

often dwelt on the issues of his plural marriages and his status in the AFTERLIFE.

While the scriptures relate different stories of his introduction at Saul's court (1 Sam. 16:14–23; 17:55–58), David's vault from obscurity to national awareness seems to have come as a result of his courageous defeat of the giant Goliath (1 Sam. 17:49).

David's strength and reliance on the Lord marked him as an exceptional leader and the epitome of Israelite heroism (2 Sam. 5:1–3; 22:2–51). Subsequent rulers were measured against his stature (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:3–5, 11), and his name was linked with that of the awaited MESSIAH (Mark 12:35; Luke 1:32; Rom. 1:3). Scripture indicates that David's blessings, including his wives, were given to him as a result of God's favor (2 Sam. 5:12–13; 12:8; D&C 132:39).

But when David also acquired wives and concubines, apparently under his own authority, he was condemned by God (Jacob 2:23–24). Certainly David lost divine approval as a result of his adulterous union with Bathsheba and the subsequent contrived murder of her husband, Uriah (2 Sam. 12:1–12; D&C 132:38–39).

Because of David's transgressions, his eternal blessings were taken from him (*TPJS*, pp. 188–89). The Lord granted David a continuation of life for another twenty-one years, perhaps because of his immediate and deep remorse (cf. Ps. 51), his acts of repentance, and his continued faithfulness to JEHOVAH (2 Sam. 12:13, 16; cf. *WJS*, p. 335). However, he must await in the SPIRIT PRISON the redemption promised to him (Acts 2:34; *WJS*, p. 74). Even with the assurance of the Lord's ultimate mercy (Ps. 86:13), David lost much that God had given him on earth, he fell "from his exaltation" and his wives were given unto another" (D&C 132:39). Yet his personal integrity appears in his insistence that he be punished in place of his people, whom he saw in vision being destroyed (2 Sam. 24:15–17).

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DAVID, PROPHETIC FIGURE OF LAST DAYS

King David (c. 1000 B.C.) remains today one of the most renowned Old Testament figures. His personality, spiritual sensitivity, creative abilities, military victories, and leadership carried him to the pinnacle of popularity. He had the potential to become an ideal king, but his kingship deteriorated after his adultery with Bathsheba and his involvement in Uriah's death. However, prophecy states that a model ruler in the last days will be "raised up" from David's lineage.

The Prophet Joseph SMITH taught that "the throne and kingdom of David is to be taken from him and given to another by the name of David in the last days, raised up out of his lineage" (*TPJS*, p. 339). Elder Orson Hyde, in his dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives, October 24, 1841, prophesied that the Jews would return to Jerusalem and that in time a leader called David, "even a descendant from the loins of ancient David, [would] be their king" (*HC* 4:457).

This predicted figure corresponds to a promised messianic servant. Hosea, speaking shortly before the loss of northern Israel, foretold that Israelites would return in the latter days "and seek the LORD their God, and David their king" (Hosea 3:5). JEREMIAH prophesied of Israel and Judah's future righteousness, and of "David their king, whom I [the LORD] will raise up unto them" (Jer. 30:9; cf. 23:5; 33:15–22). And in Ezekiel it is written, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them" (Ezek. 34:23–24; cf. also 44:1–3).

Speaking to Joseph Smith, the angel MORONI₂ cited Old Testament passages telling of significant figures who would be involved with Christ's millennial reign (JS—H 1:40). As prophesied in Isaiah, it appears that two persons are spoken of, a "rod" and a "root" (11:1, 10)—one a leader "on whom there is laid much power," the other a person with special priesthood keys (D&C 113:3–6). These leaders are believed by some to be among the "messianic figures" spoken of in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in rabbinic literature (*Encyclopedia Judaica*, 11: 1409–1411).

Although noble attributes and spiritual pow-

ers characterize such messianic servants, Jesus Christ exemplifies these qualities perfectly (D&C 113:1–2). Jesus is the exemplar prophet, priest, and king. He identified himself as the PROPHET “like unto Moses” (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22–23; 3 Ne. 20:23) and was a HIGH PRIEST after the order of MELCHIZEDEK (Heb. 5:9–10; 7:15–22). Jesus is King of Kings (Rev. 19:16), greater than all other leaders of all time. Some see in Jesus Christ the complete fulfillment of the prophecy of a future David. Others feel that, while the titles and functions of the future Davidic king apply to Jesus, there will also be another righteous king by the name of David in the last days, a leader from the loins of Jesse (and thus of Judah).

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DEACON, AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

Twelve-year-old LDS males usually receive the AARONIC PRIESTHOOD and are ordained deacons, continuing in that PRIESTHOOD OFFICE until age fourteen. Deacons receive assignments from their BISHOPS that may include distributing the SACRAMENT to the congregation, serving as messengers, collecting FAST OFFERINGS, providing assistance to the elderly or disabled, and caring for the meetinghouse and grounds.

Although the exact role of deacons (from the Greek *diakonos*, or “servant”) in the Christian church of the New Testament is not known, tradition indicates that they were ordained to their positions and were ranked below bishops and elders. Their duties apparently involved collecting and distributing alms and waiting on tables. Also, relatively early in the Catholic tradition, deacons may have assisted in the administration of communion and taken the sacrament to the homes of those who could not attend church. They also maintained church properties and read the gospel lection in Eucharist assembly. While closely associated with bishops in their service at the sacrament table, deacons were younger and were understood to be in schooling for greater service upon reaching maturity (Shepherd, Vol. 1, pp. 785–86).

The office of deacon was introduced by Joseph Smith at least as early as the Church conference held on June 9, 1830 (D&C 20:39). Some deacons may have been ordained at the organizational

meeting on April 6, 1830 (HC 1:79), but the records are not specific.

Latter-day scriptures provide that teachers and deacons are “to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59) and are to edify one another (D&C 20:85). Deacons may be ordained by any elder or priest at the direction of the local bishop, contingent on a worthiness interview and the sustaining vote of the congregation (D&C 20:39, 48).

Deacons are organized into quorums of twelve or fewer members, with one called as president, two as counselors, and another as secretary (*see* PRIESTHOOD QUORUMS). The BISHOPRIC assigns an adult adviser to teach and help train the quorum members to emulate the example of Jesus Christ in word and deed and helps prepare them for ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood and for missionary service.

Church-sponsored Boy Scout troops provide the major activity program for deacons in the United States and Canada, and give them important learning and leadership experiences (*see* SCOUTING).

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DEAD SEA SCROLLS

[*This entry has two parts:*

- Overview
- LDS Perspective.]

OVERVIEW

The major corpus of the Dead Sea scrolls, about 600 manuscripts, dates from c. 250 B.C.E. to 68 C.E. Other works from the Southern Jordan Rift, Nahal Hever and Nahal Seelim chiefly, date from 131 to 135 C.E. Masada produced materials from the first century B.C. to A.D. 73.