

What is the Book of Mormon?

The Book of Mormon is a religious text revered and read among groups in the [Latter-day Saint movement](#).

Joseph Smith was a religious figure from New York who claimed that in 1823, an angel revealed to him the existence of a book written on gold plates, which contained religious narratives about ancient Americans and the “fulness of the everlasting Gospel”. Five years after learning about them, Smith translated this book from its original “reformed Egyptian” into English with the aid of mystical instruments. This book, known as the Book of Mormon, was published in 1830 and became the foundation for many groups within the Latter-day Saint movement^{1 2}

Why is it so important?

The introduction of the Book of Mormon³ states:

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.

Preach My Gospel⁴ states:

An arch is a strong architectural structure made from wedge-shaped pieces that lean against each other. The middle piece, or keystone, is usually larger than the other wedges and locks the other stones in place. When Joseph Smith called the Book of Mormon “the keystone of our religion,” he taught that the Book of Mormon holds our religion together. President Ezra Taft Benson said that the Book of Mormon is the keystone in at least three ways:

- **Witness of Christ.** “The Book of Mormon is the keystone in our witness of Jesus Christ, who is Himself the cornerstone of everything we do. It bears witness of His reality with power and clarity.”

¹[Church History: The Book of Mormon](#)

²The Restoration of the Fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, A Bicentennial Proclamation to the World

³[Book of Mormon Introduction](#)

⁴[Preach My Gospel: What Is the Role of the Book of Mormon?](#)

- **Fulness of doctrine.** “The Lord Himself has stated that the Book of Mormon contains the ‘fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.’⁵... In the Book of Mormon we will find the fulness of [the doctrine] required for our salvation. And [it is] taught plainly and simply so that even children can learn the ways of salvation and exaltation.”
- **Foundation of testimony.** “Just as the arch crumbles if the keystone is removed, so does all the Church stand or fall with the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. The enemies of the Church understand this clearly. This is why they go to such great lengths to try to disprove the Book of Mormon, for if it can be discredited, the Prophet Joseph Smith goes with it. So does our claim to priesthood keys, and revelation, and the restored Church. But in like manner, if the Book of Mormon be true—and millions have now testified that they have the witness of the Spirit that it is indeed true—then one must accept the claims of the Restoration and all that accompanies it” ⁶

Who’s Book is it Anyway?

This website will approach and negotiate the Book of Mormon from the perspective of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ⁷ This does not mean in any way that the Book of Mormon is solely the property of that Church.

The Latter-day Saint movement has several denominations that all claim the Book of Mormon as their own. The reason that this website will not attempt to negotiate the differences between these denominations, but will instead focus on the Book of Mormon as a text that from the largest one is because the author of this website was raised in this tradition- and therefore has the most familiarity with it.

“Who of all these parties are right”

...or, are they all wrong together? ⁸

Below are an incomplete list of denominations that claim the Book of Mormon as their own within the Latter-day Saint movement.

- **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or LDS:** “The Book of Mormon is another witness of Jesus Christ.” ⁹

⁵[Doctrine and Covenants 20:9](#)

⁶[The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion, By President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Church](#)

⁷churchofjesuschrist.org

⁸[Joseph Smith—History 1:10](#)

⁹[Book of Mormon Gospel Topics](#)

- **Community of Christ or RLDS:** “The Community of Christ uses the Book of Mormon... because it confirms the message that Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God.”¹⁰
- **The Church of Jesus Christ or Bickertonite:** “The Book of Mormon is divinely inspired holy scriptures”¹¹
- **Church of Christ With the Elijah Message:** “We believe that... The Record of the Nephites is an added Witness for Christ”¹²
- **Apostolic United Brethren:** “We know the Book of Mormon is a true record”¹³
- **Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints or FLDS:** “We...believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God”¹⁴
- **Christian fellowships of “the Remnants” movement or Snufferites:** “The Book of Mormon... is the preeminent volume of scripture for this day.”¹⁵
- **Church of Christ (Temple Lot):** “the Book of Mormon is an added witness for Christ”¹⁶
- **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or Strangite:** “The Book of Mormon is a volume of holy scripture”¹⁷
- **The Real Illuminati:** “We, the Real Illuminati®, created a new American scripture—the Book of Mormon”¹⁸

¹⁰<https://cofchrist.org/our-beliefs/>

¹¹[Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#)

¹²[Articles of Faith \(Church of Christ With the Elijah Message\)](#)

¹³[Words from Rulon Allred](#)

¹⁴[Articles of Faith \(Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints\)](#)

¹⁵[Christian fellowships of “the Remnants” movement: Book of Mormon as Covenant](#)

¹⁶[Church of Christ \(Temple Lot\), Basic Beliefs](#)

¹⁷[Introduction & Witnesses](#)

¹⁸[A New American Scripture \(The Real Illuminati\)](#)