

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).

VICTOR L. LUDLOW

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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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RONALD L. BRAMBLE

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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.