

24:5) and become as wicked as Sodom and Gomorrah (Wilford Woodruff in Ludlow, p. 224) and as those of the time of Noah (*DS* 3:20), and that if Jesus “were here to-day, and should preach the same doctrine He did then, they would put Him to death” (*HC* 6:58).

This wickedness will result in wars of unprecedented destruction (George A. Smith, *CR*, Oct. 1946, p. 149), parents and children seeking each other’s lives (Mark 13:12; *HC* 3:391), great increases in crime (Wilford Woodruff in Ludlow, p. 228), the destruction of many cities (Brigham Young in Ludlow, p. 223), and a “desolating scourge” that will reach plague proportions (*D&C* 29:19).

As the end nears, the earth will be in commotion (*D&C* 45:26; cf. Joel 2:30–32). There will be severe lightnings and thunderings (*D&C* 87:6). The waves of the sea will heave themselves beyond their bounds (*D&C* 88:90). The earth will “reel to and fro as a drunken man” (*D&C* 49:23). A devastating hailstorm will destroy the crops of the earth (*D&C* 29:16), causing widespread famine (Brigham Young in Ludlow, p. 223). These judgments and wars will ultimately result in the “full end” of all nations (*D&C* 87:6).

Immediately preceding the Second Coming, unmistakable signs will appear in the heavens. The sun will be darkened, the moon will turn to blood, the stars will fall, and the powers of heaven will be shaken (*D&C* 45:42). In addition, the rainbow will be taken from the sky (*HC* 6:254). Finally, a great sign will be seen having the appearance of “seven golden lamps set in the heavens representing the various dispensations of God to man” (Wilford Woodruff in Ludlow, pp. 233–34). There will then be silence in heaven for half an hour, and “immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled” (*D&C* 88:95).

As the earth becomes increasingly full of violence and immorality, the righteous will be watching the signs of the times and will call upon the Lord and seek to be worthy to abide the day of his coming (Luke 21:36; Acts 2:21). These faithful disciples of the Lord will experience “very little compared with the terrible destruction, the misery and suffering that will overtake the world” (John Taylor in Ludlow, p. 225; Moses 7:61); moreover, the righteous who fall victim to pestilence and to disease will be saved in the kingdom of God (*HC* 4:11).

To escape these judgments, the faithful will obey the commandments (*DS* 3:33–35; Luke 21:36), honor the priesthood (Wilford Woodruff in Ludlow, pp. 235–36), take the Holy Spirit for their guide (*D&C* 45:57), and stand in holy places (*D&C* 45:32). As the polarization of the righteous and the wicked increases, the righteous followers of the Savior will be called “Zion” (both the condition of purity of heart and the community of the pure-hearted). A city, Zion (the **NEW JERUSALEM**), will be established on the American continent and, together with her outlying stakes, will be a place of refuge (*HC* 3:391). And old Jerusalem will become a holy city (Ether 13:5). From these two capital cities of the millennial era, Jesus Christ will personally rule the renewed, paradisiacal world (*see* **NEW JERUSALEM**).

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## LAST SUPPER

See: Sacrament

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## LATTER-DAY SAINTS (LDS)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*D&C* 115:4) sees itself as a **RESTORATION** of the original Church of Jesus Christ “of Former-day Saints.” Members of the Church in the time of Christ are often referred to as “saints.” Actually, the word “saint” predates Christ, and it is used thirty-six times in the Old Testament. It appears sixty-two times in the New Testament. The term “Christian” appears only three times in the New Testament, used by others to identify the followers of Christ. At the time of Christ and the Apostles, the term “saint” was accepted as a proper name for anyone who was a member of the Church, and was not used as a term of special sanctity as in earlier and later traditions. The phrase “latter days” designates the period leading to the **LAST DAYS** and the series of events that will culminate in the reappearance of Christ to all the world. By referring to themselves as Latter-day Saints, members of the Church reaffirm their historical tie to original

Christians (the Former-day Saints of the New Testament) but differentiate the two time periods. Also, they are striving to become sanctified through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

The name unites three themes: (1) the *restoration* theme, since the term has a New Testament origin; (2) the *preparation* theme, since the Saints in the latter days anticipate the coming of Christ; and (3) the *revelation* theme, since the name was received by revelation and recorded in Doctrine and Covenants, section 115.

It is interesting to some that the people of the DEAD SEA SCROLLS also called themselves Latter-day Saints. These individuals believed themselves tied to the PROPHETS and the COVENANT (hence the name Saint) and anticipated the imminent coming of the MESSIAH (hence the term Latter-day).

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## LAW

[Four different articles treat diverse aspects of LDS beliefs and experience with law. Two of the articles are grouped below:

### Overview

#### Divine and Eternal Law

*The Overview discusses the LDS concept of law in general and of divine and eternal law in particular. Divine and Eternal Law summarizes and describes the references in LDS scripture to the central role of law as pertaining to God.*

*The article Nature, Law of discusses the absence of a developed tradition of moral natural law among Latter-day Saints and describes their limited efforts to provide rational explanations for the laws of nature as described by the natural sciences. Constitutional Law summarizes the LDS respect for civil law in general and American constitutional law in particular.*

*The experience of Latter-day Saints and the Church in the courts is reported in Legal and Judicial History. Book of Mormon legal traditions and experience are described in Book of Mormon, Government and Legal History in. Regarding LDS views on specific aspects of civil*

*law, see also Church and State; Civic Duties; Civil Rights; Constitution of the United States of America; Freedom; and Politics: Political Teachings. For information on other law-related topics, see Justice and Mercy; Law of Moses; and Witnesses, Law of. Commandments and gospel principles are often referred to as "laws"; on these subjects, see such entries as Commandments; Consecration: Law of Consecration; and Obedience.]*

## OVERVIEW

Three types of laws exist: spiritual or divine laws, laws of nature, and civil laws. Latter-day Saints are deeply and consistently law-oriented, because laws, whether spiritual, physical, or civil, are rules defining existence and guiding action. Through the observance of laws, blessings and rewards are expected, and by the violation of laws, suffering, deprivation, and even punishment will result.

Basic LDS attitudes toward law and jurisprudence are shaped primarily by revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, and by explanations given by the Presidents of the Church. God is, by definition, a god of order: "Behold, mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion" (D&C 132:8). God and law are inseparable, for if there is no law, there is no sin; and if there is no sin, there is no righteousness, "and if these things are not there is no God" (2 Ne. 2:13). Law emanates from God through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the law, and the light" (3 Ne. 15:9), and God's word is his law (D&C 132:12).

In an 1832 revelation, Joseph SMITH learned that law is a pervasive manifestation of God's light and power: "The light which is in all things . . . is the law by which all things are governed" (D&C 88:12–13). In connection with both spiritual law and natural law, no space or relationship occurs in which law is nonexistent. "There are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; . . . and unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions" (D&C 88:37–38).

There are as many laws as there are kingdoms, which reflect greater or lesser light and truth. Some laws are higher, and some are lower. The kingdom of God operates in accordance with higher laws befitting God's exalted station, while the earth and all mortality and other kingdoms belong to lower spheres and therefore operate under different laws. The degree of glory that a person or thing can abide depends on how high a law he, she, or it is able to abide (D&C 88:22–25).