

(Mal. 4:5). Elijah gradually assumed the role of precursor of the Messiah and the messenger announcing his advent. Some of the contemporaries of Jesus (cf. Matt. 16:13–14) seem to have thought that he might be Elijah (Matt. 11:14; 17:10–13) in a manner that suggests that John the Baptist, as the forerunner and announcer of the Messiah, was Elijah (namely, fulfilled his eschatological function). Later apocryphal writings (e.g., *The Apocalypse of Elijah*) connect the “revelations” concerning the last things they report with Elijah. Elements from the Jewish Elijah traditions and legends were also adopted and developed in different ways by Islam.

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For Islamic traditions, see “Ilyas” and “al-Khadir” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.

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## ELIJAH, SPIRIT OF

For members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the spirit of Elijah is the spirit of family kinship and unity. It is the spirit that motivates the concern to search out ancestral family members through FAMILY HISTORY; and, on their behalf, to perform proxy baptisms, temple ENDOWMENTS, AND SEALING ordinances (HC 6:252). This is seen as fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi that in the last days Elijah “will turn the heart [in Hebrew, the innermost part, as the soul, the affections] of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Mal. 4:5–6).

The appearance of Elijah to the Prophet Joseph SMITH and Oliver COWDERY in the KIRTLAND TEMPLE in 1836 inaugurated anew this spirit (D&C 110:13). The spirit of Elijah is active in the impetus anyone feels toward finding and cherishing family members and family ties past and present. In the global sense, the spirit of Elijah is the spirit of love that may eventually overcome all human family estrangements. Then the priesthood power can bind generations together in eternal family rela-

tionships and “seal the children to the fathers and fathers to the children” within the gospel of Jesus Christ (WJS, p. 329).

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## ELOHIM

Elohim (God; gods; Heavenly Father) is the plural form of the singular noun *’eloah* (compare Arabic *Allah*) in the Hebrew Bible, where it is used 2,570 times as compared to 57 times for its singular. But as one commentator has noted, why this “plural form for ‘God’ is used has not yet been explained satisfactorily” (Botterweck, Vol. 1, p. 272).

**SINGULAR USAGE.** Elohim appears in the Hebrew Bible as a common noun identifying Israel’s God: “In the beginning God [*’elohim*] created [singular verb] the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). It was also frequently used interchangeably with Jehovah, the proper name for Israel’s God: “And Jacob said, O God [*’elohim*] of my father Abraham, . . . the LORD [Jehovah] which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country” (Gen. 32:9; *see also* JEHOVAH, JESUS CHRIST).

Latter-day Saints use the name Elohim in a more restrictive sense as a proper name-title identifying the Father in Heaven (*see* GOD THE FATHER). The First Presidency of the Church has written, “God the Eternal Father, whom we designate by the exalted name-title ‘Elohim,’ is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race” (MFP 5:26; *see also* Doctrinal Expositions of the First Presidency, “The Father and the Son,” appendices, Vol. 4).

**PLURAL USAGE.** Ancient Israelites used *’elohim* also as a proper plural form to refer to gods of nations other than Israel. At such times, the accompanying verbs and adjectives used were also plural. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3; here “other” is a plural adjective).

Occasionally, Latter-day Saints use Elohim in its plural sense as a common noun to refer to the plurality of gods known to exist (TPJS, pp. 371–74). However, despite their belief that many lords

and gods exist in addition to Elohim, Jehovah, and the HOLY GHOST (D&C 121:28–32), they follow the example of Jesus and Paul, who worshiped the Father in Heaven (Matt. 19:17; 1 Cor. 8:4–6).

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## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Latter-day Saints are taught to prepare for potential problems. Since the gospel is concerned with mankind's temporal as well as spiritual welfare, the Church considers any potential emergency that would adversely affect the quality of life or produce suffering to be a cause for advance preparation. This includes natural disasters, unemployment, disease, injuries, and other circumstances that could threaten life or personal well-being. The Church teaches its members to prepare for such emergencies.

The rationale for emergency preparedness is that by living providently and by acquiring in advance the skills and resources necessary to cope effectively with difficulties, Latter-day Saints can minimize or avoid the suffering that accompanies the unexpected. They can also have the sense of security and peace of mind (D&C 38:30) that are essential to spiritual development. They are also taught to work toward SELF-SUFFICIENCY—to provide adequately for themselves, to assist those in need, and to avoid unnecessary dependence upon the efforts or resources of others. They are told to put aside something when times are good so that they can care for themselves and others when times are bad. For Latter-day Saints, preparing for emergencies is more akin to saving for a "rainy day" than surviving "doomsday" (Kimball, p. 78).

For more than a hundred years, Church leaders have taught the members to store grain and other essentials that would sustain life in times of drought or famine (*Essentials of Home Production and Storage*, p. 17). The current guidelines for home storage are intended to apply internationally. They include having a supply of food, clothing, and, where possible, the fuel necessary to sustain life for one year (Benson, p. 33). Church



This LDS farm wife was photographed with her home-bottled produce (1940) as part of a U.S. Farm Security Administration project, which sent three photographers to rural Utah during 1936–1941. Many Latter-day Saints continue the tradition of canning home-grown food, following Church counsel to be prepared for all kinds of emergencies. Photographer: Russell Lee. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (37282-D).

guidance states, "We have never laid down an exact formula for what anybody should store. Perhaps if we think not in terms of a year's supply of what we ordinarily would use, and think more in terms of what it would take to keep us alive in case we didn't have anything else to eat, that last would be very easy to put in storage for a year" (*Essentials*, p. 6).

Home gardens, canning, and sewing have long been encouraged among the women by the RELIEF SOCIETY through homemaking lessons and workdays. Latter-day Saints are counseled to seek education and training opportunities that prepare them to adapt to changes in the working world, to avoid personal indebtedness, to maintain good health by eating and exercising properly, to learn first aid, and to know how to protect their lives and possessions against fire, flood, and theft. They are counseled to obtain life, medical, and property insurance where it is available. They are also urged to avoid panic buying, purchasing emergency resources on credit, pursuing fads, and giving official endorsement to specific brands, suppliers, or techniques.

Institutionally, the Church practices the principles of preparedness. Under the aegis of its