Ezra Taft Benson was ordained and set apart as the thirteenth President of the Church on November 10, 1985. During his administration he emphasized the Book of Mormon and the theme “Come Unto Christ” in strengthening missionary work and families.

Church and all the children of Zion out from under condemnation—the scourge and judgment” (Ensign 16 [May 1986]:78; see D&C 84:54–58). To that end, his address “The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God” was repeated in regional conferences throughout the Church. This emphasis greatly accelerated the distribution and reading of the Book of Mormon and “brought more souls to Christ, both within and without the Church, than ever before” (Ensign 18 [Nov. 1988]:4).

Continuing to help set the Church in order and perfect the Saints, he delivered another landmark address entitled “Beware of Pride” and gave separate messages to the children, young men, young women, single adult brethren, single adult sisters, fathers, mothers, and the elderly.

Throughout the years, the home and family were the center of many of President Benson’s conference messages, such as his widely broadcast address “Our Homes—Divinely Ordained” (IE 52 [May 1949]:278–79, 332–33) and his frequent reference to his goal that there be “no empty chairs” in the family circle in the next life (Dew, p. 363). He has manifested a great love for the children and youth of the Church.

He was President during the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution and, as one of its greatest defenders, he delivered messages honoring this divine document and its inspired framers (The Constitution: A Heavenly Banner, Salt Lake City, 1986).

During his presidency, new temples were announced and several were dedicated, and missionary work expanded around the world with special opportunities being afforded, particularly in Eastern Europe, in countries previously closed.

For nearly fifty years his thousands of speeches stressed mankind’s three great loyalties—loyalty to God, loyalty to family, and loyalty to country. His life has been exemplary in striving to live those loyalties as a prophet, a patriarch, and a patriot.

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BIBLE
[The entry on the Bible is designed as an overview of the positive LDS appraisal and extensive use of this scriptural collection. Articles under this entry are:

Bible
LDS Belief in the Bible
King James Version
LDS Publication of the Bible
The first article explains the importance of the Bible among the standard works of the Church. The second
In addition to Sunday School instruction, teenagers attending SEMINARY classes spend two years of their four-year curriculum on the Bible. A similar emphasis is found in college-level religion classes in the universities and colleges of the Church educational system and in INSTITUTE OF RELIGION classes at other universities and colleges. LDS missionaries often refer to Bible passages as they teach investigators of the Church. One of the strongest demonstrations of the importance of Bible study to the Latter-day Saints is found in the adult Sunday School program. In the Gospel Doctrine classes, two of every four years are devoted to reading, studying, and discussing the Bible. Another strong evidence of LDS commitment to the Bible is the effort and expense incurred to produce the LDS PUBLICATION OF THE BIBLE in 1979. The General Authorities of the Church frequently quote from the Bible in their writings and general and stake conference addresses. Thus, the Bible forms an important gospel foundation for all Church members, from the newly baptized to the presiding leaders.

PREVALENT BIBLICAL TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES. Among the teachings found in the Bible, some concepts receive special emphasis. For example, Latter-day Saints readily identify with the Old Testament pattern of God speaking through living prophets (Amos 3:7), a pattern visible in the Church today. They also relate to the house of Israel through their individual PATRIARCHAL BLESSINGS, which usually identify a genealogical line back to one of the tribes of Israel. The concept of a covenant people, as taught in Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy, conforms to LDS beliefs about being a covenant people today. Many laws and commandments, in particular a health code, distinguish both ancient Israel and its modern spiritual counterpart in the Church (Lev. 11; D&C 89; see WORD OF WISDOM). The wanderings of ancient Israel and the challenges in settling the PROMISED LAND also parallel early LDS history, so much so that Brigham YOUNG has been called a modern Moses (e.g., Arrington, 1985; see also PERSECUTION; PIONEERS).

New Testament teachings that are emphasized among Latter-day Saints include the teachings of the Savior and the apostles on basic gospel principles, especially faith and repentance, and covenant ordinances, particularly baptism and the GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST (see FIRST PRINCIPLES...
of the gospel), Latter-day parallels to the New Testament Church organization, priesthood offices, and missionary work have their counterparts in contemporary LDS beliefs, practices, and Church organization (see organization of the church in new testament times).

Biblical Emphasis Within the Book of Mormon. Among Old Testament writings, those of Moses, Isaiah, and Malachi receive special attention from Latter-day Saints because of their prominence within the Book of Mormon. The teachings of Moses as found in the Pentateuch (an expanded portion of Genesis 1–6 being available also in the pearl of great price) provide the foundation for understanding the Mosaic dispensation of the house of Israel. The Book of Mormon record, which originated with lehi and with the people of zarahemla (see mulek), came mostly out of this Israelite setting. The record includes Adam and Eve and events in the Garden of Eden (e.g., 2 Ne. 2:15–25), and references to the flood at the time of Noah (e.g., Alma 10:22), to people divinely led to the Americas at the time of the tower of babel (Ether 1:3–5, 33), to events in the lives of the patriarchs (e.g., 2 Ne. 3:4–16), and to the calling, works, and words of Moses (e.g., 1 Ne. 17:23–31; 2 Ne. 3:16–17; see also law of Moses). The fifth chapter of 1 Nephi reviews the biblical records that lehi’s family brought out of Jerusalem (see book of mormon plates and records) and, along with 1 Nephi 17, highlights key biblical events, particularly the Israelite exodus from Egypt, although without the details found in the Pentateuch. The examples and teachings of Old Testament prophets, judges, and kings were also part of the biblical records of the community of lehi. Because this group lived under the law of Moses (2 Ne. 25:24), Old Testament religious practices are continued in the Book of Mormon.

Fully one-third of the writings of Isaiah are found in the Book of Mormon, making Isaiah the most frequently quoted biblical book there. Twenty-two of the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah are quoted in whole or in part in the Book of Mormon (a total of 433 of Isaiah’s 1,292 verses). Book of Mormon prophets and writers typically selected those chapters highlighting God’s covenant relationships and his promises to Israel, the role and calling of the messiah, and prophecies concerning the last days. These themes are prevalent in contemporary LDS theology as well (A of F 3, 4, 9, 10).

Malachi’s teachings in the Book of Mormon are important because the resurrected Jesus quoted them and thus emphasized them (cf. 3 Ne. 24–25; Mal. 3–4; D&C 2:1–3). Malachi’s words concerning a messenger sent to prepare the way for Christ’s second coming, the payment of tithes and offerings, and the latter-day mission of elijah thus form another important nucleus of Old Testament teachings within LDS society.

Because the main Book of Mormon colony left Jerusalem approximately six hundred years before the beginning of the New Testament period, Book of Mormon writers did not have access to New Testament records. However, they had access to two important sources of doctrines paralleling some of the New Testament: the resurrected Christ and divine revelation. The resurrected Christ delivered to his hearers in the Americas a sermon essentially the same as the one he had delivered near the Sea of Galilee. He also gave important additions and clarifications that focus on him as the Redeemer and Lord, on the fulfillment of the law of Moses, and on the latter days (3 Ne. 11–18; see also beatitudes; sermon on the mount). In addition, he amplified teachings recorded in John 10, especially verse 16, about his role as the Good Shepherd of the scattered sheep of Israel (3 Ne. 15:12–24). Mormon’s important teachings about baptism and about faith, hope, and charity parallel New Testament teachings, especially those of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13.

Is the Bible Complete? Latter-day Saints revere the Bible as the word of God revealed to humankind. However, Joseph Smith recognized that translations do not reflect totally and exactly the original words and intentions of the ancient prophets and other biblical writers. Thus, in the Wentworth Letter he wrote, “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly” (A of F 8). Joseph Smith observed that “our latitude and longitude can be determined in the original Hebrew with far greater accuracy than in the English version. There is a grand distinction between the actual meaning of the prophets and the present translation” (TPJS, pp. 290–91). While Latter-day Saints accept rather explicitly what the Bible now says, they realize that more is to be accounted for than is available in the extant biblical record.
In addition to difficulties associated with translating from ancient to modern languages, other scriptures also declare that some parts of the original biblical text have been lost or corrupted (e.g., 1 Ne. 13:28–29; D&C 6:26–27; 93:6–18). Joseph Smith commented on the Bible's incompleteness: "It was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of men, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled" (TPJS, pp. 10–11). He later said, "Much instruction has been given to man since the beginning which we do not possess now... We have what we have, and the Bible contains what it does contain" (TPJS, p. 61). The Prophet Joseph further stated, "I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors" (TPJS, p. 327). Thus, the elements of mistranslation, incompleteness, and other errors weaken the Bible; but the spirit of its messages still reveals enough of God's word to fulfill his appointed purposes. Joseph Smith summarized thus: "Through the kind providence of our Father a portion of His word which He delivered to His ancient saints, has fallen into our hands and is presented to us with a promise of a reward if obeyed, and with a penalty if disobeyed" (TPJS, p. 61). Latter-day Saints have continued to trust in the general accuracy of the biblical texts even though they know that that text may not always be correct. Thus, they study and revere the Bible, especially in the context of other scriptures and modern revelation, which have much to say about the Bible and how it is to be interpreted, and as they study they ponder and pray that they may receive inspiration from God and come to understand the Bible’s messages as they need to be applied in their lives (cf. Moro. 10:3–5).

**First Presidency’s Endorsement of Bible Reading.** Each of the Presidents of the Church has encouraged Latter-day Saints to read the scriptures and to apply scriptural teachings in their lives, as the scriptures also admonish (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Ne. 19:23). As a demonstration of this emphasis, in 1983, a year proclaimed as the "Year of the Bible" in the United States, the members of the First Presidency of the Church issued a strong statement in support of Bible reading and application: "We commend to all people everywhere the daily reading, pondering and heeding of the divine truths of the Holy Bible." They also declared the Church’s attitude toward the Bible by saying that "the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the Holy Bible as essential to faith and doctrine" and that the Church is committed to Bible reading and scholarship as demonstrated by the publishing of an enhanced edition of the King James Version. "Moreover," they continued, "the Holy Bible is the textbook for adult, youth and children’s classes throughout the Church each year."

In the same statement, the First Presidency highlighted the role and value of the Bible in the lives of individuals. They observed that when "read reverently and prayerfully, the Holy Bible becomes a priceless volume, converting the soul to righteousness. Principal among its virtues is the declaration that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, through whom eternal salvation may come to all." They continued with the promise that "as we read the scripture, we avail ourselves of the better part of this world’s literature” and they encouraged all to "go to the fountain of truth, searching the scriptures, reading them in our homes, and teaching our families what the Lord has said through the inspired and inspiring passages of the Holy Bible." ("Statement of the First Presidency," p. 3).

The Latter-day Saint use of the Bible differs from the Judeo-Christian norm because it is not the sole LDS source of authority (see Scripture: Authority of Scripture). The Bible is interpreted and understood by Latter-day Saints through four important means: (1) other LDS scriptures, which enrich and give perspective to an understanding of biblical teachings; (2) statements of modern prophets and apostles on the meaning of some biblical passages; (3) the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible; and (4) personal revelation through the gift of the Holy Ghost enhancing the comprehension of the scriptures. Consequently, Latter-day Saints are not left without information about the meaning of many difficult passages that have divided the entire Christian world for two millennia.

The LDS perspective on the Bible is summarized well in the statement of the seventh Church president, Heber J. Grant, who said, "All my life I have been finding additional evidences that the Bible is the Book of books, and that the Book of Mormon is the greatest witness for the truth of the Bible that has ever been published" (IE 39 [Nov. 1936]:660).
LATTER-DAY SAINTS REVERE THE NEW TESTAMENT. Latter-day Saints revere the New Testament for its account of the birth, ministry, atonement, and resurrection of the Savior, Jesus Christ. The teachings of Jesus in the New Testament comprise the core of LDS doctrine, and their preeminence is evidenced by their frequent appearance in other LDS standard works accepted as scripture and in LDS speaking and writing.

The writings of the New Testament apostles are accepted and appreciated for their doctrine and wise and inspired counsel and for documenting the apostolic challenge of proclaiming the gospel, adhering to the original teachings of Christ, establishing the unity of the faith, and promoting the righteousness of believers in a rapidly growing Church. Latter-day Saints also find references in several letters of the early apostles of the falling away (see apostasy) that necessitated the restoration, alerting the faithful to remain fervent and active in the faith and to stay true to the love of Jesus Christ.

While Latter-day Saints devotedly regard the Bible, they do not consider it the sole authoritative source of religious instruction and personal guidance. They also study accounts of God’s dealings with other ancient peoples such as those found in the Book of Mormon along with the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the latter-day prophets and apostles (see doctrine and covenants; general authorities; joseph smith translation of the Bible [JST]; pearl of great price). Latter-day Saints consider personal revelation the individual’s ultimate source for understanding scripture and knowing God’s will.

Viewed as being harmonious with each other, all these sources enhance and clarify one another, and aid modern readers in correctly comprehending and translating these texts.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS BELIEVE ALL THAT GOD HAS REVEALED. Latter-day Saints believe all that God has revealed. They seek to know and do the word of God wherever it has been made known in truth and authority. They believe that salvation is in Jesus Christ and not in any combination of words or books. They believe in God and in his son Jesus Christ, whose words and ways can be known through a lifetime of scripture study, service, and prayer, and by personal revelation through the power of the Holy Ghost.

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PAUL HEDENGREN
KING JAMES VERSION
In various lands where The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been established, it uses a translation of the Bible in the local language. In English-speaking areas, the Church uses the King James (or Authorized) Version (KJV), mainly because it was the basic English text used by the Prophet Joseph Smith and because subsequent Church leaders have approved its use. The Church does not claim that the KJV is perfect, but it is currently the preferred English version and was used in the Church’s 1979 edition and later printings of the Bible.

The books of the Bible were originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek. No original biblical manuscripts exist today, but they were copied and translated into many languages in antiquity. Many early papyri and parchments have survived. From those records, numerous modern translations have been made.

From 1604 to 1611, some fifty-four scholars worked to produce the KJV of the Bible. This was not the first English translation. In 1382, John Wycliffe translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate; a revised edition was published in 1388. From 1523 to 1530, William Tyndale translated the Pentateuch from Hebrew and the New Testament from Greek. Still later in the 1500s, other translations appeared, including the Protestant Geneva Bible in 1560 and the Bishops’ Bible in 1568. The former became popular with the laity and the latter with Protestant bishops. The Catholic Rheims-Douai Bible was finished in 1569 (1582 New Testament, 1609 Old Testament), based on the Latin Vulgate.

In an attempt to heal differences between Anglicans and Puritans, King James I appointed a body of scholars to produce a version of the Bible to be authorized for use in the English churches. They used the best texts available to them, mainly the “Received Text of the New Testament in the multilanguage (“polyglot”) editions, presenting the Old and New Testaments in Hebrew and Greek respectively, and other languages. The long and respected line of English Bibles was also diligently compared and used.

The resulting King James Version was published in 1611. Various editions of the KJV appeared throughout the 1600s, which resulted in many printing inaccuracies. The Cambridge (1762) and Oxford (1769) editions featured a revised text, updated spelling, corrected punctuation, increased italics, and changed marginal notes.

Many other English versions have appeared, especially in light of the discovery of additional early manuscripts, beginning with Constantin von Tischendorf’s first find at St. Catherine’s Monastery in the Sinai peninsula in 1844. These translations have generally endeavored to render the ancient texts into contemporary usage while reflecting the form of the oldest available manuscripts as much as possible.

Latter-day Saints have not made extensive use of these other translations. Many feel that popularization tends to dilute the sacred nature of the Bible. They also find the ancient textual variants to be relatively insignificant, usually not changing the important messages of the Bible, most of which, in any event, are corroborated elsewhere in LDS scripture.

Although the KJV was Joseph Smith’s English Bible, he did not regard it as a perfect or official translation; this is why he studied Hebrew and undertook the task of producing an inspired revision of the scriptures. He commented that he preferred some aspects of the Martin Luther translation (HC 6:307, 364), and several other nineteenth-century Church leaders stressed the need for greater accuracy and truth in Bible translations.

Twentieth-century Church leaders have given a variety of reasons for the continued use of the KJV: it was the common translation in use in the English-speaking world at the time of the Restoration; its language prevails in all the STANDARD WORKS; a large number of passages in the Book of Mormon, which parallel the Bible, were translated into the English style of the KJV; the JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE (jst) was based on the KJV, with 90 percent of the verses unchanged. All latter-day prophets have used the KJV, and using the KJV in all Church publications has made it possible to standardize annotations and indices.

The KJV is viewed by many as a masterpiece of English literature. It has been called “the noblest monument of English prose,” and it is certainly the most influential; its translators “showed great sensitivity,” and the result was “destined for extraordinary influence and acclaim” (Speiser, pp. lxii–iv). H. L. Mencken praised it as “probably the most beautiful piece of writing in all the literature of the world” (Paine, p. viii).

The KJV is a relatively conservative translation. This is generally a strength, although at times it produces obscure renderings. Moreover, some
of its diction is now archaic and ungrammatical in current usage, and it is not consistent in the spelling of names in the Old and New Testaments (for example, Isaiah/Eaiaas and Elijah/Elias). Identical words in the synoptic Gospels are sometimes translated differently, and some misprints were never corrected (for instance, in Matt. 23:24, “strain at a gnat” should have been rendered “strain out a gnat”).

After studying many modern English translations, however, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., a counselor in the First Presidency, said in 1956 that the KJV was “the best version of any yet produced” (Clark, p. 33). For example, he felt that the KJV translators clearly portrayed Jesus as the promised Messiah and as the Son of God, and accepted the gift of prophecy, the reality of miracles, and the uniqueness of the love of Christ; whereas modern translations have tended to promote naturalistic explanations for divine action, preferred the word “sign” instead of “miracle,” and used “love” in place of “charity,” and “appoint” instead of “ordain.” His views have been influential among most Latter-day Saints. Not all alternative translations, of course, suffer from the problems identified by President Clark.

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D. KELLY OGDEN

LDS PUBLICATION OF THE BIBLE
An edition of the King James Version of the Bible with new Bible study aids was published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1979, culminating seven years’ work by Church leaders and scholars. The goals were to make Bible study more meaningful for Church members by supplying maps, charts, definitions, headnotes, footnotes, and cross-references to all of the four standard works, and also to provide a single Bible edition for use in the Church curriculum.

This project began in 1972, about the time the study of the scriptures became the primary goal for the adult curriculum of the Church. Previously Church teachers had relied mainly on lesson manuals prepared by individuals or committees. The work was commissioned by the First Presidency, who appointed a Bible Aids committee to oversee the project. This committee (later called the Scriptures Publications Committee) consisted initially of Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer, and Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ashton was later given another assignment and Bruce R. McConkie was appointed.

The committee called scholars, editors, and publication specialists from Brigham Young University, the Church Educational System, and Deseret Book Company to prepare Latter-day Saint-oriented aids to help readers better understand the King James text. Early in the project the First Presidency determined that the King James text would be used without change. This text of the Bible, along with the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, was entered into a computer data base. Each verse was reviewed, and key topics and terms identified. Computer printouts were generated comprising long lists of possible cross-references from which useful citations were then selected. Emphasis was given to references from the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price that helped clarify Bible passages along with abundant interbiblical cross-references. These now appear in the footnotes and in the topical guide (an extensive subject index and modified concordance). A Bible Dictionary, 24 pages of full-color maps, and a complete gazetteer were included. The Bible Dictionary provides concise explanations of biblical items and often adds points of interest to Latter-day Saints. Brief explanations of some words or phrases from Hebrew and Greek were also included as footnotes, along with about 600 passages from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST). Unique summaries at the beginning of each chapter in this edition of the King James Bible suggest the doctrinal and historical content of each chapter from an LDS point of view.

The footnote system organizes all the aids available in this publication of the Bible. Some earlier Bible editions place cross-references in a cen-
BIBLE, LDS

[The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reveres the Bible as the word of God given through ancient prophets and apostles, though it recognizes that the current text is not identical with the original. The Church has consistently used the King James Version (KJV) for formal classes, missionary work, and personal study among English-speaking peoples, utilizing KJV editions issued by the major Bible publishing houses. However, because latter-day revelation offers insight, interpretation, and supplemental material to thousands of biblical passages and in order to make the message of the Bible more readily accessible to LDS readers, the Church published in 1979 an edition of the KJV with multiple study helps. These include chapter headings, cross-references to other LDS scriptural works, explanatory footnotes, clarification of Greek and Hebrew terms and idioms, a subject-matter guide, a dictionary, maps, and excerpts from an inspired translation of the Bible by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

 Articles directly related to this subject are Bible: LDS Publication of the Bible; Bible Dictionary; Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST); and Topical Guide. Other relevant articles are Bible: LDS Belief in the Bible; Bible; King James Version; Scripture; Scripture Study; Standard Works.]

BIBLE DICTIONARY

In 1979 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints published its own edition of the King James Version of the Bible with many reader's aids, including a new Bible dictionary. This dictionary contains much information relevant to the Bible that is unique to Mormonism. Bible dictionaries have traditionally been geographic and cultural word books, dating back to works such as Langenstein's Vocabularius Bibliae (1476) and Heyden's Biblisches Namen Buch (1567), which surveyed biblical history and archaeology then known. The increase in biblical scholarship since World War II has seen both a proliferation of linguistic materials and changes in dictionaries to include doctrinal concepts as well as people and

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