

# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM

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Edited by  
Daniel H. Ludlow

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

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hua, Mexico, largely resulted from the Church's attempts to find refuge for polygamists under threat of prosecution during the 1880s (see ANTIPOLYGAMY LEGISLATION). Later efforts included the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming by 1900 and Kelsey, Texas, in 1901. Though Kelsey was one of only a handful of LDS settlements established outside the larger sphere of Latter-day Saint influence, the town still exhibited many of the characteristics of a planned Mormon village.

Early in the twentieth century, new colonization ceased and emphasis was placed on strengthening congregations throughout the world rather than on gathering to already predominantly LDS communities.

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RICHARD L. JENSEN

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## COLORADO, PIONEER SETTLEMENTS IN

The first Latter-day Saints in Colorado were predominantly from the American South. In 1846, converts from Mississippi, expecting to join Brigham Young and the pioneer company en route to the Great Basin, wintered at the site of present-day Pueblo after learning that the first company of Nauvoo emigrants would not leave the Missouri River until the next spring. A group of sick members of the MORMON BATTALION, including women and children, joined these Mississippi Saints, and all left Pueblo in time to reach the Great Salt Lake Valley in July 1847.

Southern converts also formed the nucleus of permanent LDS colonization in Colorado, wintering in Pueblo in 1877–1878 and settling in 1878 in the San Luis Valley. Joined by settlers from Sanpete County and elsewhere in Utah and by two families from New Mexico, they founded several settlements in the following decade. The San Luis

Stake, with headquarters at Manassa, was organized in 1883 and consisted of LDS colonists in Conejos County. Jack Dempsey, a son of expatriate southern Latter-day Saints, was born in Manassa and, as world heavyweight boxing champion, bore the nickname "Manassa Mauler."

Beginning as early as 1880, LDS settlers began to establish farms along the Mancos River in southwest Colorado. In 1901, after land in the nearby Fort Lewis Indian Reservation was made available for settlement, Latter-day Saints began to establish farms on the Fort Lewis Mesa. They constituted a majority of the settlers in that area, though Mancos itself was not a predominantly Mormon town. The Young Stake, organized in 1912, consisted of Latter-day Saints in Mancos, the Fort Lewis Mesa, and northwestern New Mexico.

Early growth of the Church along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains came largely through the proselytizing of the Western States Mission, long headquartered in Denver; branches of the Church were established there and in Englewood, Fort Collins, and Pueblo by 1930. Farther west, additional growth came in Alamosa and Grand Junction in the first third of the twentieth century. By 1990, after continued proselytizing and in-migration, there were 87,000 Latter-day Saints in Colorado.

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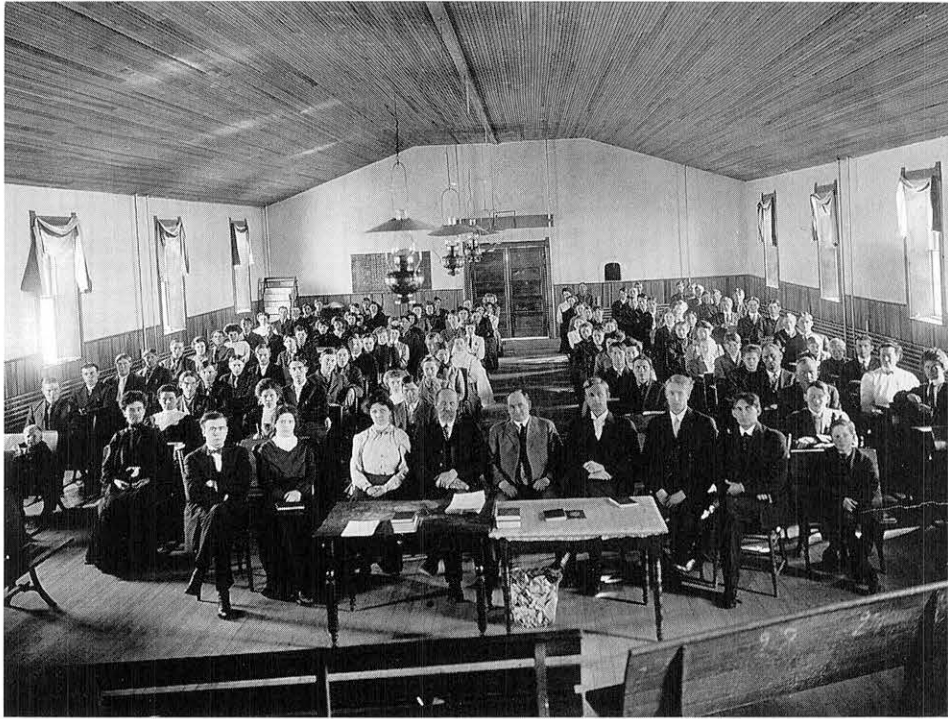
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RICHARD L. JENSEN

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## COLUMBUS, CHRISTOPHER

Latter-day Saints generally regard Columbus as having fulfilled a prophecy contained early in the Book of Mormon. NEPHI<sub>1</sub> recorded a vision of the future of his father's descendants. After foreseeing the destruction of his own seed, Nephi beheld a GENTILE "separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters," and saw that the Spirit of



Latter-day Saints attending classes in the San Luis Stake Academy, in Manassa, Colorado, December 1909. Each stake, wherever located, was counseled to appoint an academy principal and to operate a school for the general education of the Saints.

God “came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land” (1 Ne. 13:12).

Nephi appears to give an accurate account of Columbus’s motives. Even though he was well-acquainted with the sciences of his day and his voyages have been viewed by some historians as primarily an economic triumph of Spain over Portugal, Columbus apparently had bigger motives for his voyage and felt himself spiritually driven to discover new lands. Newly acknowledged documents show that medieval eschatology, the scriptures, and divine inspiration were the main forces compelling him to sail. His notes in the works of Pierre d’Ailly and his own unfinished *Book of Prophecies* substantiate his apocalyptic view of the world and his feelings about his own prophetic role.

Among the themes of this book was the conversion of the heathen. Columbus quoted Seneca, “The years will come . . . when the Ocean will loose the bonds by which we have been confined,

when an immense land shall lie revealed” (Watts, p. 94). He believed himself chosen by God to find that land and deliver the light of Christianity to the natives there. He was called *Christoferens* (the Christ-bearer). A map contemporaneous with his voyages depicts him bearing the Christ child on his shoulders across the waters. He believed that he was to help usher in the age of “one fold, and one shepherd,” citing John 10:16 (cf. 3 Ne. 15:21), and spoke of finding “the new heaven and new earth.”

Writing to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to gain financial support, Columbus testified that a voice had told him he had been watched over from infancy to prepare him for discovering the Indies. He felt that he was given divine keys to ocean barriers that only he could unlock (Merrill, p. 135). In a second letter, he emphasized his prophetic role: “Reason, mathematics, and maps of the world were of no use to me in the execution of the enterprise of the Indies. What Isaiah said [e.g., Isa. 24:15] was completely fulfilled” (Watts, p. 96). Unknowingly, Columbus also fulfilled Nephi’s prophecy.

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LOUISE G. HANSON

## COMFORTER

See: Holy Ghost

## COMMANDMENTS

Latter-day Saints believe that commandments are divine directives for righteous living; bring happiness and spiritual and temporal blessings; and are part of God's way to redeem his children and endow them with ETERNAL LIFE. Therefore, commandments provide not only a test of faith, obedience, and love for God and Jesus Christ but also an opportunity to experience love from God and joy both in this life and in the life to come. Commandments are received by REVELATION directly from deity or through his prophets. Written accounts of such revelations are contained in the scriptures, which include the BIBLE, the BOOK OF MORMON, the DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS, and the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

At the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, Joseph SMITH was designated a seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and elder. On that occasion, the Lord said to the Church, "Thou shalt give heed unto all [Joseph Smith's] words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; for his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith" (D&C 21:4–5; cf. D&C 1:37–38; 5:10; 68:34). Based upon these admonitions, members of the Church accept righteous instruction from those authorized by God as commandments binding upon the Church and upon individuals.

To the Church in 1831 the Lord restated the "first and great" commandment (cf. Matt. 22:37–38): "Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind,

and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him" (D&C 59:5). This reiteration was followed by the previously established divine injunctions not to steal, commit adultery, or kill (D&C 59:6).

In the Doctrine and Covenants, section 42, which the Lord identified as the "law of the Church" (D&C 42:2, 59), verses 19–27 reaffirm many admonitions from the TEN COMMANDMENTS. These basic commandments have been reiterated in successive DISPENSATIONS, or eras, in essentially the same form (Ex. 20:3–17; Deut. 5:6–21; Mosiah 12:34–36; D&C 42:19–27; cf. Matt. 5:17–48).

In Old Testament times, because the prohibition of certain outward acts was emphasized, the consequences of disobedience were seemingly stressed more than spiritual and physical redemption through obedience (*see* LAW OF MOSES). With a different emphasis the New Testament and the Book of Mormon accentuate the purifying process of obedience. Christ made it clear that the commandments were to include not only the deeds of men and women but also their thoughts and motives. In the SERMON ON THE MOUNT, he contrasted the old law and the new. For instance, to look upon a woman with lust in one's heart was defined as a type of adultery (Matt. 5:28). To become angry with neighbors placed one in danger of judgment (Matt. 5:21–22). Rather than seeking vengeance and "an eye for an eye," Jesus' followers were to turn the other cheek and go the extra mile (Matt. 5:38–42). To sum up the new law, Christ said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:43–44, 48; cf. 3 Ne. 12:43–48).

To those listeners in the Western Hemisphere who survived the destruction of A.D. 34, the resurrected Christ explained the relationship between the law and the gospel: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil; for verily I say unto you, one jot nor one tittle hath not passed away from the law, but in me it hath all been fulfilled. And behold, I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come