

Kenneth L. Alford

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A HISTORY OF MORMON CATECHISMS

WHEN I first heard the term *catechism* as a young grade-school student, I had no idea what it meant. I later learned that the word comes from two ancient Greek words, *kata*, which means “down,” and *echein*, which means “to sound.” Literally, *catechism* means “to sound down (into the ears)”; in other words, a catechism is “instruction by word of mouth.”¹ Catechisms can take two different forms—either a series of questions and answers or simply a series of questions.² Catechisms are most frequently associated with religion, but they have also been used for centuries in a variety of scientific, political, military, and other fields.

The *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* observes that “conspicuously absent from LDS language . . . are many terms of other Christian cultures, such as ‘abbot,’ ‘archbishop,’ ‘beatification,’ ‘cardinal,’ ‘*catechism*,’

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‘creed,’ ‘diocese.’”³ However, the word *catechism* was actually used frequently by Latter-day Saints during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Imagine that President Thomas S. Monson were called to Washington DC and asked to testify before a Senate committee regarding whether the Church uses catechisms. Strange as this may seem today, that situation actually occurred in the first decade of the twentieth century. President Joseph F. Smith traveled to Washington DC and testified in hearings before the United States Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections to determine if Reed Smoot, one of the Twelve Apostles and the senator-elect from Utah, should be seated in the Senate. One of the questions he was asked by Senator Lee S. Overman, a first-term senator from North Carolina, was, “Do you have catechisms for the children?” President Smith answered, “Yes, sir.” The hearing transcript reveals that the next several questions from Senator Overman addressed the Church’s use and understanding of catechisms.⁴

A CHRISTIAN CATECHISTIC TRADITION

A rich Christian catechistic tradition stretches back hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Thomas Aquinas and other theologians developed and encouraged the use of catechisms. Catechisms also played an important role during the establishment of the American colonies.

Puritan and Pilgrim alike in the early days in New England had family religious instruction through catechism, questions and answers. . . . One of the earliest catechisms among the Puritans and Pilgrims was that by John Cotton, . . . issued in London in 1646. Cotton Mather call[ed] it, “The Catechism of New England,” and fifty years after its issue [said], ‘The children of New-England are to this day most usually fed with this excellent catechism.’ It contained sixty questions and answers which became familiar as household words in New England, and it was made a part of the famous *New England Primer* in the next century, thus continuing its popularity for more than a hundred years.⁵

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Religious catechisms were especially popular in the nineteenth century among a variety of American Christian denominations, including Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Methodists.⁶ There were also numerous nondenominational Christian catechisms published. Catechism societies—groups whose members met for the purpose of reciting religious catechisms—were organized across the United States. For example, the preface to *A Short Biblical Catechism*, published in Boston in 1816, briefly outlines how the catechism societies functioned. “At each meeting the members severally may answer the questions succeeding those which they answered at the previous meeting.”⁷

Catechisms also figured prominently in much of popular nineteenth-century literature. Books such as *Jane Eyre* (Charlotte Brontë), *Walden* (Henry David Thoreau), *Treasure Island* (Robert Louis Stevenson), *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (Harriet Beecher Stowe), *Les Misérables* (Victor Hugo), *The Scarlet Letter* (Nathaniel Hawthorne), and *Hard Times* (Charles Dickens) all included references to catechisms.⁸

A LATTER-DAY SAINT CATECHISTIC TRADITION

It should not be surprising that early converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints often brought with them a catechistic background. Commenting on his Anglican and Methodist childhood, President John Taylor said, “I learned and said my prayers; was taught the catechism; knew the litany and a great many of the church prayers by rote; repeated week after week.”⁹ President Wilford Woodruff explained that when he was a child, “I dared no more go out to play on a Sunday than I dared put my hand in the fire. It would have been considered an unpardonable sin. We could not attend a ball and dance; we did not dare attend a theatre, and from Saturday night, at sundown, to Monday morning, we must not laugh or smile, but we must study our catechism.”¹⁰

Truths taught to children through catechisms often made a lasting impression upon their lives. As Elder George A. Smith noted in 1855, “It may

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be said of me that I never knew anything else but ‘Mormonism,’ yet I have found that some of the traditions of my early education (as I was piously educated at the Sunday school in the doctrine and principles of Presbyterianism)—some of these principles which I received in my youth have clung to me so closely that I have had to stop at times and reflect whether I had learned that from the proper source, or whether it was part of my old catechism.”¹¹

Thus catechisms were a familiar religious educational device to many early Latter-day Saint converts. It was a natural extension, therefore, for Latter-day Saints to create and use catechisms to teach the doctrines of the Restoration. The *Lectures on Faith* (until 1921 the doctrine portion of the Doctrine and Covenants) contain what may be the earliest examples of Latter-day Saint catechisms.¹² The first five lectures each end with a formal catechism that reiterates the key concepts, doctrines, and scriptural facts from the preceding lecture in a question-and-answer format. Many questions are doctrinal in nature. For example:

Q. Is faith anything else beside the principle of action?

A. It is.

Q. What is it?

A. It is the principle of power, also.

Q. How do you prove it?

A. First, It is the principle of power in the Deity, as well as in man. Heb. 11:3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.¹³

Some questions and answers are factual, including many that most gospel students today would probably consider to be gospel trivia.

Q. How many noted righteous men lived from Adam to Noah?

A. Nine; which includes Abel, who was slain by his brother.

Q. What are their names?

A. Abel, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, and Lamech.

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Q. How old was Adam when Seth was born?

A. One hundred and thirty years. Gen. 5:3

Q. How many years did Adam live after Seth was born?

A. Eight hundred. Gen. 5:4.¹⁴

The two final lectures in the *Lectures on Faith* did not contain a catechism. A note to readers at the end of lecture six states, “This lecture is so plain and the facts set forth so self-evident that it is deemed unnecessary to form a catechism upon it: the student is, therefore, instructed to commit the whole to memory.”¹⁵

In 1835, Oliver Cowdery explained why catechisms were added to the *Lectures on Faith*. He suggested that “in giving the following lectures we have thought best to insert the catechism, that the reader may fully understand the manner in which this science was taught. It was found, that by annexing a catechism to the lectures as they were presented, the class made greater progress than otherwise; and in consequence of the additional scripture proofs, it was preserved in compiling.”¹⁶

The treatise “Of Governments and Laws in General,” authored by Oliver Cowdery and canonized as Doctrine and Covenants section 134, is written as a form of implicit catechism, with the individual questions missing and each of the answers beginning with either “We believe” or “We do not believe.” With the questions made explicit, it might look something like this:

1. Q. *Why were governments instituted?*

A. We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society.

2. Q. *Do governments have the right to establish laws?*

A. We believe that rulers, states, and governments have a right, and are bound to enact laws for the protection of all citizens in the free exercise of their religious belief.¹⁷

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The Articles of Faith, written by Joseph Smith in 1842, follow this same implicit catechistic format.

THE REFORMATION

From 1856 to 1857, the Church, especially within the Utah Territory, enacted a religious “reformation” to help members return to fundamental doctrines and practices. Church members were often called to repentance by specially called missionaries who used a formalized set of questions that they regularly referred to as a catechism. There were several versions of reformation catechisms. Members were asked questions regarding their spiritual life, such as, “Do you pray in your family night and morning and attend to secret prayer? Do you pay your tithing promptly? Do you teach your family the gospel of salvation? Do you and your family attend Ward meetings? Have you lied about or maliciously misrepresented any person or thing? Have you borne false witness against your neighbor? Have you taken the name of the Deity in vain?”

They were also asked questions of a more legal nature: “Have you committed murder, by shedding innocent blood, or consenting thereto? Have you betrayed your brethren or sisters in anything? Have you committed adultery, by having any connection with a woman that was not your wife or a man that was not your husband? Have you coveted anything not your own? Have you taken and made use of property not your own, without the consent of the owner? Have you been intoxicated with strong drink?”

Some questions reflected living conditions in the mid-nineteenth century: “Do you wash your body and have your family do so as often as health and cleanliness require and circumstances will permit? Have you cut hay where you had no right to, or turned your animals into another person’s grain or field, without his knowledge and consent? Have you taken water to irrigate with, when it belonged to another person at the time you used it? Have you taken another’s horse or mule from the range and rode it without the owner’s consent? Have you branded an animal that you did not know to be your own?”¹⁸

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Historian Paul Peterson noted, “The administration of the catechism was a particularly sensitive problem. It would appear that initially, at least in some instances, it was administered publicly, and the confession that followed was likewise public. Most often, however, teachers and home missionaries went to individual homes and catechized families as units. This naturally led to embarrassing moments.”¹⁹

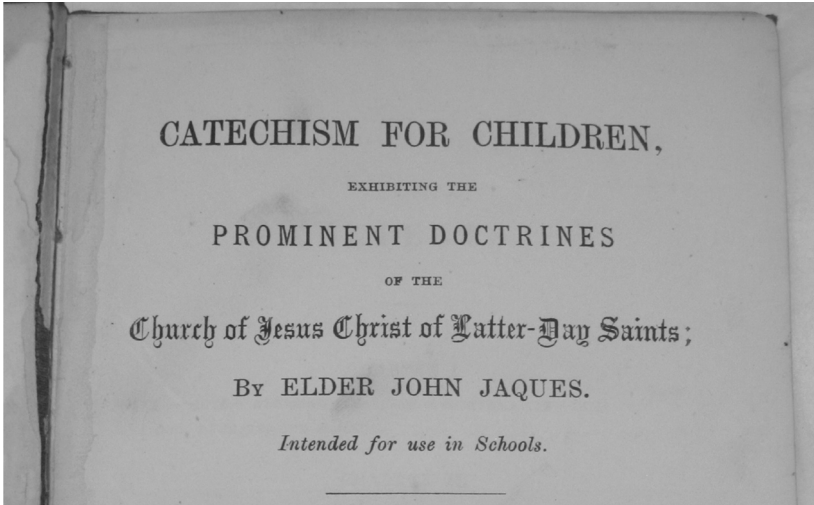
Commenting on the reformation catechism in a letter to Elder Orson Pratt, President Brigham Young stated, “Those missionaries go from house to house, and examine every individual therein separately; and, as a consequence, we have had this people examining themselves minutely; much honest confession and restitution have been made. The catechism has been as a mirror to the Saints, reflecting themselves in truth.”²⁰

LATTER-DAY SAINT CATECHISM PUBLICATIONS

Beginning in 1845, the *Millennial Star*, an influential Church publication in Great Britain, published a series of catechisms—“The Mormon Creed” by Orson Pratt (1845), “Questions and Answers” by Thomas Smith (1848), “The Child’s Ladder” by David Moffat (1849), and “Catechism for Children” by John Jaques (1853–54).²¹ Jaques, who was baptized at age eighteen in England in 1845, published fourteen catechism chapters serially in the *Millennial Star*. In 1854, Jaques combined those chapters into a book, *Catechism for Children, Exhibiting the Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, which became the most famous Latter-day Saint catechism book.²²

Jaques’s book was printed and reprinted for thirty-five years, including editions in Samoan, Danish, German, Swedish, Hawaiian, Dutch,²³ and the Deseret alphabet.²⁴ “*Catechism for Children* is the first broadly distributed LDS children’s book. Its importance, however, goes beyond this bibliographical footnote: for by claiming to list the doctrines of Mormonism, it . . . helped to standardize Mormon theology.”²⁵ By 1888, Jaques’s *Catechism for Children* was in its tenth printing and had sold over thirty-five thousand

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Written by John Jaques, Catechism for Children was the most popular and influential of all Latter-day Saint catechism books. (Courtesy of Kenneth L. Alford.)

copies—almost one copy for every five members of the Church (equivalent to selling almost three million copies today). Sales were helped, no doubt, by comments such as Elder George A. Smith’s during the April 1872 general conference: “The catechism for children, exhibiting the prominent doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, should be in every family, school and Bible class.”²⁶

The eighteen chapters in Jaques’s *Catechism for Children* covered a wide variety of gospel doctrines and topics—the basic principles and ordinances of the gospel, the Council in Heaven, the Fall, the Atonement, the Ten Commandments, the Word of Wisdom, the organization of the Church, the priesthood, and other subjects. Here is a sample from chapter 5 (“Person, Character and Attributes of God”):

1. Q. What kind of a being is God?
A. He is in the form of a man.
2. Q. How do you learn this?

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- A. The Scriptures declare that man was made in the image of God. Gen. i. 26, 27.

Repeat the passage.

And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness. * * * So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.

3. Q. Have you any further proof of God's being in the form of man?

- A. Yes. Jesus Christ was in the form of man, and was at the same time in the image of God's person. Heb. i. 3.²⁷

The influence of Jaques's *Catechism for Children* was widespread and long lasting. On August 18, 1901, Elder B. H. Roberts delivered a lecture to the Mutual Improvement Association conference. His discourse was published in the *Deseret News* and the *Improvement Era*, and a copy "fell into the hands of the Reverend C. Van Der Donckt, of Pocatello, Idaho, a priest of the Roman Catholic Church,"²⁸ who wrote a reply that was also published in the *Improvement Era*. Elder Roberts answered his reply, and the entire exchange was published in 1903 in Elder Roberts's book *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity: The Roberts–Van Der Donckt Discussion*. The influence of Jaques's book is shown by the fact that some of their debate centered on questions and answers from his book.²⁹ Roberts also quoted Jaques's *Catechism* in his *Seventy's Course in Theology* and *Defense and the Faith of the Saints*.³⁰ Furthermore, the first serious scriptural commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants, written from 1913 to 1916 by Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, quoted John Jaques's definition of the term *dispensation* in helping to expound on Doctrine and Covenants 27:13.³¹

PROLIFERATION OF CATECHISMS

The 1880s saw the height of Latter-day Saint catechism popularity. On Christmas Day in 1881, Eliza R. Snow wrote to Robert Welch, a Primary secretary who had earlier written to her, saying, "I am now devoting what

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Examples of popular nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint catechism books. (Courtesy of Kenneth L. Alford.)

time I can to a series of three books for the Primary Associations, especially for recitations. These books are very much needed, and I feel anxious to get them out as soon as possible.”³² She had recently completed and published *Bible Questions and Answers for Children*, a book of questions and answers about both the Old and New Testaments. Her book begins with this catechism:

1. Q. Who made this world?
A. The Gods.
2. Q. How long did it take to make the world all things in it?
A. Six days.
3. Q. At that time, how many years long was a day?
A. One thousand.

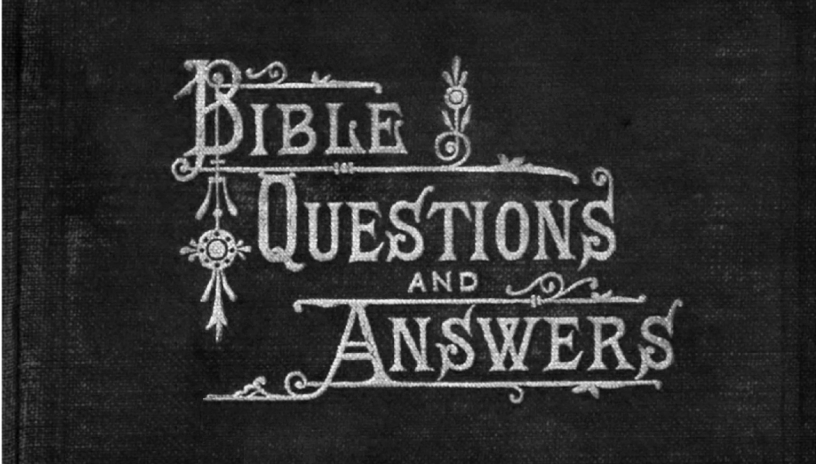
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4. Q. What was the world called?
A. The earth.
5. Q. What was the great deep?
A. Water.
6. Q. What was on the face of the water?
A. Darkness.³³

Eliza R. Snow's book of Bible catechisms is especially interesting because it included an explanatory note informing readers how her book of catechisms was to be used with students. She said, "This book is designed to assist those who have charge of the children. The president, or one whom she shall appoint, is expected to read a question, and another appointee read the answer, and all the children present repeat the answer in concert.



Eliza R. Snow spent the final years of her life authoring catechisms for Latter-day Saint youth.



Cover of a Latter-day Saint catechism book written by Eliza R. Snow.

As soon as the children can answer the questions the prompting may be dispensed with. One chapter, or part of a chapter, may be taken for a lesson, and be repeated week after week until it is well committed.”³⁴

In the 1880s, the Deseret Sunday School Union published several catechism books. The first of these—*Questions and Answers on the Life and Mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith*—was published in 1882.³⁵ It contained thirteen chapters that began with Joseph Smith’s birth and boyhood and ended with the Martyrdom. In 1886, Abraham H. Cannon, the son of Apostle George Q. Cannon and one of the seven Presidents of the Seventy, authored *Questions and Answers on the Book of Mormon*, which was “designed and prepared especially for the use of the Sunday Schools in Zion.”³⁶ In the preface, the publishers stated, “The importance of a careful study of writings so fraught with historical and religious truths as the volume translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, cannot be overestimated. And our most earnest desire will be gratified if these questions and answers can but induce the young people of Zion to search with greater diligence for the valuable truths contained in the revelations of ancient and modern times, all of which are given the Latter-day Saints for their instruction.”³⁷ The catechism questions and answers begin with the background and history of the Book of Mormon:

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1. Q. What is the Book of Mormon?
A. The sacred history of ancient America.
2. Q. By whom was it written?
A. A succession of ancient prophets who inhabited the continent.
3. Q. On what was it written?
A. On plates which had the appearance of gold.³⁸

The first two chapters discuss the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the Three Witnesses, the Eight Witnesses, and even the Jaredites. The questions in chapter 3 start with 1 Nephi 1:

1. Q. Whose writings are found in the first part of the Book of Mormon?
A. Those of Nephi.
2. Q. Who was his father?
A. Lehi, who was a descendant of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt.
3. Q. How many brothers did he have older than himself, and what were their names?
A. Three, Laman, Lemuel and Sam.³⁹

The remaining chapters walk the reader through the remainder of the Book of Mormon, concluding with Moroni's promise, his farewell, and Joseph Smith's testimony:

18. Q. How does Moroni say people can learn of the truth of the Book of Mormon?
A. By asking God, with a sincere heart, in the name of Christ.
19. Q. What is Moroni's last exhortation to all people?
A. To come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift.
20. Q. What is the testimony of the Prophet Joseph concerning the Book of Mormon?

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- A. “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”⁴⁰

During the 1880s, the *Juvenile Instructor* published numerous catechisms⁴¹ as well as a series of six “Motto Catechism Cards”—small cardboard cards with catechisms of various gospel topics printed on them.⁴² Card number one was about wisdom, number two about the knowledge of God, and so forth. Other catechism cards were published during the 1880s and 1890s by various Church organizations and private individuals.

Speaking during general conference in October 1899, Elder Francis M. Lyman stated, “With pleasure we refer to the value that the *Juvenile Instructor* . . . has been in aiding the great Sunday school work. . . . The publication in its columns of the catechisms on the Bible, Book of Mormon, Church History, etc. . . . have rendered it a necessity in our Sunday schools whose influence can scarcely be over-estimated.”⁴³

In 1898, the Deseret Sunday School Union published *The Latter-day Saints’ Sunday School Treatise*. A section devoted to catechisms informed Sunday School teachers and officers that catechization was “the art of asking questions in accordance with the laws of the most rapid proportionate development and culture of the pupil.” Readers were informed that catechism questions should be “adapted to the capacity of the pupil. Questions should lead the pupil from the known to the unknown. From the concrete to the abstract. From the simple to the complex.” Catechisms could help teachers with “the correcting of errors. The drawing out of new ideas. The inculcation of the principles of the Gospel. The training in obedience to the will of God.”⁴⁴ The discussion of catechisms also included these fourteen “Rules of Catechization” to assist teachers in creating and using their own gospel-centered catechisms:

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1. See that every question and every answer is a complete sentence.
2. Aim to have every question bear directly on the subject in hand.
3. Be clear, concise and logical.
4. Aim to never use more than three questions explanatory of the same point.
5. Repeat no pupil's answer habitually.
6. Have no habitual expletives, as, for instance, "Just so," "Right," etc.
7. Avoid direct questions, that is, such as can be answered by "Yes" or "No."
8. Ask more reflective than mere memorative questions.
9. Be natural, avoiding all affectation.
10. Avoid peculiarities in speech, gestures or voice.
11. Do not place yourself at the mercy of your class by non-preparation or by unguarded questions.
12. Prefer pupil's own language to mere quotations, but encourage exact quotations of scriptural passages.
13. Put the same question in several forms occasionally.
14. Be pointed in your questions, so that they will admit of but one perfect answer.⁴⁵

Sunday School teachers were informed that "pupils should feel as anxious to answer as the teacher to ask, and they should feel as free in asking questions."⁴⁶

THE INFLUENCE OF CATECHISMS

Nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint catechisms had a large influence on members of the Church, including future Church presidents. For example, Joseph Fielding Smith said, "I remember that one thing I did from the time I learned to read and write was to study the gospel. I read and

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As a child, Joseph Fielding Smith memorized much of John Jaques's Catechism for Children.

committed to memory the children's catechism and primary books on the gospel."⁴⁷ Future Church President Heber J. Grant "took advantage of the ward's new school. In fact, the ambitious and assertive boy was often at front stage. Excelling at memorization, he quickly mastered the Articles of Faith; the first five pages of John Jaques's *Catechism*; and Joseph Smith's health revelation, the Word of Wisdom, a frequent Sunday School recitation. . . . On one occasion, Heber pitted his declamatory skills against Ort [Orson F.] Whitney [and lost] . . . But 'Heber had another card up his sleeve,' Orson Whitney recalled many years later. 'He answered more questions from the

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Catechism than any other student in school, and won a prize equal to mine, which was the *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*.”⁴⁸

In an October 1874 session of general conference, Elder George A. Smith promised the young men of the Church “that if they will attend the Bible classes and study the catechism in use in our schools, and make themselves familiar with it, they will become so thoroughly informed in the principles of the Gospel and the evidences of it, that when called upon to go abroad to defend the doctrines of Zion they will be well prepared to do so.”⁴⁹

Almost thirty years later, during the October 1903 general conference, Elder Reed Smoot approvingly noted, “Not later than last Wednesday, September 30, Chancellor McCracken of New York University, in his address to the student body, made the following statement: ‘I wish we could require from every freshman a Sunday school diploma that would certify that he knew by heart the ten commandments, the sermon on the mount, a church catechism of some kind, a score of scripture psalms and best classic hymns.’”⁵⁰

The experience of Eli Peirce illustrates the effect that catechisms had on many members of the Church. On October 5, 1875, Peirce was working at the railroad office instead of attending general conference. He later explained:

One of my fellow employees was at the conference; I was not, because I did not care to be. He heard my name called [to serve as a full-time missionary], abruptly left the meeting and ran over to the telegraph office to call and tell me the startling news. This was the first intimation I had received that such a thing was contemplated. At the very moment this intelligence was being flashed over the wires, I was sitting lazily thrown back in an office rocking chair, my feet on the desk, reading a novel and simultaneously sucking an old Dutch pipe, of massive proportions, just to vary the monotony of cigar smoking.

As soon as I had been informed of what had taken place, I threw the novel in the waste basket, the pipe in a corner and started up town to buy a catechism. Have never read a novel nor smoked a pipe from that hour. Sent in my resignation the same day, to

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take effect at once, in order that I might have time for study and preparation.

Remarkable as it may seem, and has since appeared to me, a thought of disregarding the call, or of refusing to comply with the requirement, never once entered my mind.⁵¹

To Eli Peirce, purchasing and studying Latter-day Saint catechisms seemed to be closely linked with mission preparation and righteous living.

THE DECLINE OF LATTER-DAY SAINT CATECHISMS

Catechisms quickly faded from popular Latter-day Saint culture in the first decades of the twentieth century. Influential leaders such as Elder James E. Talmage spoke out against rote memorization, the favored method for teaching catechisms. He believed that religion “is more than knowledge, though that knowledge be classified and codified, and annotated to perfection. Religion is the application of the laws of God in our lives, the living up to all we have learned as to our duty, and it entails the obligation to so live until right life is a part of our natures and calls not for rule and rote at every turn.”⁵²

CATECHISMS TODAY

Catechisms can still be found today in many forms and in many places. For example, hymn 11 in the current hymnbook, “What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?,” is a catechism.⁵³ The Primary children’s song “He Sent His Son,” by Mabel Jones Gabbott, is also in the form of a catechism:

How could the Father tell the world of love and tenderness?

He sent his Son, a newborn babe, with peace and holiness.

How could the Father show the world the pathway we should go?

He sent his Son to walk with men on earth, that we may know.

How could the Father tell the world of sacrifice, of death?

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He sent his Son to die for us and rise with living breath.

What does the Father ask of us? What do the scriptures say?

Have faith, have hope, live like his Son, help others on their way.

What does he ask?

Live like his Son.⁵⁴

Primary children continue to memorize the Articles of Faith. The current missionary manual, *Preach My Gospel*, has several catechistic elements, as does the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth*. In a manner reminiscent of the worthiness questions asked during the 1856–57 reformation, every two years, members of the Church who wish to receive or renew a temple recommend are asked to answer—not just once, but twice—a series of questions that Saints in the nineteenth century would have recognized as a catechism. Catechisms may have faded from the collective consciousness of Latter-day Saints, but they can still easily be found.

NOTES

1. *Oxford English Dictionary*, “catechism” and “catechesis.”
2. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 4th ed., “catechism.”
3. Robert W. Blair, “Vocabulary, Latter-day Saint,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 4:1537; emphasis added.
4. *Testimony of Important Witnesses as Given in the Proceedings before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Protest Against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator from the State of Utah, to Hold His Seat* (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake Tribune, 1905), 207.
5. Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday-School Movement 1780–1917 and the American Sunday-School Union, 1817–1917* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1917), 73.
6. In the nineteenth century, catechisms were even produced for those who could not read. See Barbara H. Jaye and William P. Mitchell, eds., *Picturing Faith: A Facsimile Edition of the Pictographic Quechua Catechism in the Huntington Free Library* (Bronx, New York: Huntington Free Library, 1999); and *A Catechism to Be Taught*

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Orally to Those Who Cannot Read; Designed Especially for the Instruction of the Slaves (Raleigh: Office of "The Church Intelligencer," 1862).

7. Hervey Wilbur, *A Short Biblical Catechism, Containing Questions, Historical, Doctrinal, Practical and Experimental* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1816), v.
8. See Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1924), 58. "The Sunday evening was spent in repeating, by heart, the Church Catechism, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew; and in listening to a long sermon, read by Miss Miller, whose irrepressible yawns attested her weariness." See also Henry David Thoreau in *Walden and Other Writings of Henry David Thoreau*, ed. Brooks Atkinson (New York: The Modern Library, 1992), 8. Thoreau introduced one of his arguments with an appeal to catechisms: "When we consider what, to use the words of the catechism, is the chief end of man, and what are the true necessities and means of life, it appears as if men had deliberately chosen the common mode of living because they preferred it to any other."
9. Dean C. Jessee, "The John Taylor Nauvoo Journal," *BYU Studies* 23, no. 3 (Summer 1983): 2.
10. *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, ed. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 181.
11. George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–1886), 2:361.
12. Doctrine and Covenants section 77, received by Joseph Smith Jr. in March 1832 at Hiram, Ohio, is in the form of questions and answers about the book of Revelation, but there do not appear to be any indications that it was used as a catechism for educational purposes.
13. *Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints: Carefully Selected from the Revelations of God* (Kirtland, OH: F. G. Williams, 1835), 10.
14. Doctrine and Covenants (1835), 28.
15. Joseph Smith, comp., *Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 71.
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