this consequence of choosing could be overridden or ignored, men and women would not determine their own destiny by their choices and agency would be void.

The captivity resulting from sin is also called "the bondage of sin" (D&C 84:49–51). Sin sets up dispositions in the sinner that empower Satan to control the sinner's thoughts and behavior by means of temptation. As this happens, the individual still possesses agency in name, but his capacity to exercise it is abridged. In this sense, to misuse one's agency is to lose that agency: "Evil, when listened to, begins to rule and overrule the spirit [that] God has placed within man" (B. Young, JD 6:332). Conversely, using agency to receive and obey the influence of the spirit of Christ liberates one from this bondage. Thus, though agency, in the sense of the capacity to choose life or death, is a kind of freedom, it differs in quality from the liberty that is inherent in obedience to Christ. Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). When King Benjamin's people in the Book of Mormon received a Remission of Sins and were spiritually born again, they attested that their affections and desires had been so changed that they had "no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). Obedience expands agency, and the alternative to obedience is bondage.

Thus, in the LDS concept of agency, obedience and agency are not antithetical. On the one hand, Church leaders consistently stand against all coercion of conscience ("We are not disposed, had we the power, to deprive anyone of exercising . . . free independence of mind" [TPJS, p. 49]) and counsel Church members to depend first of all on themselves for decisions about the application of gospel principles. On the other hand, obedience—willing and energetic submission to the will of God even at personal sacrifice—is a central gospel tenet. Far from contradicting freedom, obedience is its highest expression. "But in rendering . . . strict obedience, are we made slaves? No, it is the only way on the face of the earth for you and me to become free. . . . The man who yields strict obedience to the requirements of Heaven, acts upon the volition of his own will and exercises his freedom" (B. Young, JD 18:246).

Church leaders consistently call agency a gift of God. Sin abridges the agency of sinners to the point that unless some power releases them from this bondage, they will be "lost and fallen" (Mosiah 16:4). That power is Christ's atonement, which overcomes the effects of sin, not arbitrarily, but on condition of wholehearted repentance. "Because . . . they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever . . . to act for themselves" (2 Ne. 2:26). Thus, human agency was purchased with the price of Christ's suffering. This means that to those who blame God for allowing human suffering, Latter-day Saints can respond that suffering is less important than the gift of agency, upon which everything else depends, and that none of us has paid a greater price for this gift than Christ.

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AGRAPHA

See: Jesus Christ, Sources for Words of

AGRICULTURE

The Latter-day Saints were pioneers in developing techniques and institutions of irrigated agriculture and dry farming in the Far West, probably because of a particular juxtaposition of modern attitudes toward farming and farm life, skills gained in early industrial Britain and the United States, and the pressing need to increase production on Utah's hardscrabble farms.

Most American-born Latter-day Saints, even if trained in a trade, had some experience with farming in more humid areas before moving into the desert wilderness in 1847. They were joined by a major influx of converts from the British Isles, most from the industrialized regions of England and Wales and therefore with little farming experience. In Utah, virtually all the pioneers had to become farmers to survive. Until the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, they had to
Mormon pioneers displayed ingenuity and industry as they brought the valleys of the Intermountain West under irrigation. This style of hay derrick (c. 1900 on Blue Creek Ranch, near Brigham City, Utah), introduced into the area by Danish converts, became widely known as the “Mormon hay derrick.”

raise enough food for themselves and for the immigrants who would arrive too late to grow anything. Finding Utah’s annual rainfall insufficient to raise most crops, they had to irrigate the crops with water diverted from canyon streams. Also, only a small amount of land was situated so that canals could be built above the fields to irrigate the crops below. All of these circumstances—and the LDS ethic of community action—combined to shape the role of Mormons in the agricultural history of the United States.

Unlike many traditional farmers, the Latter-day Saints had a modern view of their lands and farming. Land was necessary for making a living, but it was not imbued with mystical qualities that gave superior virtue, independence, or permanence to farm life. President Brigham Young, himself a craftsman, supported manufacturing and artisan crafts as well as farming and did not impute moral superiority to one over the others. Farming for the Saints was not “a way of life” but a way of making a living, and this attitude freed them from undue reverence for traditional farming practices and from any reluctance to leave the land to take up ranching, manufacturing, trade, professions, and other pursuits that might assure a better standard of living. Moreover, the paucity of irrigable land kept most farms small, limiting production to barely more than a household subsistence level, in spite of a willingness, even eagerness, to engage in commercial agriculture.

The need to irrigate crops impelled LDS farmers to become innovators in western irrigation. Paradoxically, the high number of people previously skilled in manufacturing may have helped them to do so. The artisan-farmers applied the hydraulic engineering techniques they had learned in factories and workshops powered by water to the task of bringing water to fields. Necessity forced them to do so quickly, if sometimes clumsily. But they demonstrated that irrigated agriculture on a regional scale was possible.

A whole set of cooperative management techniques for building and maintaining dams and canal systems, distributing water to individual farmers, and applying it to the fields evolved into a
model for later settlers in the arid West. It was appropriate that the first National Irrigation Congress be held in Salt Lake City in 1891, for many considered Utah a model of what was being accomplished in the West through irrigation. Ordinary farmers from Utah, skilled in irrigation techniques, have been well represented among those who have opened land in Canada and in federally sponsored irrigation projects in Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, California, Oregon, and Washington, spreading both their farming techniques and their faith throughout the West.

The urgent need to maximize production on Utah’s small farms led many Latter-day Saints to study scientific agriculture. Perhaps chief among them was John A. Widtsoe, later an apostle, who, after a Harvard education in physical chemistry, concentrated on expanding agricultural production. Directing the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, he encouraged studies on soils, climate, fertilizers, and soil-working techniques, which led to publication of his Principles of Irrigation Practice (1914). He directed dry-farming experiments for nonirrigable lands, which culminated in Dry Farming: A System of Agriculture for Countries Under a Low Rainfall (1910).

Other Latter-day Saints who improved farming practices were Edgar B. Brossard in the economics of farm production; William M. Jardine (secretary of agriculture under President Calvin Coolidge) in agronomy; Phillip V. Cardon (administrator of the Agricultural Research Administration and director general of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization) in forage crops and diseases; Franklin S. Harris in agronomy and sugar beet culture; Lowry Nelson in rural sociology; Thomas L. Martin in agronomy; and Willard Gardner in soil physics.

Church President Ezra Taft Benson (secretary of agriculture under President Dwight D. Eisenhower) devoted much of his life to founding farmer cooperatives. The Ezra Taft Benson Agriculture and Food Institute at Brigham Young University (1975) fosters cooperative agricultural techniques in developing countries.

Latter-day Saints continue as individuals and under Church auspices to work at improving crop yields throughout the world and applying cooperative principles to improving the standard of living in developing regions. Since the early 1970s some Latter-day Saints have been called by the Church as “additional assignment” missionaries to encourage practical self-help programs and better farming techniques in regions of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Gordon Wagner, a Latter-day Saint with a doctorate in economics from Cornell, worked on his own during the 1970s and 1980s to apply LDS cooperative principles to agricultural development problems in impoverished regions of Africa.

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DEAN L. MAY

AHMAN

Ahman is twice mentioned as one of the names of God in the Doctrine and Covenants. In each instance, Jesus Christ is called Son Ahman, suggesting Son God and son of Ahman (D&C 78:20; 95:17). Orson Pratt, an apostle, suggested that this was one of the names of God in the pure language (JD 2:342; cf. Zeph. 3:9; see ADAMIC LANGUAGE).

Ahman is also an element of the place-name ADAM-ONDIAHMAN, Missouri, where the Lord visited ADAM and “administered comfort” to him and where Adam prophesied concerning “whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation” (D&C 107:53–57; cf. D&C 78:15–16). Adam lived in the region of Adam-ondi-Ahman (D&C 117:8), and PROPHECY anticipates a future visit of Adam at this place (D&C 116:1; cf. Dan. 7:13).

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EDWARD J. BRANDT

AIDS

The first presidency statement on AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) released May 27, 1988, admonishes Church members to become informed about AIDS and to avoid all ac-