

kidney.) In the case of some organs, such as the cornea of the eye, the donated organ usually comes from one who signs a statement indicating a desire to donate organs upon death. In the event of an accident or untimely death, the donor's eyes may then be used with the consent of the family.

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## ORIGINAL SIN

While The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that the transgression of ADAM and EVE brought death into the world and made all mortals subject to temptation, suffering, and weakness, it denies that any culpability is automatically transmitted to Adam and Eve's offspring. All mortals commit sin, but they will be punished "for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression" (A of F 2).

**IN OTHER FAITHS.** The doctrine of original sin as taught traditionally states that, due to the FALL OF ADAM, infants are born tainted with actual SIN, resulting in the "privation of sanctifying grace"; this dogma "does not attribute to the children of Adam any properly so-called responsibility for the act of their father," nor is it a voluntary sin "in the strict sense of the word," yet it is a "real sin" (S. Harent, "Original Sin," in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1911 ed., Vol. 11, p. 315). All people, according to this doctrine, except the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, inherit an actual, existing personal guilt (*see* IMMACULATE CONCEPTION). A corollary of this belief is the doctrine of INFANT BAPTISM, holding that infants are to be baptized to remove this sin because those who die without baptism remain unsanctified and forever excluded from heaven and the presence of God.

The doctrine of original sin derives from an interpretation given to the writings of Paul, particularly Romans 5:12-21, by some theologians of the second and third centuries. More than any other, Augustine in the fifth century transformed Paul's teachings on the Fall into the doctrine of original sin. His views were adopted as doctrine and formally canonized by the decrees of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. According to this

view, Adam's sin is considered "original" because it arose with the "origin" of man.

Protestantism largely accepts this doctrine. John Calvin stated: "We believe that all the posterity of Adam is in bondage to original sin, which is a hereditary evil" (R. Reed, *The Gospel as Taught by Calvin* [Grand Rapids, Mich., 1979], p. 33). Protestant views emphasize the inherited nature of the sin, reflecting the German word for "original sin," *Erbsunde* (literally "inherited sin"). Rabbinic Judaism teaches of two inclinations, one evil and one good; and some Jews consider "circumcision as a means of escaping damnation" (Samuel Cohon, *Essays in Jewish Theology* [Cincinnati, Ohio, 1987], p. 265).

**IN LDS DOCTRINE.** Latter-day Saints believe that infants inherit certain effects of the Fall, but not the responsibility for any sin as a result of Adam's or Eve's transgression. From the foundation of the world, the atonement of Jesus Christ makes amends "for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam" (Mosiah 3:11). Therefore, baptism is not needed until children reach a state of accountability, generally at the age of eight years, for little children cannot sin and are innocent (*see* CHILDREN: SALVATION OF CHILDREN). They are redeemed from the beginning by the grace of Jesus Christ (D&C 29:46-47), whose atonement cleanses them of the effects of the Fall (D&C 137:10). The Prophet Mormon wrote the following words of Christ: "Little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them" (Moro. 8:8).

In one account in the Pearl of Great Price, Adam learned that he had been forgiven for his transgression in the Garden of Eden, and that "the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children" (Moses 6:54). However, as a consequence of the Fall, evil is present in the world and all "children are conceived in sin, [and] so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good" (Moses 6:55). Begetting children in marriage is not a sin (cf. Heb. 13:4), but the propensity for sin is inherited.

No mortal person bears the burden of repenting for Adam's transgression. Nevertheless, all inherit the effects of the Fall: All leave the presence of God at birth, all are subject to physical death,

and all will sin in some measure. From the moment of conception, the body inherits the seed of mortality that will eventually result in death, but only as a person becomes accountable and chooses evil over good do personal sins result in further separation from God. Thus Adam was counseled: "Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there" (Moses 5:57).

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## ORIGIN OF MAN

The view of the "origin of man" in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints differs significantly from that in most other modern traditions. Its prime concern is to affirm that humans were created as SPIRITS by and in the image of God, which determined their form and nature long before they became earthly organisms. Questions about what biological or cultural mechanisms might have produced *Homo sapiens* and over what period of time that often dominate secular discussions are of limited interest for Latter-day Saints.

The clearest presentation of the Church position may be a 1909 statement by the FIRST PRESIDENCY entitled "The Origin of Man," where four essential points are made: (1) God created humans (Gen. 1:27–28); (2) God created ADAM, "the origin of the human family" and "the first man"; (3) CREATION was sequential: first spiritual, later physical; and (4) each human body displays the characteristics of the individual premortal SPIRIT that inhabits it. Other ideas included in the statement are that humanity was not "a development from the lower orders of creation" but a "fall" from a higher state of existence; that an understanding of all the details about the origin of man is not vital to one's salvation, although the matter is related to several important truths; that the subject cannot be fully clarified by human learning alone; and that only certain relevant facts are now known, to which the Church adheres.

Subsequent official statements indicate that the details of how Adam became "the first man" are considered not to have been revealed clearly enough to settle questions of process. Emphasized instead is an eternal perspective wherein the individual as an "undeveloped offspring of celestial parentage is capable, by experience through ages and aeons, of evolving into a God" (IE 28:1091).

Since the rise of Darwinism in 1860, individual Latter-day Saints, both leaders and members, have occasionally participated in public discussion about EVOLUTION, since the official position of the Church on man's origin is not definitive in all respects. Mormons have expressed a wide range of views that are reminiscent of the well-known debates among Christians. Since a large number of Latter-day Saints entered careers in science early in this century, some have attempted to reconcile scientific facts and ideas with statements from the scriptures and prophetic leaders that are emphasized in the LDS tradition. Others have argued that in this area science merely offers "theories of men" and should therefore be discounted.

Many sympathetic to science interpret certain statements in LDS scripture to mean that God used a version of evolution to prepare BODIES and environmental surroundings suitable for the premortal spirits. For example, one scriptural description of creation says, "the Gods *organized the earth to bring forth . . . every thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind*" (Abr. 4:25 [emphasis added]). Certain statements of various GENERAL AUTHORITIES are also used by proponents of this idea to justify their opinions.

Other Latter-day Saints accept a more literal reading of scriptural passages that suggest to them an abrupt creation. Proponents of this view also support their positions with statements from scripture and General Authorities (*see* EARTH).

While the current state of revealed truth on the LDS doctrine of man's origin may permit some differences of opinion concerning the relationship of science and religion, it clearly affirms that God created man, that the FALL OF ADAM was foreknown of God and was real and significant, and that the ATONEMENT of Christ was foreordained and necessary to reverse the effects of the Fall. Perhaps because these claims embrace the main doctrinal issues relevant to the condition of man, the description of the actual creation process does not receive much attention from the general membership of the Church or from the authorities.