

“the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will” (Heb. 13:20–21).

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## HEIRS

[*This entry consists of two parts: Heirs of God and Joint-Heirs with Christ. The first part explains that by obedience to the commandments of God a person can become an heir of God. The second part emphasizes that the gospel of Jesus Christ also provides the way for one to become a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, and obtain the special inheritance of the Church of the Firstborn.*]

### HEIRS OF GOD

The doctrine of becoming an heir of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ was noted by Paul (Rom. 8:14–17; Gal. 3:26–29; 4:1–7; *see also* CALLING AND ELECTION; CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN). In this connection, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that all humans are spirit sons and daughters of God, with the potential of inheriting all that the Father has (D&C 84:33–38). Every member of the human family is a child of God. However, through obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, including having faith, love, charity, and participating in TEMPLE ORDINANCES and SEALINGS, men and women can become heirs of God in a special way. Such persons are called the “children of Christ, his sons and his daughters,” being “spiritually begotten” by him (Mosiah 5:7). They will be exalted in the CELESTIAL KINGDOM. Members of the Church make several COVENANTS with God, beginning with baptism and continuing through the temple ENDOWMENT and MARRIAGE, by which they promise to obey God’s commandments and to consecrate to him all that they possess in order to become heirs through Christ in the Father’s kingdom. Such may eventually be exalted

by God and be given many divine powers, including ETERNAL INCREASE.

Promises of inheritance are extended also to those who die without a knowledge of the gospel, for they shall have opportunity in the SPIRIT WORLD to hear the message of redemption, and have the essential ordinances of the gospel performed in their behalf in the temples of the Church.

[*See also* Salvation of the Dead.]

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### JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST

Joint-heirs with Christ identifies those persons who attain the highest degree of the CELESTIAL KINGDOM. Latter-day Saints regard Jesus Christ as the firstborn spirit child of God the Father and the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. Because of this priority, he is the natural heir of the Father. Through strict obedience to the Father’s will, progressing from grace to grace by obeying the gospel and its ORDINANCES and making the infinite ATONEMENT, Jesus became the Savior of all mankind and also heir to all that the Father has. Those who accept Jesus Christ as their redeemer, repent of their sins, obey the ordinances of the gospel, and live in willing obedience with the Holy Spirit as their guide, can also become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. In the eternities, they can inherit the same truth, power, wisdom, glory, and EXALTATION possessed by God the Father and by the Son (*see* D&C 84:38).

The scriptures set forth the Father’s plan of salvation for becoming joint-heirs with Christ. This includes taking the name of Christ upon oneself and living a Christlike life. Obeying the gospel means keeping the ordinances and ceremonies as well as living the moral law. Having started on the course of salvation, each individual is expected to continue to serve the Lord with a pure heart to the end of the mortal life. Through the GRACE of Jesus Christ and the blood that he shed, the willing and obedient are redeemed and sanctified.

All people are spirit children of God and recipients of his love, but only through accepting and living the gospel of Jesus Christ are individuals born again, spiritually begotten, and adopted into the family of God in a special relationship as the “sons and daughters” of Christ (Mosiah 5:7; Gal. 4:5–7; Rom. 8:14–17; *see also* BORN OF GOD; LAW

OF ADOPTION). Through the gospel, one becomes a joint-heir with Christ, a member of the CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN, and a partaker of the fulness of God's glory.

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## HELAMAN<sub>1</sub>

The first Helaman noted in the Book of Mormon (c. 130 B.C.) was one of the three sons of BENJAMIN, king of the NEPHITES and the people of Zarahemla. He is mentioned only once in connection with his father's efforts to educate him and his brothers, MOSIAH<sub>2</sub> and Helorum. Benjamin taught them both the language of their fathers and the prophecies spoken by their fathers, "that thereby they might become men of understanding" (Mosiah 1:2).

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## HELAMAN<sub>2</sub>

Helaman<sub>2</sub> (c. 100–57 B.C.) was a noted BOOK OF MORMON military commander and PROPHET. The eldest son of ALMA<sub>2</sub>, he was brother to Shiblon and Corianton (Alma 31:7) and father to HELAMAN<sub>3</sub>. He became a HIGH PRIEST (Alma 46:38) and was known for teaching REPENTANCE to his people.

While a young man, he remained behind during the mission of his father and brothers to the Zoramites (Alma 31:7), apparently to manage domestic and ecclesiastic affairs in Alma's absence. Later, his father gave him a special blessing, which is often quoted among Latter-day Saints, admonishing him to keep the commandments of God and promising that, if he did so, he would prosper in the land (Alma 36:30; 37:13). Helaman's father also instructed him to continue the record of his people and charged him with the sacred custody of the NEPHITE records, the plates of brass, the twenty-four plates of the JAREDITES, the interpreters, and the LIAHONA, that is, the divine compass that led LEHI's family to the new promised land in the western hemisphere (Alma 37:1–47). Before his father's death, Helaman recorded his father's prophecy concerning the final destruction of the Nephite people (45:9–14).

Although Helaman was known simply as one of "the high priests over the church" (Alma 46:6), apparently he was the chief priest because "Helaman and his brethren" (45:22–23; 46:1, 6; 62:45) or "Helaman and the high priests" (46:38) always performed the ecclesiastical functions; no other presiding high priest is named. When Helaman and his brothers attempted "to establish the church again in all the land" (45:22) after a protracted war with the LAMANITES (43–44), their action triggered civil unrest led by Amalickiah, which in turn embroiled the Nephites in one of their most devastating wars.

During Helaman's youth, a large number of Lamanite converts, called Ammonites (*see* BOOK OF MORMON PEOPLES), moved to the Nephite territory of Jershon (Alma 27). They swore an oath that they would never again take anyone's life (Alma 24:17–18). Later, when other Lamanites attacked their Nephite protectors, the Ammonites offered to break their oath in order to help the Nephite army defend their families and land. It was "Helaman and his brethren" who persuaded them not to break their covenant. They did welcome 2,060 Ammonite young men, who were not under their parents' oath, who volunteered to fight in the Nephite cause and chose Helaman to lead them (53:10–22). Accepting their invitation, he became both military leader and spiritual father, an observation found in Helaman's long letter to his commander MORONI<sub>1</sub> (Alma 56–58). While Helaman led these "stripling soldiers" (53:22) into many battles, none was killed, although all received wounds (56:56; 57:25; 58:39). These young men credited God with their protection and paid solemn tribute to their mothers who had trained them in faith (56:47). During Helaman's military campaign as leader of these young men, he won victory after victory, often capturing enemies without shedding blood. Exhibiting extraordinary ingenuity and character, he always acknowledged God's blessings in his successes (56:19; 57:35; 58:33).

After the war, Helaman returned home and spent his remaining years regulating the affairs of the Church, convincing "many people of their wickedness, which did cause them to repent of their sins and to be baptized unto the Lord their God" (Alma 62:45). An era of peace resulted from his final efforts. He died in 57 B.C.

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