these assemblies are usually PRIESTHOOD leaders. Sometimes in such assemblies the sacrament is served, but traditionally the main function is for those assembled to receive counsel from the presiding Church authorities.

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RICHARD E. TURLEY, JR.

SON OF GOD
See: Jesus Christ: Names and Titles of

SONS OF PERDITION
In LDS scripture Lucifer and Cain are called Perdition, meaning “destruction” (D&C 76:26; Moses 5:24). The unembodied SPIRITS who supported Lucifer in the WAR IN HEAVEN and were cast out (Moses 4:1–4) and mortals who commit the UNPARDONABLE SIN against the HOLY GHOST will inherit the same condition as Lucifer and Cain, and thus are called “sons of perdition.”

Perdition is both a place and a spiritual condition. As a place, it is synonymous with that HELL to which both unembodied and resurrected sons of perdition will be consigned following the last JUDGMENT (2 Ne. 28:23; D&C 29:38; TPJS, p. 361). This future kingdom of the devil will be devoid of any of the Spirit and glory of God. (D&C 88:24).

The spiritual condition of those in this realm is described metaphorically as a lake of unquenchable fire and brimstone and as “a worm [that] dieth not” (Jacob 6:10; D&C 76:44). They will be “vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God” (D&C 76:33). God’s wrath will originate within them when they contrast his holiness and majesty with their own filthiness and ignominy (2 Ne. 9:14; Alma 12:14–17; Morm. 9:4–5; TPJS, p. 361). The Prophet Joseph SMITH explained, “A man is his own tormentor and his own condemnner. . . . The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone” (TPJS, p. 357). Fire and brimstone characterize the person, not the place.

The awful realization that they are truly damned, have lost all favor with God, have rejected all that he represents, and have lost the opportunity for repentance will be compounded by their subjection to Lucifer and Cain, who are consumed with like misery and frustration (2 Ne. 2:27; Moses 1:22). Such is the ultimate ‘damnation of hell’ (TPJS, p. 198; see DAMNATION).

Perdition is the second death: total banishment not only from God’s literal presence but also from the influence of his Spirit (2 Ne. 9:15–16; Hel. 14:18; D&C 88:32). Those who sin against the Holy Ghost commit the unpardonable sin and will suffer the fulness of the second death (Alma 39:6; Hel. 14:16–19). All others will be saved eventually in one of the DEGREES OF GLORY (D&C 76:40–43; JD 8:154).

Sons of perdition are not merely wicked; they are incorrigibly evil. In sinning against the revelations of the Holy Ghost, they have sinned against the greater light and knowledge of God. They wilfully and utterly pervert principles of RIGHTEOUSNESS and truth with which they were once endowed, and transform them into principles of evil and deception. Joseph Smith declared, “You cannot save such persons; you cannot bring them to repentance” (TPJS, p. 356). No divine principle can cleanse the sons of perdition; following the last judgment, they will remain “filthy still” (D&C 29:44; 88:35). It is revealed that “it had been better for them never to have been born” (D&C 76:32).

Those who become sons of perdition while in mortality will be resurrected with unglorified physical bodies and “rise to the damnation of their own filthiness” (TPJS, p. 361). Cain, thus resurrected, will then rule over the unembodied Lucifer (Moses 5:23; MD, p. 109).

It has been suggested that in the absence of the life-sustaining powers of God’s Spirit, sons of perdition will eventually become disorganized and return to “native element” (JD 1:349–52; 5:271; 7:358–59). However, scripture declares that “the soul can never die” (Alma 12:20) and that in the Resurrection the spirit and the body are united “never to be divided” (Alma 11:45; cf. 12:18; D&C 93:33). The ultimate fate of sons of perdition will be made known only to those who are partakers thereof and will not be definitely revealed until the

Few individuals have been identified as sons of perdition. Although Judas is often so regarded, there is a question whether he had received the Holy Ghost sufficiently to sin against it at the time of his betrayal of Christ (John 17:12; Smith, pp. 433–34).

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RODNEY TURNER

SOUL

In Latter-day Saint terminology “soul” is used in various ways, with diverse connotations found throughout the scriptures and in other Church writings. However, the word also has a precise definition given in latter-day revelation: the soul is the united entity of the spirit with the physical body (D&C 85:15–16). This concept is enhanced by an understanding of (1) the creation of humankind as a uniting of the spirit body and the physical body (Gen. 2:7; Moses 3:7; Abr. 5:7); (2) the knowledge that God himself is embodied (D&C 130:22); and (3) the doctrine that all mortals will ultimately undergo a literal resurrection of the physical body (Alma 40:17–23; 41:2; 2 Ne. 9:13). Only in this resurrected and permanently united form can a soul receive a fulness of joy (D&C 93:33–34; cf. D&C 138:17). The glory with which the soul arises in the resurrection is related to the glory, form, and qualities of the resurrected body (1 Cor. 15:40–45; D&C 88:28).

“Soul” in a generic sense, however, means a person. This was common usage in the nineteenth century and earlier (i.e., Gen. 17:14 and Mosiah 18:28) as it is today. “Soul” is sometimes synonymous with “the whole self,” or what might be described as one’s “being” or “essence.” Scriptural passages speak of “enlarging” the soul (Alma 32:28; D&C 121:42) and of imploring others with all the “energy” of one’s soul (Alma 5:43). The word occasionally also appears as a metaphor implying “strength” (D&C 30:11; 31:5) or “heart” (2 Ne. 26:7, 10–11). “Soul” often is likewise used to refer to a person’s intimate feelings or desires, as when one pours out one’s “whole soul” (Enos 1:9; Mosiah 26:14) or when one is commanded to love God with “all thy soul” (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30–33; Luke 10:27). Other connotations are suggested by the word when it describes an entire community (Num. 21:4; 1 Sam. 30:6; Acts 4:32).

“Soul” is often used where the term “spirit” might also apply (1 Ne. 19:7; 2 Ne. 1:22; D&C 101:37). Here the soul is essentially that aspect of all human beings which persists independent of the physical body (Matt. 10:28; 1 Ne. 15:31; Mosiah 2:38; Alma 40:11). In LDS doctrine the soul, in this sense, exists both before and after mortal life, and is truly eternal (Abr. 3:22–23; see also intelligences).

Consistent with the idea that all spirits (or souls) existed prior to their mortal life, LDS doctrine holds that all vegetable and animal life was created spiritually before the physical creation (Moses 3:5; cf. Gen. 2:5). In this sense, every living thing (plant, animal, human) is spoken of as having a soul (Moses 3:9, 19).

The human soul is innately endowed with an agency that should be honored and guarded as sacred and eternal (D&C 134:4). The soul (spirit), being eternal, cannot be fully destroyed but can suffer a type of destruction or spiritual death through sins that result in total and ultimate estrangement from God (1 Ne. 14:3; Alma 12:16–18; 36:30:47; 42:9, 16). Scripture teaches that all human souls are children of God and are of infinite worth (Matt. 16:26; Alma 39:17; D&C 18:10–16). God has great joy in a repentant soul, and there is no more important work than the saving of souls and bringing them to God (D&C 18:10–16; 15:6; 16:6).

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SOUTH AMERICA, THE CHURCH IN

This entry consists of three articles:

Brazil
South America, North
South America, South

The first article discusses the establishment, growth, and development of the Church in Brazil. The second article covers the same points in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela; and the third article covers Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.