

# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM

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Edited by  
Daniel H. Ludlow

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

Macmillan Publishing Company  
New York

Maxwell Macmillan Canada  
Toronto

Maxwell Macmillan International  
New York Oxford Singapore Sydney

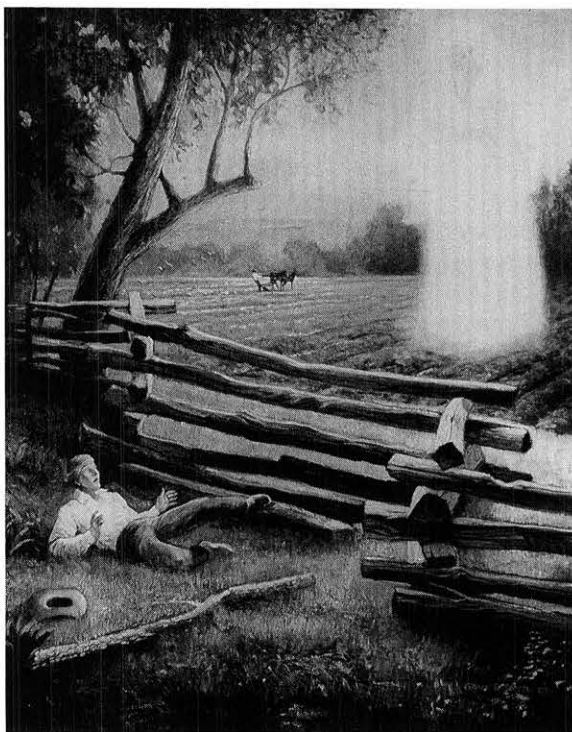


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instructed Joseph to return to this spot at the same time the following year and that he should continue to do so until the time had come for obtaining the plates (JS—H 1:51–54).

It is reported that during those years Joseph Smith also received visits from Mormon, Nephi, and other “angels of God unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days” (HC 4:537; cf. JD 17:374; Petersen, p. 131). Joseph shared with his family some of his experiences. His mother, Lucy Mack SMITH, recalled, “From this time forth, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, and we continued to get the children together every evening for the purpose of listening while he gave us a relation of the same. . . . He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious wor-



*The Fourth Appearance of Moroni to Joseph Smith*, by Gary E. Smith (1980s, oil on canvas, 36" × 42"). After seeing the angel Moroni three times the night before in his bedroom, Joseph Smith was so exhausted that he fell while attempting to cross a fence. Again the angel appeared, commanding Joseph to tell his father about the vision. Courtesy Blaine T. Hudson.

ship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them” (pp. 82–83).

Moroni temporarily reclaimed the plates and the interpreters after Martin HARRIS had lost the first 116 manuscript pages of the translation. Later, when Joseph Smith moved from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Fayette, New York, in June 1829, Moroni returned them to him there (Smith, pp. 149–50). Still later, Moroni showed the plates to the Three Witnesses (HC 1:54–55), took them after the translation had been completed (JS—H 1:60), and once more returned them briefly to Joseph to show to the Eight Witnesses (see BOOK OF MORMON WITNESSES).

In addition to Joseph and the Three Witnesses, Mary Whitmer also saw the angel and talked with him. Mary Whitmer said she was shown the gold plates when she conversed with Moroni (Peterson, pp. 114, 116). Other sources indicate that Moroni appeared also to W. W. Phelps, Heber C. KIMBALL, John TAYLOR, and Oliver Granger (Peterson, pp. 151–52).

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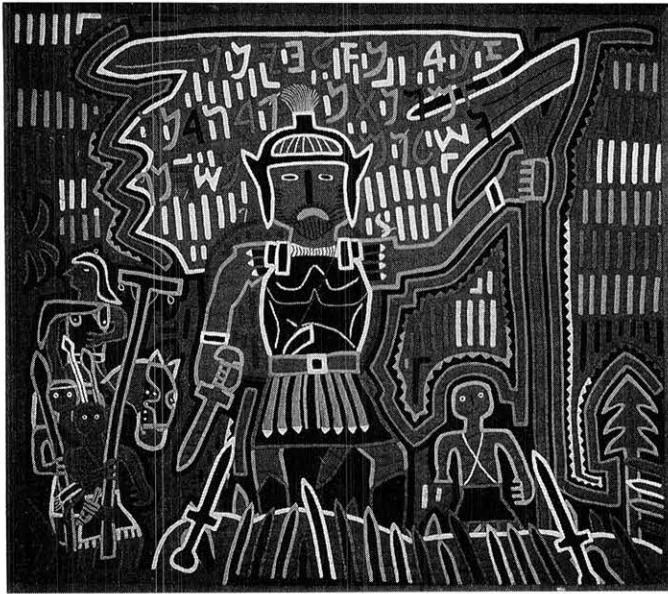
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ELDIN RICKS

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## MORONI<sub>1</sub>

The first Moroni mentioned in the Book of Mormon (died c. 56 B.C.) was twenty-five years old when he was appointed captain of the NEPHITE armies (Alma 43:16). He upheld the liberty of the Nephites against threats posed by invading armies and by “kingmen” who tried to reestablish a monarchy by force after failing to win popular support. Moroni rallied his people for a seven-year struggle by raising “the title of liberty,” a banner on which he wrote his reasons for defense, and by having his people covenant to defend their freedom and obey God’s commandments (Alma 46:12–13, 20).



*The Title of Liberty*, maker unknown, Cuna Indian from Panama (mola—cloth appliqué, reverse embroidery and embroidery, 13" × 15"). In rallying his people to defensive battle, Captain Moroni rent his coat and wrote upon it: "In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole . . . and he called it the title of liberty" (Alma 46:12–13). Church Museum of History and Art.

Despite many battles, Moroni did not become bloodthirsty. He operated within legal authority, and when he gained advantage over enemies, he offered them freedom if they would lay down their weapons and take an oath not to war again. He introduced new armor and fortifications and sought the direction of a prophet about what his armies should do (Alma 43:23; *see also* BOOK OF MORMON, HISTORY OF WARFARE IN). Five hundred years later, MORMON, the chief editor and compiler of the Book of Mormon, wrote, "If all men had been . . . like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever" (Alma 48:17). Mormon even named his son, MORONI<sub>2</sub>, after him.

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MELVIN J. THORNE

## MORONI<sub>2</sub>

Moroni<sub>2</sub> is the last prophet and author of the last book in the Book of Mormon. His life spanned the latter part of the fourth century and the early fifth century. He led ten thousand troops in the last battle against the LAMANITES, serving under his father MORMON, who was commander in chief. Prior to the final war, Mormon had abridged the PLATES of Nephi that covered a thousand years of his people's history. He commanded Moroni to conclude the Nephite record by writing "the sad tale of the destruction of [their] people" (Morm. 8:3) and to preserve all the sacred writings (Moro. 9:24).

After Moroni wrote the required postscript to his father's record and prophesied its future discovery (Morm. 8–9), he added an abridgment of ancient Jaredite engravings, a record of a nation that had inhabited the Western Hemisphere for approximately 1,700 years prior to the Nephites' arrival, or perhaps overlapping their arrival (the Book of Ether). "According to the will of the Lord," he then added ten concluding chapters on ORDINANCES, principles, and church practices that he called the Book of Moroni.

Moroni spoke with prophetic assurance of conditions in the LAST DAYS because "Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing" (Morm. 8:35). With fervor, he proclaimed Christ to be a God of miracles who is the same in all ages unless unbelief causes miracles to cease. He spoke with confidence of the divinity and teachings of Jesus Christ because "I have seen Jesus, and . . . he hath talked with me face to face, . . . even as a man telleth another in mine own language, concerning these things" (Ether 12:39).

Moroni also recorded prophecies of the BROTHER OF JARED, a Jaredite prophet, who helped lead his colony to the New World. These prophecies are "sealed" to come forth at a future day (Ether 4:1–7).

Moroni's last entry in the Book of Mormon was likely written about A.D. 421, thirty-six years after the final battle. He then finished writing the title page of the Book of Mormon and finally buried the Book of Mormon plates to preserve them for a future generation.

Fourteen hundred years later this same Moroni, then a resurrected being "sent from the presence of God," appeared to Joseph Smith, a seven-