

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.

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**ORTHODOXY, HETERODOXY,  
HERESY**

Concepts of orthodoxy, heterodoxy, and heresy are found in virtually all religious traditions. This is also the case among Latter-day Saints, but with important distinctions that arise from the emphasis placed on individual agency, accountability, behavior, and growth.

The traditional terms "orthodoxy," "heterodoxy," and "heresy" are used rarely by Latter-day Saints. Moreover, in words like "orthodoxy" and "heresy" the stress is on religious belief rather than on religious practice. In the determination of an individual's standing within the LDS tradition, emphasis is placed more on what a member says or does than on what he or she believes. Thus, the terms "orthodoxy," "heterodoxy," and "heresy," in a traditional sense, are less significant to Latter-day Saints.

In general, the word "orthodoxy," which derives from the Greek *orthos*, "straight" or "right," and *doxa*, "opinion" or "belief," means adhering to what is commonly accepted, customary, or traditional. The term "heterodoxy" means not being in agreement with accepted teachings or holding beliefs that go contrary to established norms. The word "heresy," from the Greek *hairesis*, initially was a value-free term based on the word meaning "to choose" or "to act with purposive effort." This term came to mean any school, movement, or religious system of belief that was freely chosen. By the second century A.D., however, "heresy" was used in a strictly negative sense, referring to the doctrine of those who publicly dissented from or denied any of the established teachings of the tradition to which they belonged. The dissenter was thus a "heretic."

The traditional Christian concept of "church" (*ekklesia*) excluded the concept of private "choice" (*hairesis*). Religious groups characteristically identify certain beliefs and practices that they view as being primary or foundational. On that basis they establish criteria for determining what is deemed acceptable belief and behavior for their adherents, often appealing to an established canon of scripture, to recognized sources of authority, and to the requirements of an organized ecclesiastical structure. How these criteria are interpreted and implemented determines the extent to which deviant belief or practice is allowed or tolerated.

Instead, the Church admonishes its members to use their agency to do all they can to accept and live all the teachings and principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Moro. 10:32–33), knowing that they will eventually be held accountable for their choices and, for those who have lived worthily, lay claim to the promises made to them when they entered into covenants with God. Each member, at any given time, may be at any stage in this process. Each is encouraged to grow closer to the Heavenly Father and to emulate the Savior in thought and action. Members are urged to expand their knowledge of truth, grace upon grace, line upon line, and precept upon precept. Provided one continues in this effort, relying on the means of repentance that lead from baptism to eternal life, no rigid conceptual checkpoints or belief requirements are imposed to challenge a person's membership in the Church.

Distinctions arise, however, when worthiness to teach, to preach, to hold office, or to participate in temple worship comes into question. The more a person may influence others by virtue of his or her Church assignments or activities, the greater is the concern about worthiness to serve. In these instances, members are asked if they follow certain basic Church tenets (*see* INTERVIEWS; TEMPLE RECOMMEND). These include, among others, having faith in God the Father and in his Son Jesus Christ, believing in the fundamental concepts set forth in the ARTICLES OF FAITH, acknowledging Joseph SMITH as a prophet of God, and sustaining the current President of the Church, the GENERAL AUTHORITIES, and local Church leaders. They also are asked if they abide by certain prescribed patterns of conduct (*see* PRAYER; RIGHTEOUSNESS; CHASTITY; WORD OF WISDOM; TITHING; FAMILY; CALLINGS; ACTIVITY IN THE CHURCH). The goal is that each Latter-day Saint will obtain a personal