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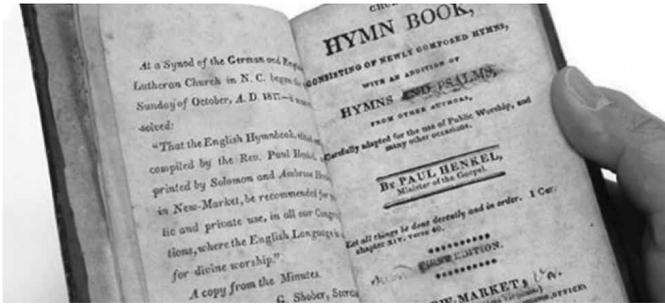


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1816 Lutheran Hymnal. *WorshipIdeas.com.*

Paper

# Will the Wicked “Be Smitten at Last”?

## A Comparative Analysis of the 1981 RLDS and 1985 LDS Hymnals

Zachary Osborne

**A**FTER JOSEPH SMITH WAS MURDERED IN 1844, THE CHURCH OF Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS church), commonly known as the Mormon Church, experienced a succession crisis which ultimately led to the forming of various branches of the Latter Day Saint movement. Joseph Smith had founded the movement in 1830 as a modern-day biblical prophet and had produced works of scripture such as the Book of Mormon, an account of Israelites on the ancient American continent, and the Doctrine and Covenants, a compilation of revelations from God given to the Church through Joseph Smith. While the LDS Church continued after the death of Joseph Smith under the leadership of church apostles, the succession crisis ultimately led to the formation of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS church) in 1860 under the leadership of Joseph Smith’s son, Joseph Smith III. Both the LDS and RLDS Churches claimed Joseph Smith as founder, both used the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants alongside the Bible, and both eventually fell under the leadership of a First Presidency which consisted of a prophet president and two supporting counselors. Significantly, both produced hymnals as official publications for their respective members for the purpose of worship. The hymnals are a manifestation of the common Latter Day Saint heritage that both churches share and the hymns within these hymnals, both those shared and distinct, demonstrate how common history and theology has been presented by these two respective churches to their congregations. An

examination of these hymnals reveals how the Utah-based LDS Church and Missouri-based RLDS Church (official name changed to the Community of Christ in 2001) have chosen to preserve their distinctive cultural heritage.

While the history of individual hymns and the evolution of LDS and RLDS hymnals as distinctive entities has been carefully studied in the past, this study analyzes and contrasts the *Hymns of the Saints* published by the RLDS Church in 1981 and used until 2013, and the *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* published by the LDS Church in 1985 which is still the official hymnal of the LDS Church. Analyzing these two hymnals together is appropriate because the era during which both hymnals were used overlapped by twenty-eight years, from the introduction of the 1985 LDS hymnal to the discontinuation of the 1981 RLDS hymnal in 2013. Furthermore, the significance of these hymnals is that they are the first modern international hymnals of the Latter Day Saint Movement. Both hymnals were compiled by committees with the intent of meeting the needs of modern and international audiences; however, these committees produced significantly different results. This study demonstrates that the LDS hymnal was bound and organized to emphasize LDS culture and tradition. With a hymnody reflective of restoration scriptures, it preserved an early Mormon theological framework in the hymnal text. Conversely, the RLDS hymnal was bound and organized in a manner that emphasized functionality and traditional Christian topics and sought to explain itself as a document. With a hymnody strongly reflective of New Testament scripture, the hymnal altered the hymns' text towards a more positive worldview. Both hymnals modernized and internationalized LDS and RLDS hymnody. However, the LDS hymnal presented LDS tradition to an international audience, while the RLDS hymnal encompassed RLDS tradition in a larger, more inclusive Christian worldview.

## Origin of LDS and RLDS Hymnody

Both LDS and RLDS modern hymnody are bonded by three early Mormon hymnals that were published before the death of Joseph Smith. Emma Smith's 1835 hymnal, produced under the direction of a revelation from her prophet husband, established a tradition in the Latter Day Saint movement of writing hymns as well as directly borrowing or adapting Protestant hymns.<sup>1</sup> After

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1. Michael Hicks, "Borrowing in Early Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 132.

the 1835 hymnal, the apostles of the Church in England compiled the 1840 Manchester hymnal, which was soon followed by the 1841 Nauvoo hymnal compiled by Emma Smith. Michael Hicks argued that the LDS hymnal tradition descends from the 1840 Manchester hymnal which incorporated distinctly Mormon themes, such as baptism for the dead, and overtook the more traditional 1841 Nauvoo hymnal in popularity. Hicks speculated that Joseph Smith’s expanding theological teachings made the theologically conservative Nauvoo hymnal compiled by Emma Smith “obsolete.”<sup>2</sup> Richard Clothier acknowledged Hicks’s arguments regarding the Manchester hymnal in the LDS hymnal tradition, but pointed out that Emma Smith’s theologically conservative Nauvoo “collection was embraced twenty years later as the model for the first hymnal of the [RLDS church].”<sup>3</sup>

For both churches, hymnals are theologically significant and play a similar role to scriptures. However, decades of theological and cultural developments have created distinctive traditions in LDS and RLDS hymnody. Hicks and Nancy J. Andersen agreed that it is tension between traditional and outside culture that has shaped music in the LDS tradition. Specifically, Andersen argued that when LDS musical identity “conflicted with social, cultural, and political circumstances,” it required hymnals to evolve and be revised over time.<sup>4</sup> For example, Douglass Campbell extensively examined changes to the text of hymns in the 1985 LDS hymnal and found “increased sensitivity by the church music committee to blacks, Native Americans, and women.”<sup>5</sup> One member of the LDS committee that compiled the hymnal explained that “we no longer expect all our converts to gather to Utah, we no longer see the world around us as hostile.”<sup>6</sup> Warrick N. Kear argued that the 1985 hymnal was “pivotal in encapsulating the trends toward de-Protestantisation” while also moving toward a more international audience.<sup>7</sup> One example of an increased international flare

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2. Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 29–31.

3. Richard Clothier, “Different Drummers: The Diverse Hymnody of the Reorganization,” *Journal of Mormon History* 32, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 118–119.

4. Nancy J. Andersen, “Mormon Hymnody: Kirtland Roots and Evolutionary Branches,” *Journal of Mormon History* 32, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 164.

5. Douglas Campbell, “Changes in LDS Hymns: Implications and Opportunities,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 66.

6. Andersen “Mormon Hymnody,” 161.

7. Warrick N. Kear, “The LDS Sound World and Global Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 34, no. 3 & 4 (Spring & Summer 2001): 81.

in the 1985 LDS hymnal was the assignment of international folk music such as “German, Finnish, Swedish, Dutch, English, and Irish folk melodies” to pre-existing and new hymns.<sup>8</sup>

The RLDS Church experienced similar cultural pressures, going through a shift in culture and theological understanding during the two decades leading up to the 1981 RLDS hymnal.<sup>9</sup> As with the LDS Church, the RLDS church is “without a formal creed” and Clothier argued that it has been the hymns that “served to fill” the role of an informal creed for the RLDS Church.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, as the Church’s culture changed, a committee was formed to produce an updated hymnal. The committee that compiled the 1981 RLDS hymnal sought to implement the newly adopted policy of their First Presidency in 1978 which called for “inclusive language” in church publications. For example, “Rise Up, O Men of God” replaces “Men” with “Saints.”<sup>11</sup>

While the roots of the hymnody for both the LDS and RLDS churches are bound together, Clothier pointed out that over a 140-year period, there have been eight major RLDS hymnals, yet the many studies on LDS hymnals “rarely [have] made reference to hymn collections other than those of the Utah church.”<sup>12</sup> William Leroy Wilkes Jr, one of the few researchers to actively compare LDS and RLDS hymnody, argued that “the close-knit sacred-secular culture of Mormonism in early Utah” promoted “uniformity,” whereas the smaller RLDS church needed to accommodate their culture to survive the mainstream Christian culture which surrounded it, producing “unity which did not demand uniformity.”<sup>13</sup> However, this study was published in 1957 and predates the 1981 and 1985 hymnals. More recent researchers such as Kear have commented in passing on the differences between LDS and RLDS hymnals. Kear felt similarly to Wilkes and argued that the 1985 hymnal is a product of the “retrenched tradition” of the LDS Church and that the RLDS Church experienced “Protestantisation” during the same time period.<sup>14</sup> It is significant that, while Kear and other researchers who comment in passing may very well be correct, their suppositions are not grounded in an actual analysis of the hymnals to substantiate their claims.

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8. Kathleen Lubeck, “The New Hymnbook: The Saints Are Singing!,” *Ensign*, September 1985, 11.

9. Clothier, “Different Drummers,” 138.

10. Clothier, “Different Drummers,” 135.

11. Clothier, “Different Drummers,” 139.

12. Clothier, “Different Drummers,” 118–119.

13. Clothier, “Different Drummers,” 143.

14. Kear, “The LDS Sound,” 81.

## Evolution of LDS and RLDS Hymnody

The migration of the LDS Church to the West and the organization of the RLDS Church in Illinois separated the evolution of the hymnody of the Latter Day Saint movement into two branches. The LDS Church had a geographically sprawling membership and several hymnals, such as the 1844 *Little and Gardner's Hymnbook*, that were “published for specific missions or regions.”<sup>15</sup> However, The Manchester Hymnal continued to be used by the majority of the congregations of the LDS Church until 1889 when *Latter-Day Saints' Psalmody* was published. Of the 330 hymns in the new hymnal, 70 percent were by LDS composers, making it the first truly distinct LDS hymnal.<sup>16</sup> This trend continued when *Latter-day Saint Hymns* was published in 1927 where, of the 419 hymns, 74 percent were LDS in origin which further reduced the number of protestant hymns.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, several protestant hymns remained popular and in the 1948 publication of *Hymns: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, the number of LDS hymns was reduced to 54 percent with a “substantial” number of protestant favorites returning.<sup>18</sup> These changes are reflective of the cultural negotiation between LDS tradition and mainstream Christianity, a negotiation which would become more important in the 1950s when President David O. McKay began to emphasize missionary work throughout the world.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the LDS Church began to experience tremendous growth. However, missionaries often carried “cultural baggage” when they failed to make distinctions between their faith and their culture. Furthermore, the LDS Church’s stance on prohibiting blacks to receive priesthood and “exhortations against Communism” limited the initial effectiveness of this work, demonstrating the conservative nature of LDS tradition.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, the church continued to grow and in 1973, President Harold B Lee declared that “no longer might this church be thought of as the ‘Utah Church,’ or as an ‘American church,’” because it had become international in nature. From 1950 to 1990, membership grew from over one million to over seven million and in about the same time frame, the proportion of membership outside

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15. Andersen “Mormon Hymnody,” 155.

16. Andersen “Mormon Hymnody,” 156.

17. Andersen “Mormon Hymnody,” 157.

18. Andersen “Mormon Hymnody,” 159.

19. James B. Allen, “On Becoming a Universal Church: Some Historical Perspectives,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25, no. 1 (March 1992): 14.

of North America increased from 7.7 percent to 40.5 percent.<sup>20</sup> The RLDS church would experience similar worldwide growth during the mid-twentieth century on a much smaller scale, as they would never grow past a quarter of a million members.<sup>21</sup>

After the RLDS church was organized in 1860, Emma Smith, who did not go west with the LDS Church, was tasked again to compile a new hymnal for the RLDS Church. The resulting work, *The Latter Day Saints Selection of Hymns*, was published in 1861 and closely modeled her previous hymnals.<sup>22</sup> It would be Mark Forscutt, an LDS convert to the RLDS Church, whose influence would lead to a drastic change in RLDS hymnody.<sup>23</sup> Under Forscutt's leadership a massive 792-paged work with 1,120 hymns, *The Saints' Harp*, was published and later republished as *Saints' Harmony* with tunes included alongside the hymnal texts. *Saints' Harmony* was the "the largest collection of hymnody in the history of all Latter-day Saintism." However, the ambitious work proved too large for congregations to gain a functional familiarity with.<sup>24</sup> It was "cumbersome," "expensive," and "unrealistic to expect that ordinary congregations could effectively learn so many unfamiliar tunes."<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, while the hymnal included a significant number of RLDS hymns, the majority were borrowed. Eventually, a slim volume of 442 hymns was produced under the same name in 1933.<sup>26</sup> By 1950, the RLDS Church was looking to elevate the "musical and theological standards" and began to become more selective, producing *The Hymnal* in 1956.<sup>27</sup> Roger D. Launius argued that it was during this period that the membership of the RLDS Church would begin to culturally shift from the belief that the "Reorganized Church was the only true church to one asserting that the Reorganization was only one true church among many."<sup>28</sup>

During the 1950s and 1960s a greater number of RLDS administration and leadership were receiving graduate degrees, often in theology, and RLDS

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20. Allen, "On Becoming a Universal Church," 15.

21. "A Worldwide Church," Community of Christ, accessed August 11, 2017, <https://www.cofchrist.org/a-worldwide-church>.

22. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 119.

23. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 121.

24. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 123–124.

25. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 127.

26. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 131.

27. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 134.

28. Roger D. Launius, "Coming of Age? The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the 1960s," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 39.

materials began to become more “liberal in theological orientation and overall perspective.”<sup>29</sup> During this time of reformation, traditions were overturned and there were efforts to “[demythologize] church history, theology, and assorted traditions” resulting in the breakdown of the “traditional ideological consensus.”<sup>30</sup> This change was parallel to the post-World War II prosperity in the United States that in turn allowed for the increase of missionary work. The RLDS Church opened twelve missions in “non-English speaking countries, more than doubling the number of those nations in which the church was operating.”<sup>31</sup> As a consequence, they found that their traditional methods of missionary work such as focusing on Joseph Smith and the Restoration proved ineffective, and they began to focus on emphasizing traditional Christian topics instead.<sup>32</sup> Between 1950 and 1980, RLDS membership within North America grew from 122,909 to 171,467 and outside of North America more than doubling from 9,058 to 20,230. The higher growth rate outside of North America compared to inside of it is understated because RLDS membership numbers were inflated inside North America, as thousands of disaffected traditionalists stopped attending meetings due to changes in RLDS Church culture. These alienated members would still be included in general membership totals. During the second half of the twentieth century it became clear that the future potential of the RLDS Church was international.<sup>33</sup>

## Appearance and Organization

Before examining the content of the hymns, it is important to investigate how the heritage of the hymnals has been preserved through their respective appearance and organization. The title of the 1985 LDS hymnal is “*HYMNS*” and is embossed in a golden color. Underneath the title is an embossed image of the LDS tabernacle organ. The title of the 1981 RLDS hymnal is “*Hymns of the Saints*” and is also embossed in a gold color. There is an important difference between the presentation styles of the hymnals. “*Hymns of the Saints*” is a semi-generic title and, while it does demonstrate the possessive cultural connection

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29. Launius, “Coming of Age,” 39.

30. Launius, “Coming of Age,” 41, 45.

31. Roger D. Launius, “The Reorganized Church, the Decade of Decision, and the Abilene Paradox,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 31, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 48.

32. Launius, “Coming of Age,” 47.

33. Launius, “The Reorganized Church,” 52–53.

between the RLDS church and its Hymns, it is also a title that could be applied to hymnals of various Christian traditions, saints being a general term referring to the followers of Christ in the New Testament. In comparison, "*HYMNS*" may appear as generic a title as possible, its bold presence in all capitals with no explanation implies the expectation of recognition. In other words, those seeing the hymnal are expected to recognize it as their own. This interpretation is made more likely with the presence of the embossed cultural symbol of the tabernacle organ placed directly under "*HYMNS*." The Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle organ is a distinctive part of LDS musical tradition and is therefore recognizable as a LDS cultural symbol. Those who recognize the symbol would either be LDS or be aware of the symbol through LDS cultural products such as the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The presence of "*HYMNS*" above the Mormon Tabernacle is tantamount to explicitly saying "Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" or simply "Mormon Hymns." While the RLDS church is not lacking RLDS-specific musical symbols, such as the renowned Auditorium Organ, these symbols are absent from the RLDS hymnal.

What is evident from the covers and the opening pages of both hymnals is that the LDS hymnal presents itself as a distinctive cultural product with an emphasis on LDS tradition. In contrast, there was great care in the production of the RLDS hymnal to explain the process and decision making behind creating a hymnal less culturally distinct and more functional for a wider audience. The RLDS hymnal does not refer to its distinctive historical past. The hands and minds behind the production, the committee and those listed in the "Acknowledgments," are a clear presence within the RLDS hymnal. However, the only felt presence within the LDS hymnal is the comparatively brief "First Presidency Preface" with no reference to any committee nor the names of the First Presidency. The RLDS hymnal has six pages of explanatory text with 37 individuals named, while the LDS hymnal has two pages with two individuals named, specifically Emma and Joseph Smith. This exacerbates the difference between the tones the hymnals present. The LDS hymnal is written in a prophetic tone, is presented with the explicit imprimatur of the LDS Prophet without the need for detailed explanation, and is intended for an international Church wrapped in LDS historical tradition. The RLDS hymnal, while endorsed by the RLDS prophet, seeks to explain the compilation of the hymnal not as a piece of tradition but as text created by a modern committee.

The significant difference presented in the organization of the hymns, beyond the more functional divisions presented in the RLDS hymnal, is in how the LDS hymnal begins and ends compared to the RLDS hymnal. The opening of the

LDS hymnal is categorized as “Restoration.” This gives a prominent position to hymns that are either authored by Latter Day Saint movement authors about the beginning of the movement or are hymns thematically similar enough to be repurposed as such. This contrasts thematically with the RLDS hymnal, as the vast majority of the RLDS sections do not appear to be distinctively referring to the Latter Day Saint movement. The RLDS hymnal opening section is “Gathering for Worship.” The closest in theme within the RLDS hymnal are the subcategories of “Revelation” and “Zion and the Kingdom,” which are placed midway through section three of the RLDS Hymnal. The LDS hymnal also includes a category, albeit one containing just four hymns, under the label of “Patriotic” for the final section in the hymnal, while the final section in the RLDS hymnal is “Benediction and Sending Forth.”<sup>34</sup> While both the LDS and RLDS hymnals were produced with an eye towards reflecting their global presence, the LDS hymnal contains the distinctly United States-centered “America the Beautiful,” “My Country, ’Tis of Thee,” and “The Star-Spangled Banner,” as well as the British Commonwealth-centered “God Save the King.”<sup>35</sup> While on a functional level, it is logical to assume that the majority of English-speaking members would live in a country where one of these hymns would be applicable, their presence gives a slight political tone to the hymnal when compared to the more globally oriented RLDS Hymnal. Finally, the LDS hymnal begins and ends on cultural thematic sections, while the RLDS hymnal functionally begins and ends with sections intended for the starting and closing of religious meetings.

## Companion Works

The LDS and RLDS hymnals were both supported by companion works designed to increase appreciation of the hymnals and are significant in understanding how the hymnals were intended to be interpreted. The 1981 RLDS

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34. It is important to note that translations, such as the Spanish, German, and Korean versions, of the LDS hymnal do not include a “Patriotic” section. For examples, see The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Himnos De La Iglesia De Jesucristo De Los Santos De Los Ultimos Dias* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1992); The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Gesangbuch Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1996); and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Chansongka Yjesu Krisido Sungdo Kuoway* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2002).

35. LDS Church, *Hymns of the Church*, Hymn 338–341.

hymnal's "Preface" directs readers to *Hymns in Worship: A Guide to Hymns of the Saints*, a 224-page work by Roger A. Revell who belonged to the RLDS committee which compiled the hymnal. *Hymns in Worship* begins with a "Forward" signed by the RLDS First Presidency which states that the goal of the book was to help readers become "comfortable" with the new hymnal and "understand" its role in Church worship. *Hymns in Worship* provided an overview of the nature and history of hymns in Christian worship as well as instructions on how to best use the hymnal for worship.<sup>36</sup> The book was also functional as a personal or group study aid as each section ends with study questions to contemplate, such as: "Look up some of the hymns associated with the authors and composers mentioned in this chapter. Discuss the differences that you observe between hymns from different time periods."<sup>37</sup> The content of *Hymns in Worship* contrasts greatly with its LDS parallel.

*Our Latter-Day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* authored by Karen Lynn Davidson as a "companion to the 1985 hymnal," is a much larger 486-page work.<sup>38</sup> Unlike *Hymns in Worship*, readers are not directly referred to *Our Latter-day Hymns* from the LDS hymnal, nor is there a forward or preface by the LDS First Presidency. While the softcover *Hymns in Worship* does not resemble the RLDS Hymnal except for its burgundy color and golden type on the front cover, the hardback *Our Latter-day Hymns* is tan, but with the same gold border and title, along with the same embossed symbol of the tabernacle. *Our Latter-Day Hymns* is formatted similar to an encyclopedia, with entries for each hymn in the hymnal and the various authors and composers. As well as providing historical background, *Our Latter-Day Hymns* provides an analysis of how the LDS hymnal is different from previous hymnals and the type of hymns it contains. It is significant to recognize that both of these works reveal how the hymnals were expected to be interpreted and used in their historical context.

While *Hymns in Worship* focuses on the broader historical context and variety of hymns, *Our Latter-day Hymns* focuses more on understanding hymns as part of distinctive LDS history. The title *Hymns in Worship: A Guide to Hymns of the Saints* demonstrates the main purpose of the companion work was to be a guide in using the hymnal, thus increasing the functionality for worship. *Our Latter-Day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* has a title that focuses less

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36. Roger A. Revell, *Hymns in Worship: A Guide to Hymns of the Saints* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1981), 7.

37. Revell, *Hymns in Worship*, 37.

38. Davidson, *Our Latter-Day Hymns*, 4.

on functionality and worship and more on distinctive LDS heritage, with the possessive “our” being prominent. Tellingly, while *Hymns in Worship* discusses the broader historical context of hymns from biblical times, the brief historical overview in *Our Latter-Day Hymns* begins with the Latter Day Saint movement.

While it could be argued that *Hymns in Worship* and *Our Latter-Day Hymns* serve different functions and therefore should not be interpreted as playing the same support role for the hymnals, that would ignore the fact that the difference in presentation of the LDS and RLDS hymnals by extent would call for different supporting companion works. While *Hymns in Worship* is an official companion work and *Our Latter-Day Hymns* lacks such an explicit position, *Our Latter-Day hymns*’ design is highly suggestive as belonging alongside the LDS hymnal and it was published by the LDS-church-owned Deseret Book. Therefore, the significance is that these companion works further demonstrate that the 1981 RLDS hymnal was directive outward and to be culturally inclusive, while the 1985 LDS hymnal work focused on refining its distinctive heritage.

## Scripture References

Both the LDS and RLDS churches use biblical scripture along with restoration scripture, the Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants. However, the LDS and RLDS versions of the Doctrine and Covenants are different as various revelations from both LDS and RLDS prophets over time have been added to their respective Doctrine and Covenants. Furthermore, the LDS Church has a compilation of various other prophetic documents from Joseph Smith called the Pearl of Great Price that the RLDS Church does not use, as it was compiled by the LDS Church after the death of Joseph Smith. As the scriptures pertain to the hymns, both the LDS and RLDS hymnals generally include two scripture references per hymn, which are intended to reflect the textual meaning. Michael F. Moody, chairman of the LDS Committee, explained that scriptural references that were attached to each hymn were selected “for members to use as a starting point to get into the scriptural relationship of each text.”<sup>39</sup> Likewise, Revell explained that “significant efforts” were made to provide references “which have obvious allusions and relationships to the hymn texts” so that the references supported and did not interpret the meaning of the hymns. Revell

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39. Lubeck, “The New Hymnbook,” 8.

also explained that there was no attempt to represent the various books of scriptures equally in the references.<sup>40</sup> While it is not clear that the LDS committee did not try to equally represent each book of scripture, it is clear that both the LDS and RLDS committee felt that the scriptural references reflected the meaning of the text.

**Table 1**

LDS Hymnal Scriptural References		RLDS Hymnal Scriptural References	
Old Testament	22.5%	Old Testament	16%
New Testament	22.1%	New Testament	40.9%
Book of Mormon	23.1%	Book of Mormon	20.9%
Doctrine and Covenants	29.7%	Doctrine and Covenants	22.2%
Pearl of Great Price	3.5%	N/A	N/A
Bible Compared to Restoration Scriptures			
Bible	44.6%	Bible	56.9%
Restoration	56.3%	Restoration	43.9%

As can be seen in Table 1, the 1985 LDS hymnal references the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Book of Mormon at a similar rate. However, in the 1981 RLDS hymnal the New Testament is prominently referenced, especially when compared to the Old Testament. In the LDS hymnal, The Doctrine and Covenants is the outlier as it is referred to 6.6 percent more than the Book of Mormon, but in the 1981 RLDS hymnal the New Testament is referred to 18.7 percent more than the Doctrine and Covenants. Furthermore, when biblical scripture is compared to distinctive restoration scripture in the LDS hymnal, restoration scriptures are referred to 11.7 percent more. This stands in stark contrast with the RLDS hymnal which references biblical scripture by 13 percent more than restoration scripture.

The significance represented in this data is that not only is the RLDS hymnal more likely to refer to biblical scripture, but it is more likely to do so from the New Testament. The New Testament is the core scripture that unites all of Christianity and its dominance in the RLDS hymnal lends credence to the argument

40. Revell, *Hymns in Worship*, 92.

that the RLDS hymnal is substantially more universal in orientation than the LDS hymnal. The LDS hymnal is clearly drawing upon its distinctive theological tradition, which it shares with the RLDS hymnal, by using restoration scripture as its predominant source. It should also be noted that despite the heavy leaning towards the New Testament, the RLDS hymnal still utilizes the Doctrine and Covenants and Book of Mormon for a significant number of references. Despite these differences, there are significant similarities which reflect a common heritage between the hymnals. When specifically looking at the use of the Old Testament in both hymnals, Isaiah is second only to Psalms in frequency of appearance. The dominance of Psalms makes thematic sense as Psalms is a musical document, but the emphasis on Isaiah is important in both traditions as Latter Day Saint movement theology and the Book of Mormon heavily draw upon Isaiah.

It could be argued that this data is inconsequential as it does not consider the actual content of the scriptures referenced, that conclusion would ignore the distinctive nature of restoration scripture when compared to biblical scripture. While there is a similarity between biblical and restoration scripture, as both the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants use and interpret biblical scripture such as Isaiah, the use and interpretation of biblical scripture is distinct and not interchangeable with biblical scripture itself. If there were no statistically significant differences between the LDS and RLDS hymnals in their references, then this data would not be noteworthy. There is a significant difference, however, and to ignore the differences would also ignore the fact that both the LDS and RLDS committees explicitly chose scriptures that best reflected the text of the hymns. Therefore, it is legitimate to use data drawn from the references to make limited inferences regarding hymn content.

## Common Hymns, Alterations, and Presentation

Beyond the organizations and presentation of the hymns within the hymnals, it is the content that is naturally the most substantial feature because the text of the hymns directs the focus of worship. There is a combined total of about 842 hymns from both the LDS and RLDS hymnals, though it should be noted that some hymn titles are duplicated within each hymnal with alternative arrangements. Despite the common roots of both LDS and RLDS hymnody, there are only 45 hymns held in common between the two hymnals from 36 common authors. This is far fewer than the 90 hymns published in Emma Smith's 1835

hymnal, which is the foundation of LDS and RLDS hymnody. Additionally, the vast majority of the 45 hymns are not part of the original 90 hymns. Of the Mormon hymns written before the death of Joseph Smith, only six are held in common between the hymnals from three Mormon authors. There is only a single post-Joseph LDS hymn in the RLDS hymnal and there are no RLDS hymns in the LDS hymnal despite numerous hymns written by the family of Joseph Smith for RLDS hymnody, which thematically and theologically would have been appropriate for the 1985 LDS hymnal. The hymnody of both the LDS and RLDS churches has evolved over time to meet the spiritual needs of their members. While an in-depth analysis of all 842 hymns is well beyond the scope of this study, some conclusions can be drawn by analyzing a few of the hymns held in common, the presence of which demonstrates a common heritage.

The LDS and RLDS hymnals cannot simply be compared by the hymn titles that are included, as both hymnals alter the presentation of the hymns in a variety of ways. The hymn text can be altered by carefully selecting which verses from the original to retain. Once the hymn verses are chosen, the order of the verses can be altered. Additionally, a contemporary verse of modern authorship can be added to alter the meaning or the text of the hymn itself can simply be altered with the same result. The LDS and RLDS hymnals both contain instances of each of these practices. It should be noted that while the accompanying musical arrangement can be altered to change the mood of a hymn and thus potentially its interpretation, a discussion of the hymn music is beyond the scope of this study.

Of all these changes, text alterations are the easiest to track because altered hymns are generally marked as such in both hymnals. However, this can under represent the actual alterations as the version of a hymn chosen might be a version that was previously altered from its original state and not altered by the committee. Additionally, it is unclear whether smaller alterations in text are always acknowledged. Despite these issues, the LDS and RLDS hymnals contrast greatly when alterations are counted. In the RLDS hymnal, 32 percent of the hymns are labeled as altered, while in the LDS hymnal hymns only 4 percent are labeled as altered. One plausible interpretation of this significant difference is that the inclusion of a wider variety of Christian hymns in the larger RLDS hymnal necessitated more extensive alterations in order to present the hymns in concordance with RLDS theological understanding. Likewise, it is plausible that the LDS committee was more selective in borrowing only those hymns from mainstream Christianity that were already in tune with LDS

theological understanding. It could also be argued that without taking into account a closer examination of the various alterations, the general data above is not reliable in and of itself. Nevertheless, the above explanations are plausible and are supported by the fact that in the evolution of LDS and RLDS hymnody, the appearance and organization of the hymnals, the campion works, and the scripture references chosen, all point to the LDS Church’s entrenchment in tradition and the RLDS Church’s more inclusive worldview. Furthermore, as discussed below, specific hymns were thematically altered to serve the needs of the respective churches.

One of the signature hymns of the Latter Day Saint movement, hymn 2 in the LDS hymnal called “The Spirit of God” which corresponds to hymn 33 in the RLDS hymnal, “The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning” was written by William Phelps and originated in Emma Smith’s 1835 hymnal. The LDS version contains the first three verses and the sixth verse of the original hymn, while the RLDS version only contains the first three verses.<sup>41</sup> The result is that the LDS version thematically ends on the second coming of Christ and the beginning of the millennium, while the RLDS version thematically ends on the gathering of the saints in “solemn assemblies” and the blessings that come from sharing the gospel. Both hymns omit the fourth verse and fifth verse from the original. As the omitted fourth verse includes the line “we’ll wash, and be wash’d and with oil be anointed withal not omitting the washing of feet,” it is possible that allusions to LDS Temple worship were not seen as appropriate to include in the LDS hymnal and in the RLDS hymnal, they would have been theologically out of tune. The omitted fifth verse, about “Old Israel” being led to freedom by “Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua,” is perhaps omitted to make a more concise hymn and possibly because it was not seen as especially pertinent to worshipers in the twentieth century.<sup>42</sup>

Another common hymn, written before the death of Joseph Smith, is presented as hymn 17, “Awake, Ye Saints of God, Awake!” in the LDS hymnal and hymn 140, “Awake! Ye Saints of God, Awake,” in the RLDS hymnal. Neither the LDS or RLDS hymnal label this Eliza R Snow hymn as altered, however both present it in a dramatically different way. The punctuation placement is different in both hymns when compared to the original hymn published in Emma Smith’s 1841 Nauvoo hymnal, but the RLDS hymnal punctuation is closer to the original. The LDS hymnal alters “fowler’s snare” to “tempter’s

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41. Davidson, *Our Latter-Day Hymns*, 31.

42. LDS Church, *Hymns of the Church*, 2; and RLDS Church, *Hymns of the Saints*, 33.

snare.”<sup>43</sup> The most dramatic changes, though, are in the verse selection. The original hymn had six verses, while both the LDS and RLDS versions have only four verses.<sup>44</sup> Both hymnals begin and end on the same verse but made different selections for the middle verses. One of the middle verses in the LDS hymnal did not even come from the original version of the hymn but came from the only stanza in Eliza R. Snows original poem that was not adapted into verse. The RLDS version centers on the concept that God is aware of the widow, orphan, and those murdered in persecution, that he will protect his people, and they will eventually be united with him.<sup>45</sup> The LDS version centers on encouraging saints to pray and have faith in God that he will preserve them from their enemies for “his vengeance will not slumber long.”<sup>46</sup> The RLDS version omits the verse containing “his vengeance will not slumber long” and the LDS version omits the verse about the persecution of the early Mormons. The result is an RLDS hymn more about enduring persecution and an LDS hymn with a greater emphasis on prayer and faith in God to overcome hostile forces.

The preserving of the early Mormon hostility towards the outside world in the LDS hymnody and the alterations of this hostility towards positivity in the RLDS hymnody is also apparent in “Come, O Thou Kings of Kings,” hymn 59 in the LDS hymnal, and “Come, Thou, O Kings of Kings,” hymn 206 in the RLDS hymnal by Parley P. Pratt. The RLDS version omits the original second verse that contained the line calling Christ to “come, make an end of sin, and cleanse the earth by fire.” Furthermore, in the RLDS hymnal the phrase “all the chosen race” was changed to “saints of every race” in the third verse. Finally, the RLDS version also adjusted the phrase “the heathen nations bow the knee” to “the thankful nations bow the knee” in the third verse. The result of these changes is that the RLDS version emphasizes the global presence of saints among different ethnicities and it is righteous “thankful nations” bowing before the coming Christ and praising him. This contrasts greatly with the original version, preserved in the LDS hymnal, which emphasizes the elect nature of the saints who are among the “heathen nations,” nations that will finally recognize and praise Christ when he returns. Overall, the original in the LDS hymnal is about the saints urging Christ to come and save them from the wicked nations they dwell in, ushering in a new time of paradise, while in the RLDS altered

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43. LDS Church, *Hymns of the Church*, 140.

44. Davidson, *Our Latter-Day Hymns*, 45.

45. RLDS Church, *Hymns of the Saints*, 17.

46. LDS Church, *Hymns of the Church*, 19.

version, it is about the saints eagerly awaiting the joy that the coming of Christ will bring.<sup>47</sup>

A similar direct shift is seen in Fowler William’s hymn “We Thank Thee O God for a Prophet,” which is significant because this is the only strictly post-Joseph LDS hymn to appear in the RLDS hymnal. The hymn, 19 in the LDS hymnal and 307 in the RLDS hymnal, is a prime example of the RLDS hymnal’s content being altered to have a wider and more positive text. In both hymnals, the hymn is about thanking God for the blessings associated with the restored gospel, the protection God provides, and the positive influence of God in the life of the saints. However, two aspects of the LDS hymn are removed from the RLDS hymn. The second verse in the LDS hymn, after describing the confidence the saints have in God’s protection, ends “the wicked who fight against Zion will surely be smitten at last” while the same verse in the RLDS hymnal ends with the far more positive “the saints who will labor for Zion will surely be blessed at last. Amen.” Furthermore, the RLDS hymnal removes the third verse entirely, which ends “thus on to eternal perfection the honest and faithful will go, while they who reject this glad message shall never such happiness know.”<sup>48</sup> These alterations removed feelings of hostility towards the outside world and lessened the sense of persecution that is contained in the original hymn.

The examples of these four hymns demonstrate how the presentation of a hymn can drastically alter its content, both directly and indirectly. In Snow’s hymn, God’s “vengeance” is assured, while in Pratt’s hymn the earth will be cleansed in “fire” and the elect nature of the Saints reinforced, and in Fowler’s hymn the Saints are assured that the “wicked” will indeed be “smitten.” All of these instances of early Mormon hostility and opposition to the outside world are preserved in the LDS hymnal and are changed in or excluded from the RLDS hymnal in order to instead thematically focus on the blessings received from the gospel. While the changes in Phelps’s hymn do not appear to have been for these reasons, it is still an example of changing hymn text in order to render thematic changes. Significantly, 27 more hymns by William Phelps, Eliza R. Snow, and Parley P. Pratt are included in the LDS hymnal than in the RLDS hymnal. Furthermore, 9 hymns by William Phelps that are among these 27 hymns were in Emma Smith’s first hymnal. These exclusions, despite the larger size of the RLDS hymnal, support the notion that the RLDS hymnal

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47. LDS Church, *Hymns of the Church*, 59; RLDS Church, *Hymns of the Saints*, 206.

48. RLDS Church, *Hymns of the Saints*, 307.

is further removed from its early Mormon roots when compared to the LDS hymnal.

The LDS and RLDS hymnals were not compiled in a historical vacuum. Why certain hymns or verses are not present or have been altered will have motives embedded in the historical narrative. For example, past RLDS hymnals included the LDS hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints" in a slightly altered state, but was removed by vote during the 1958 World Conference due to the desire to create a greater distinction between the RLDS and LDS churches.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the motives behind hymnal text differences is not apparent by a comparative analysis alone. This does not mean that a comparative look at differences in presentation is without significant value. Indeed, it is evident that though both the 1981 RLDS and 1985 LDS hymnals alter the presentation of hymns, the LDS hymnal is more likely to preserve text in conflict with the outside world.

## Conclusion

It is not reasonable to take cultural observations about the differences between the LDS and RLDS church and extrapolate conclusions to include the LDS and RLDS hymnals without first demonstrating differences between the hymnody. However, it is useful to demonstrate substantial differences between the 1981 RLDS and 1985 LDS hymnals and then place those differences in their wider cultural context. A comparative examination of the hymnals has verified differences in the cultural preservation methods chosen by the LDS and RLDS committees in charge of the compilation of these hymnals. The differences in these hymnals is perhaps reflective of the overall different cultural and historical differences since the death of Joseph Smith. For example, cultural differences would naturally arise over time through the differences in LDS and RLDS church size, geographic placement, and cultural tension with the outside world such as that faced by the LDS church during the nineteenth century for practicing polygamy. While unable to draw strong overall conclusions about the LDS and RLDS churches in general solely based on their hymnals, there are similarities and differences demonstrated by their respective hymnals worth studying.

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49. Clothier, "Different Drummers," 134.

There are substantial differences between the LDS hymnal and the RLDS hymnal in how they present their common Latter Day Saint heritage. The LDS hymnal and its companion work emphasized the distinct LDS tradition with hymns strongly supported by restoration texts and preserved the early Mormon worldview of persecution from the hostile outside world. This is contrasted by the RLDS hymnal which, along with its companion work, sought to explain itself as an inclusive document compiled by a qualified committee for an international audience. It heavily reflected New Testament scripture and thematically focused on the blessings received through the gospel. The significance behind the differences is that both the LDS and RLDS committees had the intent of creating hymnals for a modern and international audience while preserving their distinctive differences. The end results demonstrate how far culturally the LDS and RLDS churches have separated from each other, at least in the area where hymnody is concerned. Lynn, an LDS member who reviewed the RLDS hymnal upon its release praised the hymnal while lamenting that “the gain in universality and acceptance” came at the cost of “historical and doctrinal uniqueness.”<sup>50</sup> The LDS Church produced a hymnal that preserved its tradition but at the cost of a more inclusive hymnody. As the RLDS church, now the Community of Christ, recently published their new hymnal in 2013, the LDS church may choose to soon retire the 1985 hymnal as well after 32 years of use. When a new LDS hymnal is compiled, the balance between tradition and inclusion will have to be renegotiated, and the question asked: Have the wicked who fight against Zion, and the need to hold the outside world in conflict, been “smitten at last”?

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50. Karen Lynn, “The 1981 RLDS Hymnal: Songs More Brightly Sung,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1983): 38.