

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
Daniel H. Ludlow

*The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure
of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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more time for family activity. Streamlined Church organization was approved for small groups. He urged Church members to give charitable service and backed up his preaching with Church relief for victims of a burst dam in Idaho, an earthquake in Mexico City, and famine in Ethiopia.

Ironically, this peace-loving and kindly man became involved in a number of contentious public issues. First Presidency statements addressed the issues of homosexuality, abortion, and pornography, evincing serious concern about the permissiveness of American society. The First Presidency opposed installation of an MX missile system in the United States and objected doubly because it was projected for the Utah-Nevada desert. Controversy arose over the role of Church historical writing and was accentuated by the purported discovery of significant historical documents by forger Mark Hofmann (*see* FORGERIES OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS). The First Presidency endorsed equal rights for women but opposed the Equal Rights Amendment as an improper means to a desirable end. Sensitivity to women's issues resulted in Churchwide meetings for women and for girls, a statuary park in Nauvoo as a monument to women, authorization for women to pray in all meetings, speaking by women leaders in general conference.

No event in the twentieth-century Church matched the excitement attending President Kimball's announcement of receiving a revelation on priesthood in 1978, ending more than a century of limitation on admission of Church members of black African ancestry (*see* BLACKS) to priesthood office and temple ordinances. The announcement made no doctrinal statement, but simply said that the Lord had indicated that the time for change had come. The change was implemented immediately, giving great impetus to missionary work in Africa. The announcement of this revelation was added to the Doctrine and Covenants as Official Declaration—2.

From a man of whom little more than a brief caretaker administration was expected, remarkable achievements came. President Spencer W. Kimball's energetic leadership and willingness to break new ground produced twelve years of unequalled growth and change in the modern Church.

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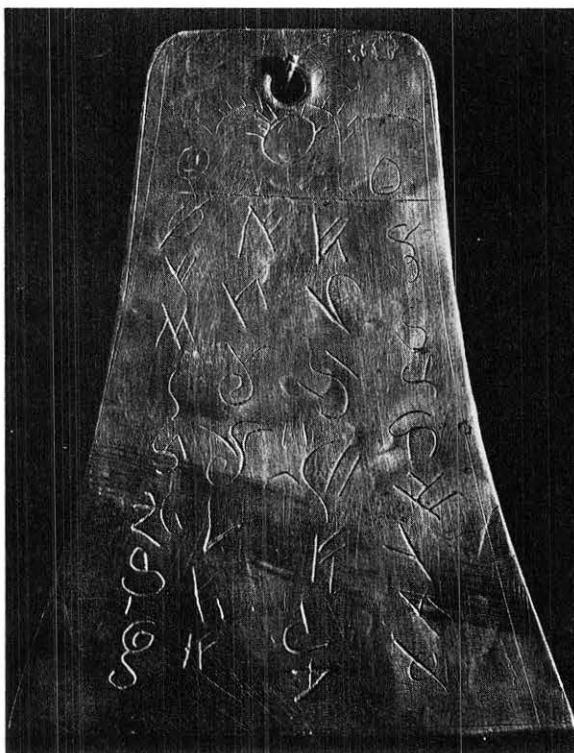
EDWARD L. KIMBALL

KINDERHOOK PLATES

In April 1843 some alleged New World antiquities were presented to Joseph SMITH for his opinion. The six 2 7/8-by-2 1/4-inch bell-shaped brass plates with strange engravings were reported to have been excavated in Kinderhook, Illinois, about seventy miles south of NAUVOO (HC 5:372-79). They were shown to Smith because of his claim to have translated the Book of Mormon from ancient GOLD PLATES taken from a New York hill in 1827.

The Kinderhook plates created a stir in Nauvoo; articles appeared in the Church press, an illustrated handbill was published, and some Latter-day Saints even claimed Joseph Smith said he could and would translate them. No translation exists, however, nor does any further comment from him indicating that he considered the plates genuine. After his assassination in June 1844, the incident was largely forgotten. Decades later two of the alleged discoverers announced that the plates were a hoax; an attempt to discredit Smith. By then, however, the Church was headquartered in Utah and little attention was paid to these strange disclosures.

Interest was kindled again in 1920 when the Chicago Historical Society acquired what appeared to be one of the original Kinderhook plates. Later the Chicago plate was subjected to a number of nondestructive tests, with inconclusive results. Then in 1980, the Chicago Historical Society gave permission for destructive tests, which were done at Northwestern University. Examination by a scanning electron microscope, a scanning auger microprobe, and X-ray fluorescence analysis proved conclusively that the plate was one of the



One of the Kinderhook Plates, a forgery used to try to embarrass Joseph Smith. Decorative and Industrial Arts Department, Chicago Historical Society.

Kinderhook six; that it had been engraved, not etched; and that it was of nineteenth-century manufacture. There thus appears no reason to accept the Kinderhook plates as anything but a frontier hoax.

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STANLEY B. KIMBALL

KINGDOM OF GOD

IN HEAVEN

The kingdom of God in HEAVEN is the place where God lives. It is a CELESTIAL KINGDOM, organized under "the divinely ordained system of government and dominion in all matters, temporal and spiritual" (*JC*, p. 789). It is a purposeful state of

existence, composed of intellectual and physical effort. It is a place of perfect order, ETERNAL PROGRESSION, everlasting family, and a fulness of joy.

The Savior taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, . . . Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:9–10). The kingdom of God is set up on the earth to prepare for the kingdom of God in heaven (D&C 65:5–6). The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph SMITH that this earth shall be "sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory, . . . that bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever" (D&C 88:17–20). When this occurs, this glorified celestial earth will become the kingdom of heaven for the Saints who have lived upon it, and then shall the meek and the righteous inherit it (Matt. 5:5; D&C 88:25–26; 130:9; *TPJS*, p. 181).

The purpose of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to help prepare its members to live forever in the kingdom of God in heaven.

GEORGE W. PACE

ON EARTH

The kingdom of God on earth exists wherever the priesthood of God is (*TPJS*, pp. 271–74). At present it is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church was established by divine authority to prepare its members to live forever in the CELESTIAL KINGDOM or kingdom of God in heaven. Its nature is ecclesiastical and nonpolitical. It "asserts no claim to temporal rule over nations; its scepter of power is that of the Holy Priesthood, to be used in the preaching of the gospel and in administering its ordinances for the salvation of mankind living and dead" (*JC*, p. 788).

The kingdom of God on the earth is the stone, spoken of by Daniel, that in the latter days would roll forth to fill the earth and never be destroyed (Dan. 2:34–45). It is the kingdom that the Savior prayed would come (Matt. 6:10), and he taught us to pray in like manner. In the MERIDIAN OF TIME Jesus set up the kingdom of God on earth, called and ordained apostles and prophets, bestowed the necessary priesthood authority (Matt. 16:19; John 15:16), and charged them with the responsibilities of the Church. After an APOSTASY removed that priesthood from earth, the authority to reestablish the kingdom of God on the earth was given to the