



Feeding the Flock: The Foundations of Mormon Thought: Church and Praxis

Terryl L. Givens

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Feeding the Flock, the second volume of Terryl L. Givens's landmark study of the foundations of Mormon thought and practice, traces the essential contours of Mormon practice as it developed from Joseph Smith to the present. Despite the stigmatizing fascination with its social innovations (polygamy, communalism), its stark supernaturalism (angels, gold plates, and seer stones), and its most esoteric aspects (a New World Garden of Eden, sacred undergarments), as well as its long-standing outlier status among American Protestants, Givens reminds us that Mormonism remains the most enduring--and thriving--product of the nineteenth-century's religious upheavals and innovations.

Because Mormonism is founded on a radically unconventional cosmology, based on unusual doctrines of human nature, deity, and soteriology, a history of its development cannot use conventional theological categories. Givens has structured these volumes in a way that recognizes the implicit logic of Mormon thought. The first book, *Wrestling the Angel*, centered on the theoretical foundations of Mormon thought and doctrine regarding God, humans, and salvation. *Feeding the Flock* considers Mormon practice, the authority of the institution of the church and its priesthood, forms of worship, and the function and nature of spiritual gifts in the church's history, revealing that Mormonism is still a tradition very much in the process of formation.

At once original and provocative, engaging and learned, Givens offers the most sustained account of Mormon thought and practice yet written.

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