

# Joseph Smith Rough Stone Rolling

An Insider's View of Mormon Origins  
 Mormonism's Most Controversial Scripture  
 Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction  
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## TATE JONAS

[An Insider's View of Mormon Origins](#) Harvard University Press  
 In this ground-breaking book, D. Michael Quinn masterfully reconstructs an earlier age, finding ample evidence for folk magic in nineteenth-century New England, as he does in Mormon founder Joseph Smith's upbringing. Quinn discovers that Smith's world was inhabited by supernatural creatures whose existence could be both symbolic and real. He explains that the Smith family's treasure digging was not unusual for the times and is vital to understanding how early Mormons interpreted developments in their history in ways that differ from modern perceptions. Quinn's impressive research provides a much-needed background for the environment that produced Mormonism. This thoroughly researched examination into occult traditions surrounding Smith, his family, and other founding Mormons cannot be understated. Among the practices no longer a part of Mormonism are the use of divining rods for revelation, astrology to determine the best times to conceive children and plant crops, the study of skull contours to understand personality traits, magic formula utilized to discover lost property, and the wearing of protective talismans. Ninety-four photographs and illustrations accompany the text.

**Mormonism's Most Controversial Scripture** Oxford University Press

Over the past thirty years, an enormous amount of research has been conducted into Mormon origins—Joseph Smith's early life, the Book of Mormon, the prophet's visions, and the restoration of priesthood authority. Longtime LDS educator Grant H. Palmer suggests that most Latter-day Saints remain unaware of the significance of these discoveries, and he gives a brief survey for anyone who has ever wanted to know more about these issues. He finds that much of what we take for granted as literal history has been tailored over the years—slightly modified, added to, one aspect emphasized over another—to the point that the original narratives have been nearly lost. What was experienced as a spiritual or metaphysical event, something from a different dimension, often has been refashioned as if it were a physical, objective occurrence. This is not how the first Saints interpreted these events. Historians who have looked closer at the foundational stories and source documents have restored elements, including a nineteenth-century world view, that have been misunderstood, if not forgotten.

*Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction* Convergent Books

For two centuries, Jesus has connected the Latter-day Saints to broader currents of Christianity, even while particular Mormon beliefs have been points of differentiation. From the author of the

definitive life of Brigham Young comes a biography of the Mormon Jesus that enriches our understanding of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

*Mormon Enigma* University of Illinois Press

The Pearl of Greatest Price narrates the history of Mormonism's fourth volume of scripture, canonized in 1880. The authors track its predecessors, describe its several components, and assess their theological significance within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Four principal sections are discussed, along with attendant controversies associated with each. The Book of Moses purports to be a Mosaic narrative missing from the biblical version of Genesis. Too little treated in the scholarship on Mormonism, these chapters, produced only months after the Book of Mormon was published, actually contain the theological nucleus of Latter-day Saint doctrines as well as a virtual template for the Restoration Joseph Smith was to effect. In *The Pearl of Greatest Price*, the author covers three principal parts that are the focus of many of the controversies engulfing Mormonism today. These parts are *The Book of Abraham*, *The Book of Moses*, and *The Joseph Smith History*. Most controversial of all is the *Book of Abraham*, a production that arose out of a group of papyri Smith acquired, along with four mummies, in 1835. Most of the papyri disappeared in the great Chicago Fire, but surviving fragments have been identified as Egyptian funerary documents. This has created one of the most serious challenges to Smith's prophetic claims the LDS church has faced. LDS scholars, however, have developed several frameworks for vindicating the inspiration of the resulting narrative and Smith's calling as a prophet. The author attempts to make sense of Smith's several, at times divergent, accounts of his First Vision, one of which is canonized as scripture. He also assesses the creedal nature of Smith's "Articles of Faith," in the context of his professed anti-creedalism. In sum, this study chronicles the volume's historical legacy and theological indispensability to the Latter-day Saint tradition, as well as the reasons for its resilience and future prospects in the face of daunting challenges.

**A Contribution to Mormon Philosophy** Columbia University Press

In this study of Mormonism and its relationship with Protestant white America in the nineteenth century, historian W. Paul Reeve examines the way in which Protestants racialized Mormons by using physical differences to define Mormons as non-white in order to justify the expulsion of Mormons from Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, and, in general, to deny Mormon whiteness and thereby exclude the new religious group from access to political, social, and economic power.--Adapted from publisher description.

*Falling in Love with Joseph Smith* Harvard University Press  
 Presents the life of the founder of the Church of Latter Day Saints, from his hardscrabble early life in rural New York, to the visions

that inspired *The Book of Mormon*, and his untimely death at the hands of a mob in 1844.

[Book of Mormon Translation on Trial](#) Polariteck

An extraordinary story of faith and violence in nineteenth-century America, based on previously confidential documents from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Compared to the Puritans, Mormons have rarely gotten their due, treated as fringe cultists at best or marginalized as polygamists unworthy of serious examination at worst. In Kingdom of Nauvoo, the historian Benjamin E. Park excavates the brief life of a lost Mormon city, and in the process demonstrates that the Mormons are, in fact, essential to understanding American history writ large. Drawing on newly available sources from the LDS Church—sources that had been kept unseen in Church archives for 150 years—Park recreates one of the most dramatic episodes of the 19th century frontier. Founded in Western Illinois in 1839 by the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith and his followers, Nauvoo initially served as a haven from mob attacks the Mormons had endured in neighboring Missouri, where, in one incident, seventeen men, women, and children were massacred, and where the governor declared that all Mormons should be exterminated. In the relative safety of Nauvoo, situated on a hill and protected on three sides by the Mississippi River, the industrious Mormons quickly built a religious empire; at its peak, the city surpassed Chicago in population, with more than 12,000 inhabitants. The Mormons founded their own army, with Smith as its general; established their own courts; and went so far as to write their own constitution, in which they declared that there could be no separation of church and state, and that the world was to be ruled by Mormon priests. This experiment in religious utopia, however, began to unravel when gentiles in the countryside around Nauvoo heard rumors of a new Mormon marital practice. More than any previous work, Kingdom of Nauvoo pieces together the haphazard and surprising emergence of Mormon polygamy, and reveals that most Mormons were not participants themselves, though they too heard the rumors, which said that Joseph Smith and other married Church officials had been “sealed” to multiple women. Evidence of polygamy soon became undeniable, and non-Mormons reacted with horror, as did many Mormons—including Joseph Smith's first wife, Emma Smith, a strong-willed woman who resisted the strictures of her deeply patriarchal community and attempted to save her Church, and family, even when it meant opposing her husband and prophet. A raucous, violent, character-driven story, Kingdom of Nauvoo raises many of the central questions of American history, and even serves as a parable for the American present. How far does religious freedom extend? Can religious and other minority groups survive in a democracy where the majority dictates the law of the land? The Mormons of Nauvoo, who initially believed in the promise of American democracy,

would become its strongest critics. Throughout his absorbing chronicle, Park shows the many ways in which the Mormons were representative of their era, and in doing so elevates nineteenth century Mormon history into the American mainstream.

[The Mormon Jesus](#) Oxford University Press

"The Prayer Wheel is a modern interpretation of the Liesborn Prayer Wheel, a beautiful, almost wholly forgotten, scripture-based mode of prayer that was developed in a medieval times. The Liesborn Prayer Wheel resurfaced in 2015 in a small private gallery near New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. It faithfully and beautifully presents seven prayer paths for personal or group use. Each path invites contemplation on the "big ideas" of the Christian faith--the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and key words from the life of Christ. In the tradition of lectio divina and walking a labyrinth, The Prayer Wheel simply and directly takes readers into a daily, wholly unique encounter with God. As the prayers in this book unfold, readers will find an appealing guide for contemplation, a way of seeing God in new ways, and an essential new tool for Christian formation."--Amazon.com

[Foundational Texts of Mormonism](#) Oxford University Press

A psychological biography of Joseph Smith presents a comprehensive account of his life, set against a backdrop of theology, local and national politics, Smith family dynamics, organizational issues, and interpersonal relations.

[Latter-Day Saint Essays](#) Oxford University Press, USA

Beginning in the 1830s, at least thirty-three women married Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism. These were passionate relationships which also had some longevity, except in cases such as that of two young sisters, one of whom was discovered by Joseph's first wife, Emma, in a locked bedroom with the prophet. Emma remained a steadfast opponent of polygamy throughout her life. The majority of Smith's wives were younger than he, and one-third were between fourteen and twenty years of age. Another third were already married, and some of the husbands served as witnesses at their own wife's polyandrous wedding. In addition, some of the wives hinted that they bore Smith children--most notably Sylvia Sessions's daughter Josephine--although the children carried their stepfather's surname. For all of Smith's wives, the experience of being secretly married was socially isolating, emotionally draining, and sexually frustrating. Despite the spiritual and temporal benefits, which they acknowledged, they found their faith tested to the limit of its endurance. After Smith's death in 1844, their lives became even more "lonely and desolate." One even joined a convent. The majority were appropriated by Smith's successors, based on the Old Testament law of the Levirate, and had children by them, though they considered these guardianships unsatisfying. Others stayed in the Midwest and remarried, while one moved to California. But all considered their lives unhappy, except for the joy they found in their children and grandchildren.

[Mormons and the Unfinished Business of American Secularism](#) Vintage

When award-winning documentary film writer Jane Barnes was working on the PBS Frontline/American Experience special series The Mormons, she was surprised to find herself passionately drawn to Joseph Smith. The product of an Episcopalian, "WASPy" family, she couldn't remember ever having met a Mormon before her work on the series--much less having dallied with the idea of converting to a religion shrouded in controversy. But so it was: She was smitten with a man who claimed to have translated the word of God by peering into the dark of his hat. In this brilliantly written book, Barnes describes her experiences working on the PBS series as she moved from secular curiosity to the brink of conversion to Mormonism. It all began when she came across Joseph Smith's early writings. She was delighted to discover how funny and utterly unlike he was--and how widely divergent his wild yet profound visions of God were from the Church of Latter-day Saints as we know it today. Her fascination deepened when, much to her surprise, she learned that her eighth cousin Anna Barnes converted to Mormonism in 1833. Through Anna, Barnes follows her family's close involvement with Smith and the crises caused by his controversial practice of polygamy. Barnes' unlikely path helps her gain a newfound respect for the innovative American spirit that lies at the heart of Mormonism--and for a religion that is, in many ways, still coming into its own. An intimate portrait of the man behind one of America's fastest growing religions, *Falling in Love with Joseph Smith* offers a surprising and provocative window into the Mormon experience.

[Martin Harris](#) Hyperink Inc

During the 20th century, an organized objective to rewrite Latter-day Saint history from within, unbeknownst to the general Church membership, went head to head behind the scenes with traditional leaders of the Church. Meet the main players of this conflict: Leonard Arrington--progressive "Father of New Mormon History," Ezra Taft Benson--traditionalist defender, and many

other advocates of traditionalist and progressive Latter-day Saint history. As traditionalists and progressives sparred during the 1970s-1980s, a covert cold war commenced in Salt Lake City, Utah, with the progressives spying on the traditionalists, and the traditionalists spying on the progressives. Secret informants, leaked documents, falsified reports, and even employed pseudonyms--all were part of this struggle to dominate Latter-day Saint history. But how did, and does, this secret conflict affect you? Progressives, working in the Church History Department and at Brigham Young University, claimed 40 years ago that it would take a generation to re-educate the Church. Where are we now in that re-education?

[The Prayer Wheel](#) Joseph Smith Rough Stone Rolling

Founder of the largest indigenous Christian church in American history, Joseph Smith published the 584-page Book of Mormon when he was twenty-three and went on to organize a church, found cities, and attract thousands of followers before his violent death at age thirty-eight. Richard Bushman, an esteemed cultural historian and a practicing Mormon, moves beyond the popular stereotype of Smith as a colorful fraud to explore his personality, his relationships with others, and how he received revelations. An arresting narrative of the birth of the Mormon Church, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* also brilliantly evaluates the prophet's bold contributions to Christian theology and his cultural place in the modern world.

[Rough Stone Rolling](#) Greg Kofford Books Incorporated

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[Rough Stone Rolling](#) Vintage

Focuses primarily on the years of McKay's presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during some of the most turbulent times in American and world history.

[The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith](#) OUP USA

After living with Joseph Smith for seven years, biographer Richard Lyman Bushman went "on the road" for a year. After delivering the final proofs of his landmark study, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* to Knopf in July 2005, Bushman crisscrossed the country from coast to coast, delivering numerous addresses on Joseph Smith at scholarly conferences, academic symposia, and firesides. This startlingly candid memoir concludes eleven months later with an article written for *Common-Place* in August 2006. Bushman confesses to hope and humility, an unexpected numbness when he expected moments of triumph, and genuine apprehension as he awaits reviews. He frets at the polarization that dismissed the book as either too hard on Joseph Smith or too easy. He yields to a very human compulsion to check sales figures on amazon.com, but partway through the process stepped back with the recognition, "The book seems to be cutting its own path now, just as [I] hoped." For readers coming to grips with the ongoing puzzle of the Prophet and the troublesome dimensions of their own faith, Richard Bushman, a temple sealer and stake patriarch but also a prize-winning scholar, openly but not insistently presents himself as a believer. "I believe enough to take Joseph Smith seriously," he says. He draws comfort both from what he calls his "mantra" ("Today I will be a follower of Jesus Christ") and also from ongoing engagement with the intellectual challenges of explaining Joseph Smith.

[Leonard Arrington and the Progressive Rewriting of Latter-day Saint History](#) University of Utah Press

From the perspective of Protestant America, nineteenth-century Mormons were the victims of a peculiar zealotry, a population deranged--socially, sexually, even racially--by the extravagances of belief they called "religion." *Make Yourselves Gods* offers a counter-history of early Mormon theology and practice, tracking the Saints from their emergence as a dissident sect to their renunciation of polygamy at century's end. Over these turbulent decades, Mormons would appear by turns as heretics, sex-radicals, refugees, anti-imperialists, colonizers, and, eventually, reluctant monogamists and enfranchised citizens. Reading Mormonism through a synthesis of religious history, political theology, native studies, and queer theory, Peter Coviello deftly crafts a new framework for imagining orthodoxy, citizenship, and the fate of the flesh in nineteenth-century America. What emerges is a story about the violence, wild beauty, and extravagant imaginative power of this era of Mormonism--an impassioned book with a keen interest in the racial history of sexuality and the unfinished business of American secularism.

[An Author's Diary](#) Greg Kofford Books

Presents the life of the founder of the Church of Latter Day Saints, from his hardscrabble early life in rural New York, to the visions that inspired The Book of Mormon, and his untimely death at the

hands of a mob in 1844.

[The Murder of Joseph Smith and the Fate of the Mormon Church](#) University of Chicago Press

ABOUT THE BOOK By 1838, tensions between Mormon settlers and residents of western Missouri reached dangerous levels, and violence soon erupted. As more and more members of the newly created church began settling in the growing Mormon strongholds of Independence, Jackson County, Missouri and Daviess County, Missouri, residents of these areas began fearing that the new, unfamiliar, and seemingly strange religious sect would soon take over and dominate local politics. These worries, combined with the vigilantism so common to frontier America, created an extremely volatile situation, and Missourians began forming mobs and militias to stamp out the growing Mormon threat. The 1838 Mormon War began when local militias attempted to forcibly prohibit Mormon settlers from voting in local elections on August 6, 1838. This clash eventually became a protracted struggle in which men were killed and property destroyed on both sides. In October 1838, the Mormon militia met the Missouri state militia on the banks of the Crooked River, and "The Battle of Crooked River" ensued. In the wake of these battles, anti-Mormon sentiment among Missourians only increased. On October 27, 1838, Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued an official extermination order, making it legal to kill Mormons, in an effort to drive them from the state. Prodded on by this legislative act, militias and mobs increased their pressure on the Mormons, finally arresting several of the church's most important leaders, Joseph Smith among them. Smith and six other prominent Mormon leaders were taken away from the Mormon settlement in Independence to the town of Richmond, in Ray County, Missouri. Here, they were held captive in a small house for several weeks while they awaited the completion of their trial. Conditions in this makeshift prison were unpleasant, as Parley P. Pratt, one of the men imprisoned with Smith, described their situation: "[They] placed us in a room without beds, chairs, or any other convenience, and chained seven of us all together, with a kind of trace chain, extending from one man's ankle to another, and fastened round one ankle of each with a padlock. In this situation we were guarded night and day by about ten men at a time, who stood over us with loaded pistols in hand. At night we were all stretched on the floor in a row upon our backs, and tried to sleep, but the hard floor, the cold, and the inability to change our position because of our chains, and the noise of the guards effectually prevented sleep. EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK Caught between their belief that God had commanded them to settle in Independence and the increasing antagonism of their neighbors, Mormons remained in Missouri for at least a five more years, although their sense of establishing a Mormon gathering place had been deeply disrupted. Just as the situation grew worse for Joseph's church in Missouri, things became difficult in Kirtland as well. Toward the end of 1836, Joseph was a leading founder and organizer of a special bank called the Kirtland Safety Society Bank. When it failed a short time later, many Mormons became upset, frustrated, and disillusioned, accusing Joseph of misconduct. The animosity toward Joseph--from Mormons, ex-Mormons, and non-Mormons alike--continued to grow until he eventually fled Kirtland in January of 1838 to escape mob violence. Joseph's situation in 1838 grew worse as many Mormons suffered violence at the hands of anti-Mormon mobs on the day of a local election in Gallatin, Daviess County, Missouri. In response, Joseph asked Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs for protection... ..buy the book to continue reading!

[My Search for the Real Prophet](#) Penguin

On June 27, 1844, a mob stormed the jail in the dusty frontier town of Carthage, Illinois. Clamorous and angry, they were hunting down a man they saw as a grave threat to their otherwise quiet lives: the founding prophet of Mormonism, Joseph Smith. They wanted blood. At thirty-nine years old, Smith had already lived an outsized life. In addition to starting the Church of Latter-day Saints and creating his own "Golden Bible" - the Book of Mormon - he had worked as a water-dowser and treasure hunter. He'd led his people to Ohio, then Missouri, then Illinois, where he founded a city larger than fledgling Chicago. He was running for President. And, secretly, he had married more than thirty women. In *American Crucifixion*, Alex Beam tells how Smith went from charismatic leader to public enemy: how his most seismic revelation - the doctrine of polygamy - created a rift among his people; how that schism turned to violence; and how, ultimately, Smith could not escape the consequences of his ambition and pride. Mormonism is America's largest and most enduring native religion, and the "martyrdom" of Joseph Smith is one of its transformational events. Smith's brutal assassination propelled the Mormons to colonize the American West and claim their place in the mainstream of American history. *American Crucifixion* is a gripping story of scandal and violence, with deep roots in our national identity.

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