

writings may confirm further the authenticity of the Joseph Smith translation known as the book of Abraham. A major question about its authenticity continues to revolve around whether Joseph Smith translated the work from the papyrus fragments the Church now has in its possession or whether he used the URIM AND THUMMIM to receive the text of the book of Abraham by revelation, as is the case with the translation of the scroll of John the Revelator, found in Doctrine and Covenants section 7, or the BOOK OF MOSES, which is excerpted from the JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE and is also found in the Pearl of Great Price. From these examples, it is evident that for Joseph Smith it was not necessary to possess an original text in order to have its translation revealed to him. In his function as PROPHET, SEER, and REVELATOR, many channels were open to him to receive information by divine inspiration.

[See also Book of Abraham Facsimiles.]

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BOOK OF COMMANDMENTS

The Prophet Joseph SMITH and a council of HIGH PRIESTS collected the Prophet's early revelations in November 1831, into the Book of Commandments. They originally decided to print 10,000 copies of the book at Independence, Missouri, but later reduced this number to 3,000. As editor of the Church's newspaper called *The Evening and*

The Morning Star and of the Book of Commandments, William W. Phelps also printed some of the major revelations in that paper during 1832–1833.

Publication plans were frustrated when a mob destroyed the printing establishment on July 20, 1833, when Phelps had printed only five 32-page signatures. These 160 pages contained sixty-five revelations, the last of which was not completely typeset. Although fire destroyed most of these uncut pages, Church members salvaged enough to put together about a hundred copies, only a few of which survive today. The revelations in the Book of Commandments became part of a larger collection titled the Doctrine and Covenants, first printed in 1835.

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BOOK OF JOSEPH OF EGYPT

See: Joseph of Egypt: Writings of Joseph

BOOK OF LIFE

In a figurative sense, the book of life is the complete record of one's life, the sum total of thoughts, words, and deeds written in the soul, of which the Lord will take account in the day of judgment (Rev. 20:12; Alma 12:14).

The scriptures also speak of a book of life, or "the Lamb's book of life," as "the record . . . kept in heaven" (D&C 128:7) in which are written both the names and deeds of the faithful. It is also the heavenly register of those who inherit eternal life (Heb. 12:23; Alma 5:58; D&C 76:68), "the book of the names of the sanctified, even them of the celestial world" (D&C 88:2; cf. Mal. 3:16–17).

In the Bible, the phrase "book of the living" appears first in Psalm 69:28, and the notion of a heavenly ledger is alluded to often (Ex. 32:32–33;