

the other tribes (D&C 113). “And they [others of the tribes of Israel] shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants . . . and there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim, and they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy” (D&C 133:30–33; *see also* ISRAEL: GATHERING OF ISRAEL).

One of the tools to be used in the gathering is the Book of Mormon, also known among Latter-day Saints as the stick of Joseph or the stick of Ephraim (Ezek. 37:15–19; 2 Ne. 3:12; D&C 27:5). It is to play an important part in convincing LAMANITES, Jews, and Gentiles that Jesus is the MESSIAH and that God does remember his covenant people (*see* BOOK OF MORMON: TITLE PAGE).

For Latter-day Saints, identification of a person’s lineage in latter-day COVENANT ISRAEL is made under the hands of inspired PATRIARCHS through PATRIARCHAL BLESSINGS that declare lineage. Elder John A. Widtsoe, an Apostle, declared, “In giving a blessing the patriarch may declare our lineage—that is, that we are of Israel, therefore of the family of Abraham, and of a specific tribe of Jacob. In the great majority of cases, Latter-day Saints are of the tribe of Ephraim, the tribe to which has been committed the leadership of the Latter-day work. Whether this lineage is of blood or adoption it does not matter” (p. 73; cf. Abr. 2:10).

The patriarchal blessings of most Latter-day Saints indicate that they are literal, blood descendants of ABRAHAM and of Israel. Those who are not literal descendants are adopted into the family of Abraham when they receive BAPTISM and CONFIRMATION (*see* LAW OF ADOPTION). They are then entitled to all the rights and privileges of heirs (TPJS, pp. 149–50). This doctrine of adoption was understood by ancient prophets and apostles (e.g., Rom. 11; 1 Ne. 10:14; Jacob 5; cf. D&C 84:33–34).

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BRIAN L. SMITH

EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy dealing with the nature and scope of knowledge. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has no uniform position on the classical issues of epistemology, such as the relationship of the sources of knowledge, theories of truth, and modes of verification, but the superiority of knowing by revelation from God is commonly cited from the scriptures.

The word “knowledge” is used in different ways and has different meanings in different cultures. Different kinds of knowledge may be independent of each other.

The Western philosophical tradition, like Western thought generally, emphasizes knowledge in the sense of knowing facts. But this emphasis may not be appropriate, especially from a gospel perspective. Some scriptures teach that other kinds of knowledge may be more important. Thus, Jesus prays, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). This is knowledge by acquaintance more than “knowledge about” (cf. JST Matt. 7:32–33). There are also indications that factual knowledge alone is not sufficient for salvation: “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). At the request of President Spencer W. KIMBALL, a prophet, the words in a LDS children’s hymn were changed from “Teach me all that I must know” to “Teach me all that I must do,” because it is not enough just to know; one must do the will of the Lord.

A related gospel theme is that knowing comes from doing. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17). The Prophet Joseph SMITH taught, “We cannot keep all the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received” (TPJS, p. 256).

In formal philosophy, “knowing,” in the sense of knowing facts, is often defined to mean true belief together with good reasons. In other words, a person knows some statement X if and only if that person believes X, and if X is true, and if the person has good reasons for believing X. The European-American philosophical tradition recognizes two kinds of reasons that support the claim to

know: rational argument and empirical evidence. Within the Church these are tacitly accepted as sources of knowledge, sometimes even of religious knowledge. For example, after reviewing the traditional arguments for the existence of God, James E. Talmage observed that some were “at least strongly corroborative” of God’s existence (*AF*, p. 29).

However, there is a continuing tradition, based on the scriptures and reinforced by modern Church leaders, that specifically religious knowledge requires a different and distinctively spiritual source. “We believe that no man can know that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. We believe in [the gift of the Holy Ghost] in all its fulness, and power, and greatness, and glory” (*TPJS*, p. 243; D&C 76:114–16). It is widely accepted by Latter-day Saints that gospel knowledge must ultimately be obtained by spiritual rather than exclusively rational or empirical means (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:3). Thus, in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, there is no clear counterpart to the Roman Catholic tradition of natural theology.

One of the most suggestive and frequently cited scriptures in LDS teaching makes the point: “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moro. 10:4–5). This scripture is usually taken to apply to all knowledge. This suggests that both rational argument and empirical evidence, the two traditional approaches to knowledge, can be either supplanted by or encompassed within spiritual knowledge. Of course, the scripture does not say that knowledge comes only by the Holy Ghost. Yet, within the Church, it is often held that what might be thought of as secular learning, for example, modern scientific knowledge, is directly associated with the RESTORATION of the gospel and is rooted in divine inspiration throughout the world.

[See also Faith in Jesus Christ; Prophets; Reason and Revelation; Science and Religion.]

K. CODELL CARTER

EQUALITY

Equality among persons is understood by Latter-day Saints as essential to divine LOVE, which explains and justifies all other ethical virtues and

principles (Matt. 22:37–40). All persons are of equal value in the sight of God. Each person (of every nation and every race) is as precious to him as another (2 Ne. 26:33; Alma 26:37). From God all people will receive equivalent opportunities through Jesus Christ to attain ETERNAL LIFE, his greatest blessing (1 Ne. 17:33–35; Hel. 14:17; D&C 18:10–12). All who are worthy to become HEIRS of Christ will enjoy equality with him and with each other in the CELESTIAL KINGDOM (D&C 88:106–107).

Latter-day Saints believe that when people love as God requires them to love (John 15:9–12), having full and equal regard for one another, they can form a ZION society as directed by the Lord and enjoy in this world the type of equality that defines relations between persons in the celestial world (D&C 78:4–8; 105:4–5). References to equality in latter-day SCRIPTURES primarily concern the building of Zion and living according to celestial LAW. In Zion the people have “all things common among them” (3 Ne. 26:19; 4 Ne. 1:3; cf. D&C 82:17–18; 104:70). They have equal chances to develop their abilities and equal opportunity to realize them in the work of Zion, all contributing according to their individual strengths and talents (D&C 82:17–18; Alma 1:26). A Zion people labor together as equals by organizing themselves according to the principle of “equal power” (D&C 76:94–95; 78:5–7; 105:4–6). For example, on the local level “all things” are done according to the “counsel” and “consent” of the community (D&C 104:21). Each member has an equal role in giving counsel and an equal vote in giving consent (see COMMON CONSENT). But equality of power also defines the relations between members so that each is the center of decision and action in performing an individual stewardship within the community (D&C 82:17; 104:70–76).

Celestial law also requires that persons receive as equals that which is essential to survival and contributes to well-being. Consequently, in Zion there are “no poor among them” (Moses 7:18; 4 Ne. 1:3). This does not mean that every person receives the same amount. The “needs,” “wants,” and “circumstances” of individuals vary so that treatment of them must also vary to be equal in effect (D&C 51:3, 8; 42:33). Still, it is “not given that one should possess that which is above another.” When such inequality exists, “the world lieth in sin” (D&C 49:20; cf. Alma 5:53–54), and