

including Zedekiah's women, headed for Egypt, fearful of Chaldean reprisals (2 Kgs. 25; Jer. 41–43).

Mulek might have been away when the city fell; perhaps he eluded his captors at Jericho; the women could have hidden him (as Jehoshiba hid her nephew Joash of the royal line earlier [see 2 Kgs. 11:2–4]); he may even have been unborn, although he probably avoided captivity some other way. But nothing in the Bible or other known sources precludes the possibility of his escape from Jerusalem.

Concerning Mulek's existence, the Bible offers important evidence. Mulek is a nickname derived from *melek* (Hebrew, king), a diminutive term of endearment meaning "little king." Its longer form occurs in the Bible as *Malkiyahu* (in English, Malchiah), meaning "Jehovah is king." Malchiah is identified as "the son of Hammelech" in Jeremiah 38:6. But Hammelech is a translator's error, since *ben-hammelek* means "son of the king" and is not a proper name—a fact confirmed by the Septuagint (LXX Jer. 45:6). A fictive paternity thus obscures the lineage of Malchiah as the actual son of Zedekiah. It is also known that names ending in *-yahu* (in English, *-iah*) were common during the late First Temple period, that Zedekiah indeed had a son named Malkiyahu (Aharoni, p. 22), and that the familial forms of *yahu*-names were shorter than their "full" forms. The study of a seal owned by Jeremiah's scribe shows that his full name was Berekyahu (in English, Berechiah), although the biblical text uses only the shorter Baruch (Avigad). This is consistent with viewing the hypocoristic Mulek as the diminutive of Malkiyahu, since *a* is often assimilated to *o* or *u* in the vocalic structure of most Semitic languages. It is therefore possible that the Mulek of the Book of Mormon is "Malchiah, son of the king" mentioned in Jeremiah 38:6.

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## MURDER

Murder is condemned in latter-day scripture just as it is in the TEN COMMANDMENTS and numerous other passages in both the Old and the New Testament. The Doctrine and Covenants declares that "thou shalt not kill" (D&C 42:18). The murderer "shall not have forgiveness in this world, nor in the world to come" (D&C 42:18).

In LDS doctrine, murder is second in seriousness only to the UNPARDONABLE SIN of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And even that sin involves a kind of murderous treachery in that one who previously had obtained an absolute witness of Jesus' divinity (*TPJS*, p. 358) in effect "crucifies [Christ]" afresh or "assent[s] unto [his] death" (D&C 76:35; 132:27). Thus, murder can be thought of as the archetypal sin, as in the sin of Cain (Gen. 4:6–11, and esp. Moses 5:18–26, 31).

Murder violates the sanctity of life and cuts off the ability of its victims to "work out their destiny" (Benson, p. 355). Moreover, because "man cannot restore life," and restoration or restitution is a necessary step for REPENTANCE, obtaining forgiveness for murder is impossible (Kimball, 1969, p. 129; D&C 42:18–19). Murder wrenches all lives connected to the victim, and ultimately the perpetrator of this crime suffers even more than the victims. "For Cain suffered far more than did Abel, and murder is far more serious to him who commits it than to him who suffers from it" (Kimball, 1982, p. 188).

Secular punishment for killing is to be proved and "dealt with according to the laws of the land" (D&C 42:79). Those who have been convicted of, or have confessed to, homicide cannot be baptized without clearance from the FIRST PRESIDENCY, and excommunication of members guilty of murder is mandatory. Joseph Fielding SMITH, as an apostle, indicated that vicarious temple work should not be done for deceased murderers (*DS* 2:192).

The Church defines "murder" as the deliberate and unjustified taking of human life. If death is caused by carelessness or by defense of self or others, or if overriding mitigating circumstances prevail (such as deficient mental capacity or state of war), the taking of a human life may be regarded as something other than murder. In making the assessment of a member's guilt or innocence of murder, Church leaders are encouraged to be responsive to inspiration and to submit the facts of the

case to the office of the First Presidency for review. In the final analysis, only God, who can discern the thoughts of the heart, can judge whether a particular killing is an unforgivable murder or not.

The Church's concern about murder is both more fundamental and broader than that found in legal definitions. Legal categories of homicide, such as manslaughter or negligent homicide (which typically involve carelessness or mitigating factors), are not necessarily murder, whereas killings involving extremely reckless conduct or "felony murder" may be.

The Church also leaves open the possibility that under some unusual circumstances, standard justifications for killing that would normally relieve the individual from responsibility for murder, such as self-defense or defense of others, may not apply automatically. Wartime military service is considered a mitigating factor, not a justification for indiscriminate killing, thus suggesting that even in warfare one's conduct is measured and weighed by God and is not a matter of license (*MFP* 6:157–61). Only the Lord has the power to give life or to authorize it to be taken. Both the Bible and the Book of Mormon depict situations in which God has commanded the taking of life to accomplish his purposes. Goliath (1 Sam. 17:46–51), the king of Bashan (Deut. 3:3), and Laban (1 Ne. 4:10–18) were slain by servants of God after having been delivered into their hands by the Lord.

A person convicted of murder by a lawful government may be subject to the death penalty. The Church generally has not objected to CAPITAL PUNISHMENT legally and justly administered. Indeed, scriptural records both ancient and modern condone such punishment (Gen. 9:5–6; Ex. 21:12, 23; 2 Ne. 9:35; Alma 1:13–14; D&C 42:19).

With respect to related offenses, the Church distinguishes ABORTION from murder but holds it an extremely grave action, not to be done except in extremely limited circumstances that might include incest or rape, perils to the life or health of the mother, or severe birth defects. As far as has currently been revealed, a person may repent and be forgiven for the sin of abortion.

SUICIDE is regarded as self-murder and a grievous sin if committed by someone in full possession of his or her mental faculties. Because it is possible that a person who takes his or her own life may not be responsible for that action, only God can judge such a matter.

A person who participates in euthanasia—the deliberate, intentional putting to death of a person suffering from incurable conditions or diseases—violates the commandments of God. There is a difference between *allowing* a terminally ill person to die of natural causes and the *initiating* of action that causes someone's death. The application or denial of life-support systems must be decided reverently, usually by competent and responsible family members through prayer and the consultation of competent medical authorities. It is not wrong to ask the Lord, if it be his will, to shorten the physical suffering of a person whose afflictions are terminal and irreversible.

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## MUSEUMS, LDS

On April 4, 1984, the Museum of Church History and Art in SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, was dedicated, culminating over 140 years of effort to erect a building specifically to house LDS Church museum exhibits. Collections of art, artifacts, sculpture, photographs, documents, furniture, tools, clothing, handwork, architectural elements, and portraits represent past and present LDS cultures from around the world unified by a common theology.

One of the first museum references in Church history is from Addison Pratt, who on May 24, 1843, donated "the tooth of a whale, coral, and other curiosities" he had obtained in Polynesia as a young sailor, "as the beginning for a museum in Nauvoo" (*HC* 5:406). On April 7, 1848, paintings by Philo Dibble depicting the MARTYRDOM of Joseph and Hyrum SMITH and Joseph's last address to the NAUVOO LEGION were exhibited to the Brethren in the log tabernacle, Pottawattamie County, Iowa. Dibble was asked to paint scenes from this time in the history of the Church and