barred women from the temple and from the temple city of Jerusalem. Such Essene doctrines are opposite to later Christian and LDS teachings. Similarities between Essennism and Christian or LDS concepts should therefore be explained as a dispersion of ideas among groups that share ancient connections rather than as evidences of more intrinsic relationships.

Much is still to be learned from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Many fragments and some scrolls remain unpublished or are not yet fully understood. Much light may yet be shed on ancient Jewish worship patterns, apocalyptic literature, angelology, and sectarianism beyond what is available in biblical accounts.

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ROBERT A. CLOWARD

**DEAF, MATERIALS FOR THE**

The Church makes a serious effort to serve the hearing impaired with gospel materials in formats they can understand. These formats include simplified versions, signed inserts (interpreters superimposed on film who sign conversations and sounds), closed captions (words that show on the screen only when decoded), printed signs, productions with all-deaf casts, and Church manuals translated into signing for the deaf on videocassettes. Each Church film is signed or closed-captioned. All satellite broadcasts and special programs are closed-captioned. To use closed-captioned videos requires a decoder, which the Church provides to units serving the hearing impaired.

All general conference sessions are signed and closed-captioned. The deaf and hearing impaired who attend general conference in SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, are invited to the Church Office’s auditorium to view the proceedings with an interpreter. Those who do not attend in person may participate via closed captions on the Church’s satellite network at their local meetinghouses. The sessions are also recorded on videos, with sign language inserts, and made available on loan. TEMPLE ORDINANCES are also presented in formats understandable by the hearing impaired.

A handbook for interpreters and a dictionary of words and phrases peculiar to the Church are available in print and on videocassettes. The Book of Mormon is being translated into American Sign Language (ASL) on videocassette targeted for completion in 1994. A current list of all materials, including their costs and how to order, is available on request from the Special Curriculum Department of the Church.

In a meetinghouse serving the hearing impaired, the Church provides a Com Tek System which amplifies the spoken language. The Church participates in supplying TTY/TDDs (telecommunication devices) for the deaf and hearing-impaired members to carry on Church functions.

DOUGLAS L. HIND

**DEATH AND DYING**

At death, the spirit and body separate and “the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life” (Alma 40:11; cf. Eccl. 12:7). ALMA 40 describes how the spirits of the righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow” (Alma 40:12; see PARADISE; SPIRIT WORLD). In contrast, the wicked, who “chose evil works rather than good,” suffer fear of the wrath of God (Alma 40:13; see SPIRIT PRISON). Both those who reside in paradise and those in the spirit prison await the RESURRECTION and the judgment of God (see JUDGMENT DAY, FINAL).

**RESURRECTION FROM DEATH.** Through the atonement of Christ, all mortals will be resurrected irrespective of personal righteousness. Their spirits will have their PHYSICAL BODIES restored to them, and thus there will be a permanent unity of the spirit with an immortal, incorruptible body (John 5:28–29; Alma 11:42–43). Except for the resurrection of Christ, “this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother
earth, to rise no more,” and the spirits of men would have become devils, subject to Satan for eternity (2 Ne. 9:7–9).

NATURE OF DEATH. The scriptures teach that death does not change one’s personality (Alma 34:34). Individual identities are eternal (D&C 18:10; 93:29). Thus all those who have been obedient to God’s commandments in any time of the world can look forward to reunions with loved ones and associations with ancestors and descendants. Latter-day Saints believe that death need not terminate personal awareness or interpersonal relationships. For the righteous, family ties can continue beyond death because of sealings in the temple. Thus, family members who have received the gospel in mortality conduct family history research and perform necessary vicarious ordinances in the temple for deceased family members (see Temple Ordinances). Many Latter-day Saints feel a closeness to ancestors from generations past because they have studied their lives, and some have served as proxies for them in temple ordinances (see Moses 6:45–46). Grieving parents know that children who die before reaching the age of accountability, and others such as the mentally disabled, receive eternal love and salvation through the grace of Christ and are restored to a completeness to continue in familial relationships (Moro. 8:17, 22; D&C 137:10).

Nevertheless, Latter-day Saints do not embrace death willingly, nor do they seek it (see prolonging life). Suicide is condemned but judgment of it is left with the Lord (Ballard, pp. 6–9). Abortion also is considered a serious sin under most circumstances and can cause much sorrow.

The best preparation for death is to repent and live righteously. Those who feel that their lives are in jeopardy with sickness may receive blessings from the elders of the Church, who, holding the priesthood of God, “shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name; and if they die they shall die unto me, and if they live they shall live unto me” (D&C 42:44; see also sick blessing the). Those who face extreme suffering in a terminal illness may call upon the Lord for comfort or relief from pain, and rely upon him to prolong or shorten their days upon the earth. To allow a person who is terminally ill to pass away, rather than maintaining a vegetative existence through artificial systems of support, is not the spiritual equivalent of failing to save the life of a person facing death under other circumstances. The Lord is, however, the ultimate giver and taker of life.

To Latter-day Saints, as to all people, death can be tragic, unexpected, or even a blessed release from suffering. The loss of loved ones is an occasion for mourning. However, in LDS doctrine, death is also an occasion for hope, a birth into the next life, a step in the plan of salvation that began in the premortal existence and leads, if one is righteous, to eternal life with God in the celestial kingdom. The grieving of the faithful is appropriately marked by sorrow and hope, not despair and depression. Yet the loss of a loved one is to be taken neither lightly nor coldly. Grief and love are compatible—if not essential—emotions of the faithful. And Latter-day Saints who face death themselves, while experiencing uncertainty and concern for those left behind, can find hope in the plan of salvation and the Lord’s promise that “those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them” (D&C 42:46).

DEATH OF INFANTS. Joseph and Emma Smith struggled with personal losses, including the death of several of their children. Joseph wrote: “I have meditated upon the subject, and asked the question, why it is that infants, innocent children, are taken away from us, especially those that seem to be the most intelligent and interesting. The strongest reasons that present themselves to my mind are these: . . . they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth . . . [but] we shall soon have them again” (TPJS, pp. 196–97).

DEATH OF YOUTH. Joseph Smith commented on the untimely death of youth at the funeral of young Ephraim Marks: “[This occasion] calls to mind the death of my oldest brother, Alvin, who died in New York, and my youngest brother, Don Carlos Smith, who died in Nauvoo. It has been hard for me to live on earth and see these young men upon whom we have leaned for support and comfort taken from us in the midst of their youth. Yes, it has been hard to be reconciled to these things . . . Yet I know we ought to be still and know it is of God” (TPJS, p. 215). The Prophet also found great comfort in the gospel’s affirmation of the relationship of mortality to eternity: “We have reason to have the greatest hope and consolations for our dead of any people on the earth; for we have seen them walk worthily in our midst, and seen them
sink asleep in the arms of Jesus; and those who have died in the faith are now in the celestial kingdom of God” (TPJS, p. 359).

Mourning not only is appropriate; it is also one of the deepest expressions of pure love: “Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die” (D&C 42:45). Alma 1:1 taught that as part of the baptismal covenant the saints are “to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:9). Mourning can heighten our faith and our hopes. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “The expectation of seeing my friends in the morning of the resurrection cheers my soul and makes me hear up against the evils of life. It is like their taking a long journey, and on their return we meet them with increased joy” (TPJS, p. 296).

FUNEALs. LDS FUNEALs are solemn and grieving occasions but also project a spirit of hope based on anticipation of reunion with the deceased after this life. They are usually held in an LDS chapel or a mortuary under the direction of the bishop of the ward (Packer, p. 18). Funeals open and close with sacred music and prayer, sometimes involving congregational singing or a choir (Packer, p. 19). Some LDS hymns describe life after death as a return to the presence of God (Hymns, p. 292), or as a condition of rest from mortal cares, and often include a reminder of the trials of mortality as temporary: “And should we die before our journey’s through, happy day, all is well. We then are free from toil and sorrow too; with the saints we shall dwell” (Hymns, p. 30).

The funeral includes reminiscences and eulogies as well as talks about the atonement, the Resurrection, life after death, and related doctrines that comfort and inspire the bereaved. Some families choose to have members or friends of the family talk about the life of the deceased or sing an appropriate hymn. A prayer on behalf of the family by one of its members before the public service begins is customary.

GRAVESIDE SERVICES. Following the funeral, a simple graveside dedication service traditionally is held, attended only by family and intimate friends. One who holds the Melchizedek priesthood, usually a member or close friend of the family, dedicates the grave, asking God to protect it from the elements or other disturbance as a hallowed resting place until the resurrection.

Local law in some countries may dictate CREMATION rather than burial, but in the absence of such a law, burial is preferred because of its doctrinal symbolism (Packer, p. 19). Circumstances also may dictate a memorial service or a graveside service only. Bishops are counseled to show regard for family wishes in keeping with the spiritual and reverent nature of the occasion (Packer, pp. 19–20).

SUMMARY. Even as death began with the Fall, it will end with the atonement, through which all are resurrected and the earth itself becomes immortal (D&C 29:22–29; 1 Cor. 15:19–26; Rev. 21:1–4). The hope engendered in Latter-day Saints by this long-range view of the loving Savior, triumphant over death, was reflected in a letter from Joseph Smith to the Church in 1842: “Now what do we hear in the gospel which we have received? A voice of gladness! A voice of mercy from heaven: and a voice of truth out of the earth; glad tidings for the dead; a voice of gladness for the living and the dead; glad tidings of great joy” (D&C 128:19). Although it brings grief to those left behind, death is part of “the merciful plan of the great Creator (2 Ne. 9:6), it is “a mechanism of rescue” (Packer, p. 21)—an essential step in the Lord’s “great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8).

[See also Afterlife; Autopsies; Burial; Cremation.]

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