tially preserved through Nephi’s abridgment of it primarily in 1 Nephi 1-10.

In June 1828 Martin Harris asked Joseph Smith repeatedly to allow him to show the 116 pages to family members to allay their skepticism and criticism of the translation. After prayerful inquiry of the Lord, Joseph Smith twice emphatically denied these requests. As Joseph’s 1832 and 1839 histories indicate, a third request received divine permission for Harris to take the 116 manuscript pages to Palmyra, New York. The Prophet required Harris to solemnly covenant that he would show them only to his brother, his parents, his wife, and her sister.

Harris’s failure to return to Harmony as promised caused Joseph great anxiety and necessitated a strenuous journey to Manchester. There, a reluctant Harris reported that someone had stolen the manuscript from his home after he had broken his covenant and indiscriminately showed it to persons outside his family. Grief-stricken, Joseph Smith readily shared responsibility for the loss. The most widespread rumor was that Harris’ wife, irritated at having earlier been denied a glimpse of the ancient plates, had removed the manuscript translation from Martin’s unlocked bureau and burned it. Not long afterward, she and Martin separated.

In consequence of this loss and of having wavered the Lord with the requests to let Harris take the pages, Joseph temporarily lost custody of the plates and the urim and thummim to the angel Moroni (D&C 3). Lucy Mack Smith notes also that two-thirds of Harris’s crop was oddly destroyed by a dense fog, which she interpreted as a sign of God’s displeasure (Smith, p. 132). Following much humble and painful affliction of soul, Joseph Smith again received the plates as well as the Urim and Thummim and his gifts were restored.

Joseph Smith was forbidden by the Lord to retranslate that part of the record previously translated because those who had stolen the manuscript planned to publish it in an altered form to discredit his ability to translate accurately (D&C 10:9–13). Instead, he was to translate the Small Plates of Nephi (1 Nephi–Omni) down to that which he had translated (D&C 10:41). Those plates covered approximately the same period as had the lost manuscript, or four centuries from Lehi to Benjamin. Mormon had been so impressed with the choice prophecies and sayings contained in the small plates that he had included them with his own abridgment of Nephite writings when told to by

the Spirit for “a wise purpose” known only to the Lord (W of M 1:7).

The loss of the 116 pages taught Joseph Smith and his associates several lessons: that one should be satisfied with the first answers of the Lord, that keeping one’s covenants is a serious matter, that God forgives the repentant in spite of human weakness, and that through his caring foresight and wisdom the Lord fulfills his purposes.

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WILLIAM J. CRITCHLOW III

MARRIAGE

[This entry consists of two articles: The first article, Social and Behavioral Perspectives, is an overview of the concept of marriage patterns in LDS society; the second article, Eternal Marriage, focuses on distinctive marriage beliefs practiced by members of the LDS Church in their temples. One of the highest religious goals for Latter-day Saints, both male and female, is to be married eternally in an LDS temple and to strive continually to strengthen the bonds of love and righteousness in marriage. Civil marriages are recognized as lawful and beneficial, but they do not continue after death.]

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL PERSPECTIVES
Marriage is more than a matter of social convention or individual need fulfillment in Latter-day Saint society and lifestyle; it is central to the exaltation of the individual person: “If a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood, and . . . [they] abide in my covenant . . . [that marriage] shall be of full force when they are out of the world; . . . then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting” (D&C 132:19–20). Thus, Latter-day Saints consider it of utmost importance, “1. To marry the right person, in the right place, by the right authority; and 2. To keep the covenant made in
connection with this holy and perfect order of matrimony” (MD, p. 118).

Central to LDS theology is the belief that men and women existed as spirit offspring of heavenly parents in a PREMORTAL LIFE. Latter-day Saints view life on earth as a time to prepare to meet God (Alma 12:24) and strive toward becoming like him (Matt. 5:48; 3 Ne. 12:48). Becoming like God is dependent to a large extent on entering into “celes
tial marriage” for “time and all eternity,” for eventually all exalted beings shall have entered into this highest PATRIARCHAL ORDER OF THE PRIESTHOOD. Latter-day Saints believe that the marital and family bond can continue in the post-earth life, and indeed is necessary for ETERNAL LIFE, or life in the CELESTIAL KINGDOM with GOD THE FATHER; MOTHER IN HEAVEN; JESUS CHRIST, and other glorified beings.

Given these doctrines, LDS marriages are distinct and different in several aspects from marriages in other denominations, and marriages of faithful Latter-day Saints differ from those of less observant Church members. Research on LDS marriages shows distinctions in four areas: sexual attitudes and behavior, marriage formation, divorce, and gender roles within the marriage.

SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR. Because of the importance of the marital bond and family relationships in both this life and the life to come, pre
marital or extramarital sexual relations are viewed as totally unacceptable. The power of procreation is vital to the entire PLAN OF SALVATION. It is held sacred, to be used “only as the Lord has directed”; as such it is viewed as the “very key” to happiness (Packer, “Why Stay Morally Clean,” Ensign [July 1972]:113). Studies conducted through the 1970s and 1980s consistently showed that Latter-day Saints have more restrictive attitudes about and are less likely to have participated in premarital sexual intercourse than members of other religious denominations. Active Latter-day Saints also have more conservative attitudes about and are less likely to have engaged in premarital sexual intercourse than those who are less active in the Church (see SEXUALITY).

A recent sampling of U.S. households showed Mormons to be significantly less approving of teenagers having sex or of premarital cohabitation than non-Mormons (Heaton et al., 1989). Another study, of over 2,000 adolescents in public high schools in the western United States, showed that 17 percent of the Latter-day Saints had had premarital intercourse, compared to 45 percent of the Catholics, 51 percent of those with no religious af
filation, and 67 percent of the Protestants (Heaton, 1988). The difference continues when Church activity is taken into account and active Latter-day Saints are compared to inactive ones. The attitudes and behavior of inactive Mormons are more similar to those of other faiths (religiously active or inactive) than to active Latter-day Saints (Heaton, 1988).

Latter-day Saint attitudes about sex in marriage and frequency of sexual intercourse in marriage are similar to those in other faiths. Although no data exist on the frequency of extramarital sexuality, Latter-day Saints in general are less approving of extramarital sex than other American populations (Heaton et al., 1989).

MARITAL FORMATION. Members of the Church in the United States and Canada are more likely to marry and remarry than Catholics, conservative Protestants, liberal Protestants, or those with no religious affiliation (Heaton and Goodman, 1985). One study of Canadians indicates that Catholic

Catholics are three times as likely, Protestants twice as likely, and those without a religious affiliation four times as likely as Latter-day Saints not to have married by age thirty (Heaton, 1988). The most recent national U.S. data show LDS more likely to be currently married and less likely to have never married than other similarly situated Americans (Heaton et al., 1989). Furthermore, the same data show that LDS men marry about one and one-half years earlier than their non-Mormon counterparts, but LDS females marry at about the same age as other females.

Although the findings are not conclusive, it appears that less active Mormons (those not marrying in a TEMPLE) marry at younger ages than those marrying in a temple (Thomas, 1983). Some of this difference may be accounted for by the number of active Latter-day Saint males serving MISSIONS during these early years. Most unmarried young LDS men who go on missions serve from about age nineteen until twenty-one.

Given the necessity of marrying another Latter-day Saint in a temple to achieve the greatest happiness in this life and exaltation in the highest level of the celestial kingdom hereafter, one would expect that Mormons in general, and active Latter-
day Saints in particular, would have lower rates of
interfaith marriages than members of other faiths or those with no affiliation. What little research has been done on LDS interfaith marriages tends to be based on small, localized samples. It appears, however, that in general (1) Mormon females are more likely to marry outside the Church than are Mormon males; (2) active Mormons are less likely to marry non-Mormons than are less active Mormons; and (3) non-Mormon spouses (especially non-Mormon husbands) are more likely to convert to the Church than Mormons are to convert to a non-Mormon spouse’s faith (Barlow, 1977).

DIVORCE. Based on research done in the 1970s and early 1980s, it has been concluded that Latter-day Saints are less likely to divorce than Catholics and Protestants and are far less likely than those with no religious affiliation. A study comparing Mormons in the United States and Canada with Protestants, Catholics, and those with no religious affiliation found that 14 percent of the Mormon men and 19 percent of the women had divorced. Comparable figures among the other groups were 20 percent and 23 percent for Catholic males and females; 24 percent and 31 percent for liberal Protestant males and females; 28 percent and 31 percent for conservative Protestant males and females; and 39 percent for males and 45 percent for females with no religious affiliation (Heaton and Goodman, 1985).

Latter-day Saints married in a temple ceremony are considerably less likely to divorce than those married outside the temple (Thomas, 1983). Among men and women who were married in the temple, 6 percent of the men and 7 percent of the women have been divorced, while among men and women not married in the temple the figures were 28 percent and 33 percent, respectively (Heaton, 1988).

GENDER ROLES. “God established that fathers are to preside in the home. Fathers are to provide, to love, to teach, and to direct. But a mother’s role is also God-ordained. Mothers are to conceive, to bear, to nourish, to love, and to train. So declare the revelations” (Benson, p. 2). This statement, made by Church President Ezra Taft Benson, exemplifies the LDS teaching that men and women have different—but closely intertwined and mutually supporting—roles in the marital and family setting. Research bears out this distinctive emphasis. Mormon males and females tend to be more conservative and traditional in their gender role attitudes and behavior than members of other faiths (Brinkerhoff and MacKie, 1988; Heaton, 1988; Heaton et al., 1989). LDS males spend about the same amount of time performing household tasks as non-Mormon males, but Mormon females spend significantly more time at such tasks than non-Mormon females. LDS females spend more time performing not only traditional female tasks, but also traditional male tasks (e.g., outdoor tasks, paying bills, and auto maintenance) than do female non-Mormons. These differences in both attitudes and behavior are not viewed negatively by either LDS men or women. They are as likely to be satisfied with their marriages and their roles in marriage as their non-Mormon counterparts (Heaton et al., 1989).

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THOMAS B. HOLMAN

ETERNAL MARRIAGE

The principle of eternal marriage and the ordinances implementing it constitute a very distinctive and valuable part of the Church. It involves a ceremony performed in a holy temple by an officiant endowed with the priesthood authority to invoke covenants intended to be efficacious for time and eternity. This is a sacred and simple ceremony to unite husband and wife in the bonds of everlasting love and in the hopes of eter-
nity. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that such a marriage involves “an eternal principle ordained before the foundation of the world and instituted on this earth before death came into it” (Smith, p. 251), for Adam and Eve were given in marriage to each other by God in the Garden of Eden before the Fall (Gen. 2:22–25; Moses 3:22–25). This sacred act of marriage was the crowning act of all creation: “In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him: Male and Female created he them; and blessed them” (Gen. 5:1–2). With his blessing they truly could set the pattern for their descendants thereafter who two by two, a man and a woman, could leave father and mother, cleave to each other, and “be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Thus began the great plan of God for the happiness of all his children.

Latter-day Saints believe that life is more secure and more joyous when it is experienced in the sacred relationships of the eternal family. Those who maintain such worthy relationships on earth will live as families in the celestial kingdom following the resurrection. Thus, a person who lives a righteous life in mortality and who has entered into an eternal marriage may look forward to an association in the postmortal world with a worthy spouse, and with those who were earthly children, fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters. Bruce R. McConkie, an apostle, explained that an eternal family starts with “a husband and a wife, united in a family unit. It then goes out to our children—the spirits that God gives us to be members of our family—to our grandchildren and so on, to the latest generation. It also reaches back to our parents and our grandparents to the earliest generation” (p. 82). President Brigham Young said that eternal marriage “is the thread which runs from the beginning to the end of the holy Gospel of Salvation—of the Gospel of the Son of God; it is from eternity to eternity” (Discourses of Brigham Young, John A. Widtsoe, ed., Salt Lake City, 1971, p. 195).

Even as marriage marks an apex in God’s creative processes, so, too, it is for each person the sacred culmination of the covenants and ordinances of the priesthood of God and, indeed, is truly a new and everlasting covenant (D&C 131:2). Eternal marriage is a covenant, a sacred promise that a wife and a husband make with each other and with God, attested to by both mortal witnesses and heavenly angels. Under proper conditions such marriages are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, and the couple, through their faithfulness, can eventually inherit exaltation and glory in the celestial kingdom of God (D&C 132:19). The scriptures confirm that eternal marriage, performed by the authority of the priesthood, sealed or affirmed by the Holy Ghost, and sustained by a righteous life, “shall be of full force” after death (D&C 132:19; cf. 1 Cor. 11:11). The phrase “until death do you part” is regarded as a tragic one that predicts the ultimate dissolution of the marriage, and this phase is not stated in the temple marriage ceremony.

The sacred ceremony of temple marriage is conducted in reverence and simplicity, and the occasion is a beautiful and joyous one for Latter-day Saints. The bride and the groom meet with family and friends in a designated sealing room of the temple. The officiator typically greets the couple with a few words of welcome, counsel, and fatherly commendations. He may admonish the couple to treat each other throughout life with the same love and kindness that they feel at this moment, and may add other words of encouragement, with his blessing upon their righteous undertaking. The couple is invited to come forward and kneel facing each other across an altar in the middle of the room. The sealer sometimes directs the attention of all present to the mirrors on opposite walls, reflecting endlessly the images of the couple at the altar, and he may comment on the symbol-
ism. Then the sealer pronounces the simple words of the ceremony, which promise, on condition of obedience, lasting bonds with the potential for eternal joy between these two sealed for eternity. President Ezra Taft Benson said, “Faithfulness to the marriage covenant brings the fullest joy here and glorious rewards hereafter” (pp. 533–34). At the conclusion of the ceremony, the couple kiss over the altar and may then arise and leave the altar to exchange rings.

Through this ordinance of eternal marriage, men and women commit themselves in pure love to remain true to each other and to God through all eternity. Divorce is discouraged, and couples are taught to confine their intimate affections and sexuality solely to each other. To undertake and honor the covenants of temple marriage require living in ways that contribute to happy and successful family life. A couple’s future may include conflicts and even divorce, which when it occurs is often a result of violating temple covenants; but the divorce rate among couples who have been sealed in a temple is very low (see divorce; Vital Statistics).

Eternal marriage is, of course, not just for the blessing, happiness, or benefit of the spouses. It is an act of service, commitment, and love that blesses the next generation. God commanded Adam and Eve to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28). A primary purpose of temple marriage in this life is to grow and mature in sharing God’s creative work in raising a family in righteousness. Parents enter into a partnership with God by participating in the procreation of mortal bodies, which house the spirit children of God. At some future time all the worthy sons and daughters of God will be reunited with their Heavenly Parents as one eternal extended family in a state of resurrected glory.

People who live a worthy life but do not marry in the temples, for various reasons beyond their control, which might include not marrying, not having heard the gospel, or not having a temple available so that the marriage could be sealed for eternity, will at some time be given this opportunity (see Baptism for the Dead; Salvation of the Dead; Sealing). Latter-day Saints believe it is their privilege and duty to perform these sacred ordinances vicariously for deceased progenitors, and for others insofar as possible. Most of the sealing ordinances (temple marriage ceremonies) performed for the deceased are for couples who were married by civil authority in mortality but died without hearing the fullness of the gospel. In this program of vicarious service, men and women meet by appointment in the temple where they stand as proxies for parents, grandparents, or others who have passed into the next world and make the solemn covenants that will reach fruition for all who accept them in the spirit world, to culminate in the day of Resurrection.

All leaders of the Church encourage couples to initiate their marriage vows in a holy temple. For those who do not, whether converts to the Church, LDS couples coming to devotion to the Church in later life, or young LDS couples who have married outside the temple and then felt the desire for eternal covenants, temple marriage is a renewal of vows first spoken in a civil marriage ceremony. For those commitments to be honored through eternity, couples must be married by an officiant having the power to bind on earth and in heaven (Matt. 16:19; D&C 124:93). Thus, they must go to a temple, where there are those ordained and appointed to the power to seal covenants for time and eternity.

For Latter-day Saints, eternal marriage is an avenue to everlasting joy. Matthew Cowley, an apostle, expressed his conviction that it is “a wonderful thing . . . to kneel at an altar in the temple of God, clasping the hand of one who is to be your companion not only for time, but also for all eternity, and then to have born into that sacred and eternal covenant children for eternity. God is love. Love is eternal. Marriage is the sweetest and most sacred expression of love, therefore, marriage is eternal” (Cowley, p. 444).

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JAMES T. DUKE