

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
Daniel H. Ludlow

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of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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Joseph Smith the GOLD PLATES from which he translated the Book of Mormon (*see* MORONI, VISITATIONS OF). Mounted on a 25-foot shaft of white granite, the ten-foot bronze figure of Moroni points toward heaven with the right hand and holds a replica of the plates with the left. Created by Norwegian sculptor Torleif S. Knaphus, the monument was dedicated by Church President Heber J. GRANT on July 21, 1935.

Moroni was the last in a line of prophet-leaders in the Western Hemisphere whose history is recorded in the Book of Mormon. Latter-day Saints believe John the Revelator foretold Moroni's angelic ministry: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6).

Because Moroni's mission was vital to the RESTORATION of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a statue of Moroni as a herald sounding a trumpet has been placed on several Latter-day Saint TEMPLES (e.g., Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.).

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CORY H. MAXWELL

ANGELS

[*This entry consists of three articles:*

- Angels
- Archangels
- Guardian Angels

The first article discusses the nature of angels as pertaining to their ministry to people on the earth, showing that different classes perform different types of service. The second article examines a hierarchy among angels, and identifies Michael as an archangel. The last article explores the concept of guardian angels, and examines what the scriptures and the Brethren have said. It proposes the Holy Spirit as a type of guardian angel.]

ANGELS

Latter-day Saints accept the reality of angels as messengers for the Lord. Angels are mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mor-

mon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price and are prominent in the early history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Angels are of various types and perform a variety of functions to implement the work of the Lord on the earth.

The skepticism of the modern age has tended to diminish belief in angels. However, Jesus Christ frequently spoke of angels, both literally and figuratively. When Jesus' disciples asked him to "declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field," he responded, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world . . . and the reapers are the angels" (Matt. 13:36–39). Angels are actual beings participating in many incidents related in scripture (e.g., Luke 1:13, 19; 2:25; John 20:12, etc.). They exist as a part of the "whole family in heaven" (Eph. 3:15). All people, including angels, are the offspring of God.

In form angels are like human beings. They do not, of course, have the wings many artists symbolically show (*TPJS*, p. 162). Concerning the two angels who visited Lot's home in Sodom, the local residents inquired, "Where are the *men* which came in to thee this night?" (Gen. 19:1, 5, emphasis added). Daniel described the angel Gabriel as having "the appearance of a man" (Dan. 8:15). At the sepulcher of the risen Savior "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven" (Matt. 28:2) as "a young man . . . clothed in a long white garment" (Mark 16:5). A quite detailed description of an angel was given by Joseph Smith in recording the visit of the angel Moroni (JS—H 1:30–33, 43).

The angels who visit this earth are persons who have been assigned as messengers to this earth: "There are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it" (D&C 130:5).

There are several types and kinds of beings, in various stages of progression, whom the Lord has used as angels in varying circumstances. One kind is a spirit child of the Eternal Father who has not yet been born on the earth but is intended for earthly mortality. Such is probably the type of angel who appeared to Adam (Moses 5:6–8).

In the early days of the mortal world, many righteous persons were taken from the earth, or translated (*see* TRANSLATED BEINGS). Enoch and his people (Moses 7:18–21, 31, 63, 69; Heb. 11:5), Moses (Alma 45:19), and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:11–12) were all translated. The Prophet Joseph SMITH taught that translated beings "are designed for fu-

ture missions” (*TPJS*, p. 191), and hence can be angelic ministrants.

Another kind of angel may be an individual who completed his mortal existence but whose labors continue in the SPIRIT WORLD while he awaits the RESURRECTION of the body. Such are referred to as “the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. 12:22–23; D&C 76:69; *TPJS*, p. 325). “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb. 1:13–14).

Since the resurrection of Jesus Christ, some angels have been “resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones” (D&C 129:1). The Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that resurrected angels have advanced further in light and glory than spirits (*TPJS*, p. 325). Such are the beings who have been instrumental in the RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL in the DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES. It was of this type of angel that John wrote, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Rev. 14:6). ELIAS, MOSES, ELIJAH, MORONI, JOHN THE BAPTIST, PETER, and JAMES are examples of resurrected angels who ministered to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Pursuant to John’s prophecy in Revelation 14:6, the fulness of the gospel, in word and power, has been restored to the earth through the ministration of angels. The angel MORONI, a resurrected being, revealed the record of the Book of Mormon which contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ (D&C 20:8–11; see MORONI, VISITATIONS OF). Later he who was called John the Baptist in the New Testament, now also a resurrected being, came as an angel and restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver COWDERY on May 15, 1829 (D&C 13; JS—H 1:68–72; see AARONIC PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF). Likewise, Peter, James, and John, as angelic embodied messengers from God, restored the Melchizedek Priesthood (D&C 27:12–13; see MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF). Moses, Elias, and Elijah each appeared as angels and committed once again the “keys of the gathering of Israel,” the “dispensation of the gospel of Abraham” (including celestial or patriarchal marriage), and the keys of the sealing powers to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers” (D&C 110:11–16).

Other “divers angels” have come to deliver keys, power, priesthood, and glory (D&C 128:18–21); to teach (2 Ne. 10:3; Mosiah 3:2–3; Rev. 1:1), guide, and inspire (Rev. 5:11); and to make the gospel operative in the lives of men and women. However, the work of the angels of the restoration is not complete, and the scriptures indicate that there will yet be other angelic administrations before “the hour of [God’s] judgment is come” (D&C 88:103–104; 133:36).

Angelic messengers bring knowledge, priesthood, comfort, and assurances from God to mortals. However, when priesthood or keys are to be conveyed, the ministering angel possesses a body of flesh and bones, either from resurrection or translation. Spirits can convey information, but they cannot confer priesthood upon mortal beings, because spirits do not lay hands on mortals (cf. D&C 129).

The Lord himself may also at times be called an angel, since the term means “messenger.” He is the “messenger of salvation” (D&C 93:8), and the “messenger of the covenant” (Mal. 3:1), and is the “Angel which redeemed me” of whom Jacob spoke in Genesis 48:15–16.

Some of the Father’s spirit children “kept not their first estate” (Jude 1:6; D&C 29:36–38; Rev. 12:3–9), and, as Peter explained, “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell” (2 Pet. 2:4). These are angels to the devil. Thus, Satan and those who chose to follow him are sometimes referred to as angels (2 Cor. 11:14–15; 2 Ne. 2:17; see also FIRST ESTATE; WAR IN HEAVEN).

A different usage of the term “angel” is applied to those who, because they have not obeyed the principles of the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, do not qualify for exaltation but remain separately and singly as ministering angels without EXALTATION in their saved condition for all eternity (D&C 132:16–17).

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OSCAR W. MCCONKIE

ARCHANGELS

Traditionally, angels have been viewed as guardians of persons or places, and bearers of God’s tid-

ings. The prefix “arch” intensifies this meaning to denote one who rules or is outstanding, principal, or preeminent. Several biblical texts give prominence to four, six, or seven angels (Ezek. 9:2; Rev. 8:2). Dionysius, a sixth-century Christian theologian, purports the existence of nine angelic orders called choirs, one of which is called “archangels.” Milton’s *Paradise Lost* has the archangels Raphael and Michael appear to and instruct ADAM concerning the fall of the angels, the Creation, and the history of the world. Dante also refers to archangels in *The Divine Comedy*.

In the literature of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an archangel is a chief angel, holding a position of PRIESTHOOD authority in the heavenly hierarchy. Michael (Adam) is the only one precisely so designated in scripture (D&C 29:26; 88:112; 107:54; 128:21; 1 Thes. 4:16; Jude 1:9), although others (Gabriel, who is also NOAH; Raphael, Raguel, etc.) are mentioned in scriptural, apocryphal, and pseudepigraphic works. Teachings of Latter-day Saint prophets indicate that a priesthood organization exists among the heavenly hosts (*TPJS*, pp. 157, 208). However, discussion of specific positions or functions in the celestial hierarchy beyond the scriptures cited above is conjectural.

JERRY C. GILES

GUARDIAN ANGELS

One of the functions of angels is to warn and protect mortals. The Lord whispered to David, “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Ps. 91:10–12). The angel of the Lord’s presence saved Israel (Isa. 63:9). Daniel replied to the King: “My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me . . .” (Dan. 6:22).

This well-known guardian function of angels has given rise to an assumption on the part of some that all persons, or at least the righteous, have individual angels assigned to them throughout life as guardians. There is no scriptural justification for this tradition, although it has been entertained sometimes among Latter-day Saints and others (*TPJS*, p. 368).

Latter-day Saints believe that every person born into the world is accorded protecting care and direction by God, provided in part by the LIGHT

OF CHRIST (D&C 84:44–48; Moro. 7:12–19). Those who have the GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST may be warned, guarded, or shielded through the spirit of revelation (D&C 8:2–4). The term “guardian angel” may best be viewed as a figure of speech that has to do with God’s protecting care and direction or, in special instances, with an angel dispatched to earth in fulfillment of God’s purposes.

OSCAR W. MCCONKIE

ANIMALS

Latter-day Saints believe that animals, like humans, have SPIRITS, in the form of their bodies (D&C 77:2). Like humans and plants, animals were created first as spirits in heaven and then physically on the earth (Moses 3:5). Mortal and subject to death, animals will be saved through the ATONEMENT of Christ (*TPJS*, pp. 291–92). Humans and animals will eventually live in peace on this earth (Isa. 11:6–9; 2 Ne. 30:12–15; D&C 101:24–26). The Prophet Joseph SMITH taught that animals will be found in heaven, in myriad forms, from myriad worlds, enjoying eternal felicity, and praising God in languages God understands (*TPJS*, pp. 291–92).

Animals, like other “good things which come of the earth . . . are made for the benefit and the use of man,” but are “to be used, with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion” (D&C 59:16–20). God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the animals (Gen. 1:28), but legitimate dominion is neither coercive nor exploitive (D&C 121:34–46). He sanctions the eating of animal flesh but forbids its waste (Gen. 9:2–5; D&C 49:18–21). The JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE (JST) cautions, “Surely, blood shall not be shed, only for meat, to save your lives; and the blood of every beast will I require at your hands” (JST Gen. 9:11).

Destroying animal life merely for sport has been strongly criticized by several Latter-day Saint leaders, including Lorenzo SNOW, Joseph F. SMITH, Joseph Fielding SMITH, and Spencer W. KIMBALL. Lorenzo Snow called it a “murderous amusement.”

When the Prophet Joseph Smith saw his associates about to kill three rattlesnakes at their campsite, he said, “Let them alone—don’t hurt them! How will the serpent ever lose its venom, while the servants of God possess the same disposition,