

Contents at a Glance

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Part I: What the Mormon Faith Is All About</i>	7
Chapter 1: A New World Religion	9
Chapter 2: The Mormon Plan of Salvation	21
Chapter 3: Heavenly Parents, Savior, and Holy Ghost	41
Chapter 4: Restoring the Priesthood and the Church	59
Chapter 5: Together Forever: The Eternal Importance of Family	73
<i>Part II: Eternal Rituals and Endless Meetings</i>	89
Chapter 6: Welcome to the Meetinghouse!	91
Chapter 7: Sacred, Not Secret: Inside Mormon Temples	113
Chapter 8: In and around Church Headquarters	131
<i>Part III: Holy Books and Sacred History</i>	149
Chapter 9: The Bible and the Book of Mormon	151
Chapter 10: Mormonism's Other Scriptures	171
Chapter 11: Searching for a Home	185
Chapter 12: Moving on to Utah with Brigham Young	199
Chapter 13: Building the Kingdom in Utah	213
<i>Part IV: Mormonism Today</i>	229
Chapter 14: Called to Serve: Missionaries and International Growth	231
Chapter 15: Hot-Button Issues for Mormons	251
Chapter 16: Sacrificing on Earth to Receive Blessings in Heaven	271
Chapter 17: Connecting with God and Each Other	291
Chapter 18: <i>In</i> the World but Not <i>of</i> the World	307
<i>Part V: The Part of Tens</i>	325
Chapter 19: Ten Famous Mormons	327
Chapter 20: Quick Answers to Ten Common Questions About Mormonism	333
Chapter 21: Ten Mormon Places to Visit	341
<i>Index</i>	349

Table of Contents

.....

<i>Introduction</i>	
About This Book	1
Conventions Used in This Book	2
Foolish Assumptions	2
How This Book Is Organized	3
Part I: What the Mormon Faith Is All About	3
Part II: Eternal Rituals and Endless Meetings	3
Part III: Holy Books and Sacred History	4
Part IV: Mormonism Today	4
Part V: The Part of Tens	4
Icons Used in This Book	4
Where to Go from Here	5

Part I: What the Mormon Faith Is All About 7

Chapter 1: A New World Religion 9

Why Know about Mormonism?	9
The Mormon Worldview	11
Life before mortal life	11
Life on earth	12
Life after mortal life	13
Joseph Smith and Mormonism's Beginnings	13
Translating additional scriptures	14
Establishing the Church	15
Coming to terms with the M-word	15
Day-to-Day Mormon Life	16
What Makes Mormonism Different?	17

Chapter 2: The Mormon Plan of Salvation 21

Mormon Karma: The Premortal Life	22
From intelligence to spirit	22
Relax, you've already passed the first test	23
Premortality in the here and now	25
Acing the Test of Mortality	27
Adam and Eve: Heroes of humanity	27
Satan: A necessary evil	29
It ain't over till it's over: Enduring to the end	30
The Afterlife: Eternal Progression	31
A waiting room for spirits	32
Reaching the three degrees of glory . . . or outer darkness	33

Chapter 3: Heavenly Parents, Savior, and Holy Ghost	41
The Head Honcho: God the Father	42
What if God were one of us?	42
With Franklin Planner in hand: God the organizer	43
Why does God go to all this trouble?	44
Differences in beliefs about God the Father	44
Second Mate: Christ the Son	45
First and best	45
Both mortal and divine	46
The Savior's post-crucifixion checklist	47
When he comes again	48
Differences in beliefs about Jesus Christ	50
God's Whisperer: The Holy Ghost	52
The Spirit who never got a body	52
The gift of the Holy Ghost	53
The Holy Ghost's many roles	56
The unforgivable sin	58
Chapter 4: Restoring the Priesthood and the Church	59
Gospel Comings and Goings	60
Beginning the Restoration	60
Joseph Smith's early years	61
Kneeling in the Sacred Grove	62
After the vision	63
Bringing Back the Church Step by Step	64
A parade of heavenly messengers	64
Continuing the gospel tradition	65
Understanding the Priesthood	66
For boys: The Aaronic Priesthood	67
For men: The Melchizedek Priesthood	69
Performing priesthood ordinances	70
What about women and the priesthood?	72
Chapter 5: Together Forever: The Eternal Importance of Family	73
The Eternal Family Unit	73
Why families are so important	74
"Till never do you part": Eternal sealing	74
Breadwinning and homemaking	76
Raising up seed	76
Shaking the Family Tree: Family History Work	78
The reason for the fuss	79
The details of the work	80
God's People: The Family of Israel	82
Abraham and God shake on it	83
The house of Israel in Mormon scriptures	83
Gathering God's children	84
Becoming adopted into Israel	84

Personal Prophecy: Patriarchal Blessings85
 Discovering personal lineage85
 Other aspects of a patriarchal blessing86
 Understanding a patriarchal blessing87

Part 11: Eternal Rituals and Endless Meetings89

Chapter 6: Welcome to the Meetinghouse!91

What’s a Ward?92
 Specialty wards93
 Wards in the making: Branches93
 Participating in the Ward94
 Get to work! Every member has a job95
 What to do when you’re in the pew: Sacrament meetings96
 Getting dunked101
 Confirmation: Installing a direct line to God103
 Baby blessings: Welcoming a new lamb into the flock104
 Funerals: Saying farewell, for now105
 Weddings: For time only106
 Other Sunday meetings106
 Weekday meetings108
 Participating in the Stake109
 Twice a year: Stake conference110
 Finding Grandpa’s grandpa: Stake family history centers111
 Stake ‘n’ shake: Stake activities111

Chapter 7: Sacred, Not Secret: Inside Mormon Temples113

Distinguishing the Temple from the Meetinghouse114
 Temple Ordinances — Why Mormons Go to the Temple115
 Understanding the essential ordinances115
 Why perform ordinances for the dead?116
 Becoming Eligible for Temple Ordinances118
 Getting a temple recommend119
 Performing baptisms for the dead120
 A preparation checklist121
 Finally! Receiving Your Own Temple Ordinances123
 Receiving the preparatory ordinances123
 Becoming endowed125
 Sealing Families for Eternity126
 Temple sealings for the living127
 When the going gets tough: Sealing complexities128

Chapter 8: In and around Church Headquarters131

A Tour of Church Headquarters132
 Governing the Church: General Authorities133
 Following the prophet134
 Apostles and seventies and bishops — Oh my!137

A Two-Day Marathon: General Conference	139
The LDS Welfare Program and Humanitarian Relief	141
Taking care of their own: The world's largest private welfare program	141
Taking care of others: LDS humanitarian relief	144
Survival of the Smartest: Mormons and Education	145
A daily dose of the gospel	146
Stone-cold sober: Brigham Young University	147

***Part III: Holy Books and Sacred History* 149**

Chapter 9: The Bible and the Book of Mormon 151

The Bible: True, with a Few Tweaks	152
Thus saith the King James Version	152
Not enough by itself	153
Joseph Smith's corrections to the Bible	154
So, where are Joseph's corrections?	155
Getting Acquainted with the Book of Mormon	156
Hitting the highlights	156
What a long, strange trip: Lehi's journey to the New World	158
Can't we all just get along? The Nephites and the Lamanites	159
The main event: The coming of Christ	160
Biting the dust: The end of the Nephites	161
How the Book of Mormon Came to Be	162
An angel in the night	162
Seer stones and scribes: Translating the golden plates	163
"You believe what?!" Reactions to the book	165
What happened to the plates?	165
The Book of Mormon in Mormon Life	166
Applying what the Book of Mormon teaches	166
Increasing emphasis on the Book of Mormon	169
Using the Book of Mormon in missionary work	169

Chapter 10: Mormonism's Other Scriptures 171

A Scriptural Hodgepodge: The Pearl of Great Price	171
Revisiting Moses	172
Mummy dearest: Uncovering the writings of Abraham	173
Expanding Matthew	174
Chronicling Joseph Smith	174
Lining up the Articles of Faith	175
Modern-Day Revelations in the D&C	176
But wait, there's more: God's revelations to Joseph Smith and others	177
Key LDS scriptures in the D&C	178
Wrapping up: Official declarations	181

The Beat Goes On: Recent Revelations Not Found in the D&C182
 Picturing the ideal family182
 Day-to-day wisdom from the prophet183

Chapter 11: Searching for a Home185

A Significant Pit Stop: Kirtland, Ohio185
 Receiving new revelations and doctrines186
 Building the Kirtland Temple187
 Empty pockets and loaded threats:
 Good times come to an end188
 Kirtland in the here and now189
 Seeking Zion in Missouri189
 Getting booted out of Zion190
 Going to war191
 Missouri in the here and now193
 Nauvoo, Illinois: A Refuge on the Mississippi193
 Building a community194
 Constructing the Nauvoo Temple194
 Trouble in Nauvoo196
 Arrest and martyrdom196
 Nauvoo in the here and now198

Chapter 12: Moving on to Utah with Brigham Young199

A Crisis of Leadership199
 The Lion of the Lord: Brigham Young200
 Another unschooled boy from Vermont201
 Becoming a leader in the Church201
 Famous leader and down-to-earth family man202
 A legacy to build on203
 Westward Ho! The Pioneer Experience204
 Packing up and leaving Illinois205
 The first company206
 The handcart experience207
 Keep 'em coming: The Perpetual Emigrating Fund209
 Mormon Groups That Didn't Go West210
 The Community of Christ211
 The Strangites212
 Church of Christ (Temple Lot)212

Chapter 13: Building the Kingdom in Utah213

Building Zion213
 Settling the Salt Lake Valley214
 Movin' on out: Settling the Jell-O Belt216
 Conflicts with the Outside World217
 The Utah War and the Mormon Reformation218
 The Mountain Meadows Massacre219

Polygamy: A Divine Principle (But an Outdated Practice)	221
Who practiced polygamy, and why?	221
Government pressure to end polygamy	224
The legacy of polygamy	225
Mormonism in Transition	226
Pledging allegiance to the flag	226
Facing some lingering problems	227
Gathering strength for a worldwide boom	227

***Part IV: Mormonism Today* 229**

Chapter 14: Called to Serve: Missionaries and International Growth 231

Missionaries of All Shapes and Sizes	231
Boy wonders	232
Girl power	233
Silver is golden	234
Hail to the chief	234
Enlisting in God's Army	235
Receiving the call	235
Diving into the "Empty Sea": Missionary boot camp	237
Living the Missionary Life	238
Finding and teaching	238
Following the rules	241
Rapid Growth: Mormonism around the World	243
Dealing with growing pains	244
Getting to know the global Church	247
Stirring the Mormon Melting Pot	248

Chapter 15: Hot-Button Issues for Mormons 251

Race and Gender Controversies	251
Black and white and shades of gray	252
Beyond Molly: Women in the LDS Church	255
Hullabaloo over History and Holy Books	258
The Book of Mormon in the hot seat	258
Faithful versus accurate history	260
Voices in Conflict	262
Free speech on the inside	262
Criticism from the outside	264
Beyond Heterosexual Monogamy	266
Born that way?	266
I do, I do, and I do again	268

Chapter 16: Sacrificing on Earth to Receive Blessings in Heaven . . . 271

Chase and Be Chaste: The Law of Chastity	272
Understanding the purposes of sexuality	272
Staying chaste	273

Enjoying marital intimacy274
 Receiving the blessings of chastity275
 Dealing with sexual sin276
 Whaddya Mean, No Coffee? Living the Word of Wisdom277
 Interpreting the Word of Wisdom278
 Live long and prosper: A principle with promise279
 The last word on the Word of Wisdom280
 Tithing: Paying the Lord’s Tax282
 Paying tithing gladly282
 Figuring the tithing bill283
 Settling up at year-end284
 Knowing where your tithe is going284
 Receiving tithing dividends285
 Fast Sunday: The Slowest Sabbath of the Month286
 Why Mormons fast287
 How and when to fast (And who shouldn’t)289

Chapter 17: Connecting with God and Each Other 291

What Mormons Do Daily . . . Ideally291
 Talking with the Big Guy292
 Studying scriptures296
 What Mormons Do Weekly . . . Ideally297
 Observing the Sabbath297
 Family Home Evening (Sorry, no Monday Night Football)300
 What Mormons Do Monthly . . . Ideally302
 Ding, dong, Mormons calling302
 Break out the breath mints: Fasting304
 A trip to the temple (a.k.a. Mormon date night)305

Chapter 18: *In* the World but Not *of* the World 307

Becoming Self-Reliant307
 Staying out of debt308
 Getting squirrely: Food storage309
 Preparing for emergencies313
 Crafting, Chronicling, and Stuffing Face: Mormon Traditions314
 Keeping a record314
 The scrapbooking craze315
 Mormon handicrafts315
 Mormon comfort food316
 Taking in a Bit of Culture317
 Lifting a chorus to the Lord: America’s choir317
 Onward Christian crooners: Mormon pop music319
 Reading between the lines: Mormon books319
 Hams and cheese: Mormon drama322
 Going Dutcher: The rise of Mormon cinema322

Part V: The Part of Tens	325
Chapter 19: Ten Famous Mormons	327
Jane Clayson	327
Stephen R. Covey	328
Liriel Domiciano	328
Richard Paul Evans	329
Orrin Hatch	329
Gladys Knight	330
The Osmond Family	330
Mitt Romney	331
Sharlene Wells	331
Steve Young	332
Chapter 20: Quick Answers to Ten Common Questions About Mormonism	333
Are Mormons Christian?	333
How Can Mormons Give Up 10 Percent of Their Income?	334
What Happens inside an LDS Temple?	335
Why Don't Mormons Drink Alcohol or Coffee?	336
Why Do Mormons Have Such Large, Strong Families?	336
Do Mormons Believe in the Bible or Just the Book of Mormon?	337
Do Mormons Really Believe that Humans Can Become Gods?	338
Why Can't Women Hold the Priesthood?	338
Do Mormons Still Practice Polygamy?	339
How Can Mormons Revere Joseph Smith?	339
Chapter 21: Ten Mormon Places to Visit	341
Sharon, Vermont	341
Palmyra, New York	342
Kirtland, Ohio	342
Nauvoo and Carthage, Illinois	343
Missouri	344
Winter Quarters, Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, Iowa	345
Martin's Cove, Wyoming	346
Salt Lake City, Utah	346
Provo, Utah	348
Polynesian Cultural Center, Hawaii	348
Index	349