

Abortion

they may also bless the sacrament, baptize, and ordain others to the offices of priest, teacher, and deacon.

The Aaronic Priesthood is “an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood” (D&C 107:14). It is often called the preparatory priesthood. As a priesthood holder serves in the Aaronic Priesthood, he prepares to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, to receive the blessings of the temple, to serve a full-time mission, to be a loving husband and father, and to continue in lifelong service to the Lord.

See also Melchizedek Priesthood; Priesthood

Abortion

In today’s society, abortion has become a common practice, defended by deceptive arguments. If you face questions about this matter, you can be secure in following the revealed will of the Lord. Latter-day prophets have denounced abortion, referring to the Lord’s declaration, “Thou shalt not . . . kill, nor do anything like unto it” (D&C 59:6). Their counsel on the matter is clear: Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints must not submit to, perform, encourage, pay for, or arrange for an abortion. If you encourage an abortion in any way, you may be subject to Church discipline.

Church leaders have said that some exceptional circumstances may justify an abortion, such as when pregnancy is the result of incest or rape, when the life or health of the mother is judged by competent medical authority to be in serious jeopardy, or when the fetus is known by competent medical authority to have severe defects that will not allow the baby to survive beyond birth. But even these circumstances do not automatically justify an abortion. Those who face such circumstances should consider abortion only after consulting with their local Church leaders and receiving a confirmation through earnest prayer.

When a child is conceived out of wedlock, the best option is for the mother and father of the child to marry and work

toward establishing an eternal family relationship. If a successful marriage is unlikely, they should place the child for adoption, preferably through LDS Family Services (see “Adoption,” pages 7–8).

Abrahamic Covenant

Abraham received the gospel and was ordained a high priest (see D&C 84:14; Abraham 1:2). He later entered into celestial marriage, which is the covenant of exaltation (see D&C 131:1–4; 132:19, 29). In connection with the covenants he made, he received great promises from the Lord concerning his family. Among these promises were the following:

- His posterity would be numerous (see Genesis 17:5–6; Abraham 2:9; 3:14).
- His seed, or descendants, would receive the gospel and bear the priesthood (see Abraham 2:9).
- Through the ministry of his seed, “all the families of the earth [would] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abraham 2:11).

Together, all the covenants and promises that Abraham received from the Lord are called the Abrahamic covenant. It is an everlasting covenant that extends to all of Abraham’s seed (see Genesis 17:7). To be counted as Abraham’s seed, an individual must obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Then that person can receive all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, even if he or she is not a literal descendant of Abraham (see Galatians 3:26–29; 4:1–7; D&C 84:33–40).

As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you are a child of the covenant (see 3 Nephi 20:25–26). You have received the everlasting gospel and inherited the same promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You have the right to the blessings of the priesthood and to eternal life, according to your faithfulness in receiving the ordinances of