCE T. VERHAAREN

TERRESTRIAL KINGDOM

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches of three DEGREES OF GLORY or kingdoms of HEAVEN in the AFTERLIFE: the CELESTIAL KINGDOM, terrestrial kingdom, and TELESTIAL KINGDOM. Paul likened these kingdoms to the relative radiance of the sun, moon, and stars (1 Cor 15:40–41; cf. D&C 76:50–98). Further evidence of a heaven with multiple kingdoms is found in Jesus' statement, "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). On February 16, 1832, the Prophet Joseph SMITH and Sidney RIGDON saw in vision the three degrees of glory, identifying the glory of the terrestrial kingdom as typical "of the moon [which] differs from the sun in the firmament" (D&C 76:71).

The terrestrial glory is for those who lived honorable lives on the earth but "were blinded by the craftiness of men" and were "not valiant in the testimony of Jesus." Those who did not receive a TESTIMONY of Jesus while on earth, but who could have done so except for their neglect, are also heirs to the terrestrial kingdom (D&C 76:72–74, 79). They obtain not "the crown over the kingdom of our God" (D&C 76:79) and remain without EXALTATION in their saved condition (D&C 132:17). They "receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father," and their kingdom differs from the celestial "as the moon differs from the sun" (D&C 76:77–78).

[See also Degrees of Glory.]

SUSAN EASTON BLACK

TESTATOR

A testator is one who at death leaves a valid will or testament. In certain usages, the word is synonymous with witness. The term appears twice in scripture, retaining the strictly legal sense in Hebrews 9:16–17, where the death of Jesus Christ makes valid the new testament, or covenant. In Doctrine and Covenants 135:5–6, testator includes the additional connotation of "martyr" when referring to the deaths of the Prophet Joseph SMITH and his brother Hyrum. The outline of Joseph Smith's

accomplishments in verse 3 underscores why Latter-day Saints regard him as a valid testator.

ROBERT L. MARROTT

TESTIMONY

[Testimony is a generic term among Latter-day Saints for the assurance of the reality, truth, and goodness of God, of the teachings and atonement of Jesus Christ, and of the divine calling of latter-day prophets. It is the core of LDS religious experience. It reaches beyond secondhand assent, notional conviction, or strong belief. It is knowledge buttressed by divine personal confirmation by the Holy Ghost and is interrelated with authentic faith and trust in God as demonstrated by dedication and discipleship. Fundamental in the Church is the doctrine that "no man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy. Whenever salvation has been administered, it has been by testimony" (TPJS, p. 160).

Articles that relate to this theme and its connections with other aspects of Latter-day Saint spiritual life include Faith in Jesus Christ; Fast and Testimony Meeting; Inspiration; Knowledge; Light of Christ; Religious Experience; Revelation; Testimony Bearing; Testimony of Jesus Christ; Truth; and Witnesses, Law of.]

TESTIMONY BEARING

Testimony bearing among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a person's verbal expression of what he or she knows to be true concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ, the RESTORATION of the fulness of his gospel in our time, and the blessings that come from living its principles. By divine mandate, bearing testimony is to be done "in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things" (D&C 100:7). Latter-day Saints often bear testimony when teaching in Church services, when explaining gospel principles to members of other faiths, and in the FAST AND TESTIMONY MEETING, held monthly in each congregation.

Bearing testimony while teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ is pervasive in the Church and is based on two central beliefs. The first is that the primary responsibility of members is to "teach one another" (D&C 88:118) rather than to depend upon one formal teacher or minister only. The second is that the power that motivates individuals to live as Christ taught is the power of the HOLY GHOST, rather than the power of logic or the elo-