

# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM

---



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



Copyright Brigham Young University, 1992.

Archived at Book of Mormon Central by Permission.

forting assurance, which comes to those who recognize the signs, that God's plans will not be frustrated (D&C 3:1; 10:43).

In addition to manifesting God's power, signs have been given as a witness of the coming of Christ to earth. Latter-day Saints believe that signs were given to prepare the people for his coming in the MERIDIAN OF TIME. King BENJAMIN declared, "And many signs, and wonders, and types, and shadows showed he unto them, concerning his coming" (Mosiah 3:15). MORMON reports that among the Book of Mormon people, signs and wonders abounded prior to the birth of Christ in the Holy Land (3 Ne. 1:4–22) and before his visit to the Western Hemisphere (3 Ne. 8–10).

Of particular interest in the present DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES are signs pertaining to the second coming of Christ (*see* SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST). The Lord has revealed the SIGNS OF THE TIMES (1 Thes. 5:1–2) to guide the faithful in their preparation for the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" (D&C 110:14)—that is, for Christ's second coming to the earth. Thus, the faithful watch for the signs so that when the hour comes, it will be great, but not dreadful to them (cf. 1 Thes. 5:2–4).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie noted at least fifty-one different signs, many of which pertain to natural phenomena, that have been foretold, pointing to the second coming of Christ. These include earthquakes, famines, depressions, economic turmoil, strikes, anarchy, violence, disasters, calamities, disease, plague, and pestilence. At the same time, both worldly knowledge and gospel knowledge increase, holy temples are built throughout the earth, Israel is gathered, and the true gospel is preached in all the world (*MD*, pp. 715–34).

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Smith, Joseph. *TPJS*, pp. 160, 198, 224, 262.

R. WAYNE SHUTE

---

## SIGN SEEKING

Signs are greeted by the faithful with reverence and appreciation (*see* SIGNS AS DIVINE WITNESS). On the other hand, a sign can become a condemnation to an unbeliever (D&C 63:7–11). Skeptics may rationalize the signs as aberrations of nature,

harden their heart, and not recognize or acknowledge God's "hand in all things" (D&C 59:21). When an unbeliever seeks for a sign he is tempting God and subjects himself to possible condemnation and the WRATH OF GOD. Two vivid Book of Mormon cases illustrating the consequences of unholy sign seeking are Sherem (Jacob 7:13–14) and Korihor (Alma 30:43–56). Furthermore, Jesus said to the Jewish rulers, "a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matt. 16:4). And in the latter days, Jesus explained that "he that seeketh signs shall see signs, but not unto salvation" (D&C 63:7). There is a great difference between signs to confirm or reward faith and the seeking of signs as an excuse for not exercising faith or as a substitute for faith.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Smith, Joseph. *TPJS*, pp. 157, 278.

Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*, p. 4. Salt Lake City, 1948.

R. WAYNE SHUTE

---

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

The phrase "signs of the times" was used by Jesus Christ when he reproved certain antagonists for not recognizing earlier prophecies relative to his second advent. He said they understood signs pertaining to the weather, but did not understand the "signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3). Recognizing such signs will enable discerning individuals to understand the unfolding of prophetic events in the final phase of the earth's history. Prophets before and after Christ have prophesied that there would be signs pertaining to events occurring prior to Christ's second coming (Joel 2:30–31; Amos 8:11–12; 2 Thes. 2:1–3; *TPJS*, pp. 286–87).

These signs include the coming of false Christs and false prophets and the deception of many who believe in them (Matt. 24:11, 23–24). Included also are wars, rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilence, and other natural calamities (Matt. 24:6, 27; Mark 13:5–8). Latter-day revelation provides additional insights concerning these eschatological catastrophes and the consequences of them for those who are unprepared (D&C 29:13–21; 45:25–45). The gospel of Jesus Christ will be preached throughout the earth as a sign that the Lord's coming draws near (JS—M