

Cults

Week 7

July 31, 2005

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Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints

a.k.a.

The Mormons

Overview

Founder: Joseph Smith

Founding

Date: April 6, 1830

Scriptures: *Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price*

Official

Publication: *Church News* is a weekly 16 page news paper and the *Ensign* is a monthly magazine.

The Watchman Expositor; Profile: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Watchman Fellowship;
<http://www.watchman.org/profile/ldspro.htm>

Overview

Organization

Structure:

One prophet leads the Church. Beneath the prophet in authority is the Council of the Twelve Apostles. A third group of men are called the First and Second Councils of the Seventy. All of these men together are called the General Authorities.

Unique Terms:

Local churches called *Wards* or *Stake Centers*. The *Temples* are not for worship, but are used for ceremonies for the living and the dead. Less than ten percent of all LDS are allowed to enter these structures.

The Watchman Expositor; Profile: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society; Watchman Fellowship;
<http://www.watchman.org/profile/jwpro.htm>

History

Joseph Smith Jr. born Dec 23, 1805 in Vermont.

1820: at age 14, praying and asking God which denomination to join. (James 1:5) Visited by God the Father and Jesus. He was told by Jesus that he should join none of them for they were "all wrong" and all the Christian church's doctrines "were an abomination" (Joseph Smith - History 19, *Pearl of Great Price*).

History

September 21, 1823: age 17, visited by the **angel Moroni** (pronounced Ma-roe-nie.)

Moroni was the son of **Mormon**, the leader of the **Nephite people** in the 4th Century AD. Back in the 4th Century, Mormon wrote ***The Book of Mormon*** in Reformed Egyptian Hieroglyphics on golden plates and hid them near where Joseph would one day live in Palmyra, New York.

September 22, 1827: Joseph received the plates and began translating.

History

How did he really translate this reformed Egyptian into the English language? David Wittmer one of the three witnesses of the book of Mormon writes in his book addressed to all believers in Christ telling us how Joseph Smith placed the 'seer stone' into a hat to translate the Book of Mormon: "I will now give you a description of the manner in which the book of Mormon was translated. Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, and put his face in the hat.

History

Drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine a piece of something resembling parchment would appear and on that appeared the writing one character a time would and under was an interpretation in English." Thus the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God, and not by any power of man." (An Address To All Believers In Christ, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, p. 12)

History

The writing would appear one character at a time Joseph would read it off to Oliver Cowdery his principle scribe (Emma his wife and Martin Harris were also scribes.) When Oliver wrote it down, he would then repeat it back to Joseph to see if it was correct. If correct it would then disappear then another character with the interpretation would appear in the seer stone. Interestingly the plates that he was supposedly were translating from were not nearby. They were well off to the side covered up.

History

After the publication of the Book of Mormon, Mormonism began to grow. Because their religion was so deviant from Christianity, i.e., plurality of gods, polygamy (Joseph is said to have had 27 wives), etc., persecution soon forced them to move from New York to Ohio, then to Missouri, and finally to Nauvoo, Illinois. After being accused of breaking some laws in Nauvoo (for destroying a printing press that was publishing harmful information on Mormonism), Joseph and his brother Hyrum ended up in jail. A mob later broke into the jail and killed Joseph and his brother.

History

After Smith's murder, several LDS leaders stepped forward to take control of the Church. Each claimed to have the authority to lead the Church, and some even claimed Smith had appointed them to be his successor. This fracturing of the Church has caused over 100 splinter groups throughout the movement's history (*Divergent Paths of the Restoration*, Steven Shields). The largest of these splinter groups is the **Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**.

The Watchman Expositor; Profile: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society; Watchman Fellowship;
<http://www.watchman.org/profile/jwpro.htm>

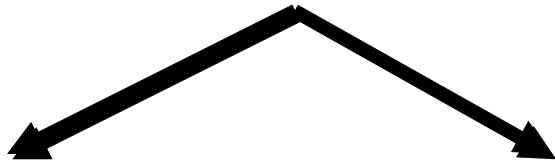
Disunity in the Cults

Many cults claim that the "church" is splintered with so many denominations.

Yet these same cults also have splintered, and they have not existed for 2,000 years like the church has!

History

Joseph Smith Jr.



Brigham Young

Joseph Smith III

Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter
Day Saints

Reorganized
Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter
Day Saints

Utah

Missouri

RLDS Presidents/Prophets

Joseph Smith Jr. (1830 – 1844)

Joseph Smith III (1844 - 1914)

Frederick M. Smith (1915 – 1946)

Israel A. Smith (1946 – 1958)

W. Wallace Smith (1958 – 1978)

Wallace B. Smith (1978 – 1996)

W. Grant McMurray (1996 – 2004)

Steven M. Veazey (2004 – present)

RLDS Name Change

April 6, 2001

Church officially changed its name from the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" to the "Community of Christ."

LDS Presidents/Prophets

Joseph Smith Jr. (1830 – 1844)

Brigham Young (1847 – 1877)

John Taylor (1880 – 1887)

Wilford Woodruff (1887 – 1898)

Lorenzo Snow (1898 – 1901)

Joseph F. Smith (1901 – 1918)

Heber J. Grant (1918 – 1945)

George Albert Smith (1945 – 1951)

David O. McKay (1951 – 1970)

Joseph Fielding Smith (1970 – 1972)

Harold B. Lee (1972 – 1973)

Spencer W. Kimball (1973 – 1985)

Ezra Taft Benson (1985 – 1994)

Howard W. Hunter (1994 – 1995)

Gordon B. Hinckley (1995 – present)

History

The Book of Mormon is the account of people who came from the Middle-East to the Americas.

Takes place 600 B.C. to 400 A.D.

History

Jaredites: people from the Tower of Babel who came to Central America and perished due to immorality.

Nephites and Lamanites: group of Jews who fled persecution in Jerusalem lead by Nephi.

Nephites defeated in 428 A.D.

Lamanites became American Indians.

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Polytheism ("Plurality of Gods")
- God is not eternal
- God was once like us
- Jesus and Lucifer were brothers, and Lucifer desperately wanted to be the savior of the world
- The Holy Ghost is a member of the "godhead"
- The Holy Spirit is an impersonal force
- Men become gods based on good works and merit
- God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob.

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- God the Father is married to the Mother God
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- Men live on the Moon and the Sun
- Black people are colored due to misdeeds in the pre-existence
- Practice "baptism for the dead"
- Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthood
- Jesus was a polygamist and had children
- There are different levels of heaven

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Salvation for a woman is dependant on her husband
- works are necessary for salvation
- Temple rituals include secret handshakes, secret names, even secret undergarments
- more...

Polytheism:

In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it

(Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 349).

Polytheism:

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods

(Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 370).

Polytheism:

Plurality of Gods: Three separate personages: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, comprise the Godhead. As each of these persons is a God, it is evident, from this standpoint alone, that a plurality of Gods exists. To us, speaking in the proper finite sense, these three are the only Gods we worship. But in addition there is an infinite number of holy personages, drawn from worlds without number, who have passed on to exaltation and are thus gods

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 576-577).

Polytheism:

How many Gods there are, I do not know.
But there never was a time when there were
not Gods.

(Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*
7:333).

Absolute Monotheism

As Bible-believing Christians, we are monotheists; that is, we believe in only one God.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD"
(Deuteronomy 6:4)

"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God... Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any" (Isaiah 44:6,8)

Jesus prayed to "the only true God" (John 17:3)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5)

Absolute Monotheism

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." (Isaiah 43:10)

"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isaiah 45:5)

"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah 46:9)

The scriptures are clear - there is only One God!

Absolute Monotheism

Bible-believing Christians are monotheists. There is only One true God. There may be false gods and idols in the world, as the apostle writes: "(as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things" (1 Corinthians 8:5-6), but those false gods are merely "the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell" (Deuteronomy 4:28).

Foundational truth: there is only One True God.

God is Not Eternal:

I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.

(Prophet Joseph Smith, LDS History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 305).

God is Eternal:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."
(Psalm 90:2)

"Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting." (Psalm 93:2)

"The eternal God is thy refuge"
(Deuteronomy 33:22)

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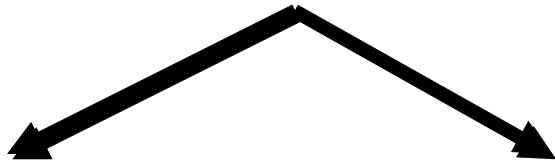
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"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." (Isaiah 43:10)

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"The eternal God is thy refuge"
(Deuteronomy 33:22)

New Material

Note About Sarcasm:

"And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." (1 Kings 18:27)

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
(Ephesians 4:29)

God Was Once Like Us:

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!...He was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did; and I will show it from the Bible.

(Prophet Joseph Smith, LDS History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 305).

God Was Once Like Us:

I know that God is a being with body, parts and passions... Man was born of woman; Christ, the Savior, was born of woman; and God, the Father was born of woman

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith, *Deseret News*, *Church News*, Sept.19, 1936, p.2).

God Was Once Like Us:

The Father is a glorified, perfected, resurrected, exalted man who worked out his salvation by obedience to the same laws he has given to us so that we may do the same

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.64)

God Is Not Like Us:

"God is not a man, that he should lie"

Numbers 23:19

"And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent."

1 Samuel 15:29

"I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee"

Hosea 11:9

God Is Not Like Us:

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Psalm 90:2

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:24

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Luke 24:39

God Is Not Like Us:

"For I am the LORD, I change not"

Malachi 3:6

Jesus and Lucifer Are Brothers:

The appointment of Jesus to be the Savior of the world was contested by one of the other sons of God. He was called Lucifer, son of the morning. Haughty, ambitious, and covetous of power and glory, this spirit-brother of Jesus desperately tried to become the Savior of mankind

(Milton Hunter of the LDS First Council of the Seventy, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, p. 15)

Jesus and Lucifer Are NOT Brothers:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of **the only begotten** of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the **only begotten Son**, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his **only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the **only begotten Son of God**." (John 3:18)

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his **only begotten Son** into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9)

Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit:

In Mormonism a distinction is drawn between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit. As LDS Apostle Marion G. Romney stated, "The Holy Ghost is a person, a spirit, the third member of the Godhead" (*Ensign* May 1977, 43-44). The sixth LDS prophet, Joseph F. Smith explains that the Holy Spirit is not a person but rather an impersonal force. "You may call it the Spirit of God, you may call it the influence of God's intelligence, you may call it the substance of his power; no matter what it is called, it is the spirit of intelligence that permeates the universe" (*Mormon Doctrine*, McConkie, pp. 752-753).

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Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit:

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and that these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.

(Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 370.)

Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit:

Jesus Christ...was filled with the divine substance or fluid called the Holy Spirit, by which He comprehended and spake the truth in power and authority, and by which He controlled the elements and imparted health and life to those who were prepared to partake of the same...The purest, most refined and subtle of all these substances and the one least understood or even recognized by the less informed among mankind is that substance called the Holy Spirit.

(Parley P. Pratt, *Key to Theology*, pp. 38, 46.)

The Holy Spirit

Henry Clarence Thiessen writes:

The Holy Spirit is recognized as God. a. He is a person. Before it can be demonstrated that the Holy Spirit is God, it must first be established that he is a person, not a mere influence or divine power. This is done along the following lines: (1) Personal pronouns are used of him. Though the Greek term for spirit is neuter, Jesus in John 14:26 and 16:13f. used the masculine demonstrative pronoun "he" (that one) of the Holy Spirit. (2) He is called Helper (Comforter). This designation is applied both to the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 26 ; 15:26 ; 16:7) and to Christ (John 14:16 ; 1 John 2:1), and since it expressed personality when applied to Christ, it must do so when applied to the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

(3) Personal characteristics are ascribed to him. He has three essential elements of personality: intellect (1 Cor. 2:11), sensibilities (Rom. 8:27 ; 15:30), and will (1 Cor. 12:11)...

Personal acts are performed by him. He regenerates (John 3:5), teaches (John 14:26), bears witness (John 15:26), convicts (John 16:8-11), guides into truth (John 16:13), glorifies Christ (John 16:14), calls man into service (Acts 13:2), speaks (Acts 13:2 ; Rev. 2:7), directs men in service (Acts 16:6f.), intercedes (Rom. 8:26), searches out (1 Cor. 2:10), and works (1 Cor. 12:11)... He relates to the Father and the Son as a person. This is the case in the baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19), in the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13:14), and in his office as administrator of the church (1 Cor. 12:4-6 ; cf. also 1 Pet. 1:1f. ; Jude 20f.)...

The Holy Spirit

He is susceptible of personal treatment. He can be tempted (Acts 5:9), lied to (Acts 5:3), grieved (Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10), resisted (Acts 7:51), insulted (Heb. 10:29), and blasphemed (Matt. 12:31f.)... He is distinguished from his own power (Acts 10:38 ; Rom. 15:13 ; 1 Cor. 2:4). All these things prove that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a mere influence.

b. He is deity. He is not, however, merely a person. He is a divine person. This can be shown in several ways: (1) Attributes of deity are affirmed of him. He is eternal (Heb. 9:14), omniscient (1 Cor. 2:10f. ; John 14:26 ; 16:12f.), omnipotent (Luke 1:35), and omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10).

The Holy Spirit

(2) Works of deity are ascribed to him, such as creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30), regeneration (John 3:5), inspiration of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:21; cf. Acts 1:16; 28:25), and raising of the dead (Rom. 8:11). (3) The way in which he is associated with the Father and the Son proves not only his personality, but also his deity, as the baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19), the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13:14), and the administration of the church (1 Cor. 12:4-6).

The Holy Spirit

(4) The words and works of the Holy Spirit are considered as the words and works of God (cf. Isa. 6:9f. with John 12:39-41 and Acts 28:25-27; Exod. 16:7 with Ps. 95:8-11 ; Isa. 63:9f. with Heb. 3:7-9 ; Gen. 1:27 with Job 33:4. (5) Finally, he is expressly called God (Acts 5:3f. ; 2 Cor. 3:17f.). Other divine names are also given to him (cf. Exod. 17:7 with Heb. 3:7-9; and 2 Tim. 3:16 with 2 Pet. 1:21). All these references prove that the Holy Spirit, equally with the Father and the Son, is God... Orthodox Christianity has always held to the deity of the Holy Spirit.

Men Can Become God:

The whole design of the gospel is to lead us, onward and upward to greater achievement, even, eventually, to godhood. This great possibility was enunciated by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the King Follett sermon (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 342-62) and emphasized by President Lorenzo Snow. It is this grand and incomparable concept: As God now is, man may become! (See *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, comp. Clyde J. Williams, Salt Lake City: *Bookcraft*, 1984, p. 1.)

(Prophet Gordon B. Hinkley, *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, page 179)

Men Can Become God:

"As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may be"

(Prophet Lorenzo Snow)

Men Can Become God:

The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods like himself. We are created to become gods like unto our father in heaven

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, volume 10, page 223)

Men Can Become God:

man is the king of kings and lord of lords in embryo

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Men Can Become God:

The Father is a glorified, perfected, resurrected, exalted man who worked out his salvation by obedience to the same laws he has given to us so that we may do the same.

(LDS Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.64)

Men Can Become God:

The Father has promised us that through our faithfulness we shall be blessed with the fullness of his kingdom. In other words we will have the privilege of becoming like him. To become like him we must have all the powers of godhood; thus a man and his wife when glorified will have spirit children who eventually will go on an earth like this one we are on and pass through the same kind of experiences, being subject to mortal conditions, and if faithful, then they also will receive the fullness of exaltation and partake of the same blessings. There is no end to this development; it will go on forever. We will become gods and have jurisdiction over world, and these world will be peopled by our own offspring. We will have an endless eternity for this

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, 48).

Men Can NOT Become God:

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, **neither shall there be after me.**" (Isaiah 43:10)

"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isaiah 45:5)

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The scriptures are clear: We are not a God, nor will we be a God. There is and never shall be anyone/thing like God.

Ye Are Gods?

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34)

"I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." (Psalm 82:6)

"But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Psalm 82:7)

Ye Are Gods?

Jesus was quoting here from Psalm 82:6. Was he thus expressing support for the LDS doctrine of the plurality of Gods? Let's look at the context. Certain Jews picked up stones to throw at Jesus, accusing him of blasphemy "because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:33). Jesus responded with the words quoted above and then continued: "If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (vv. 35, 36).

Ye Are Gods?

Rather than testifying to the plurality of Gods, Jesus was here making a contrast. He was contrasting himself with those who were called gods in Psalm 82. The Jews listening were familiar with the psalm and knew that the word of God was spoken against those individuals who were thus referred to. The point Jesus made, in effect, was "If individuals like that can be called 'gods,' how can you object to my saying I am God's Son?" He was not teaching polytheistic theology.

Ye Are Gods?

Jesus' statement must be understood as part of his overall reasoning here which is an a fortiori argument: "If God even called human judges 'gods,' then how much more can I call myself the Son of God." Christ had just pronounced himself one with the Father, saying, "I and My Father are one" (10:30). The Jews wanted to stone him because they thought Christ was blaspheming, making himself out to be equal with God (vv. 31–33). Jesus responded by quoting Psalm 82:6 which says, "I said, you are gods." So, Jesus reasoned, if human judges could be called "gods," then why can't the Son of God be called "God"?

Geisler, N. L., & Rhodes, R. 1997. *When Cultists Ask : A Popular Handbook on Cultic Misinterpretations*. Baker Books: Grand Rapids, Mich.

Ye Are Gods?

Quoted from Ps. 82:6 where God calls some unjust judges "gods" and pronounces calamity against them. Jesus' argument is that this psalm proves that the word "god" can be legitimately used to refer to others than God Himself. His reasoning is that if there are others whom God can address as "god" or "sons of the Most High," why then should the Jews object to Jesus' statement that He is "the Son of God" (v. 36)?

God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob:

God the Eternal Father, whom we designate by the exalted name-title 'Elohim,' is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and of the spirits of the human race.

(Apostle James Talmage,
The Articles of Faith, p. 421)

God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob:

It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael . . .

(Prophet Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 1:51, April 9 1852)

At the School of the Prophets in June 1871 President Brigham Young taught, "Elohim, Yahova & Michael, were father, Son and grandson. They made this Earth & Michael became Adam"

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith, *Journal*, June 17 1871, LDS archives).

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So this would mean:

Elohim = Father of Yahovah

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God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob:

Kolob means "the first creation." It is the name of the planet "nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God." It is "first in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. . . . One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth." (Book of Abraham, pp. 34-35; Abra. 3:3-9.)

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie,
Mormon Doctrine, p. 428, 1966)

God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob:

AND I, Abraham, had the Urim and Thummim, which the Lord my God had given unto me, in Ur of the Chaldees; And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it; And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest.

(Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 3:1-3)

Elohim is not God's name and He does not live on a planet near the star Kolob:

Elohim. This is a general Hebrew name for Deity that designates God as our Creator and the object of all true worship. It occurs 2,570 times in the Old Testament.¹

Because Elohim is a general term for God, it is also used when describing false gods. For instance, Exodus 20:2-3 declares: "I am the LORD thy God [Elohim] which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt . . . Thou shalt have no other gods [elohim] before me."

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Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool:
(Isaiah 66:1)

But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool
(Matthew 5:34-35)

God the Father Is Married to the Mother God:

The fact that there is no reference to a mother in heaven either in the Bible, Book of Mormon or Doctrine and Covenants, is not sufficient proof that no such thing as a mother did exist there.... does not common sense tell us that we must have had a mother there also?

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions, Vol. 3, p.142*).

God the Father Is Married to the Mother God:

Brother Kimball quoted a saying of Joseph the Prophet, that he would not worship a God who had not a Father; and I do not know that he would if he had not a mother; the one would be as absurd as the other.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, p.286)

God the Father Is Married to the Mother God:

We have now clearly shown that God the Father had a plurality of wives, one or more being in eternity, by whom He begat our spirits as well as the spirit of Jesus His First Born, and another being upon the earth by whom He begat the tabernacle of Jesus, as His Only Begotten in this world...

We have also proved that both God the Father and our Lord inherit their wives in eternity as well in time: and God the Father has already begotten many thousand millions of sons and daughters and sent them into this world to take tabernacles.

(Apostle Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, p. 172)

There Is No Mother God:

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, **neither shall there be after me.**" (Isaiah 43:10)

"I am the LORD, and **there is none else,** there is **no God beside me**" (Isaiah 45:5)

"I am God, and **there is none else;** I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah 46:9)

The scriptures are clear: There is only
ONE GOD.

We Are Offspring of Heavenly Father and Mother:

Implicit in the Christian verity that all men are the spirit children of an Eternal Father is the usually unspoken truth that they are also the offspring of an Eternal Mother. An exalted and glorified Man of Holiness (Moses 6:57) could not be a Father unless a Woman of like glory, perfection, and holiness was associated with him as a Mother. The begetting of children makes a man a father and a woman a mother whether we are dealing with man in his mortal or immortal state.

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie,
Mormon Doctrine, 1966 ed., p. 516)

We Are Offspring of Heavenly Father and Mother:

This doctrine that there is a Mother in Heaven was affirmed in plainness by the First Presidency of the Church (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund) ... they said that "man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents"

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"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah 46:9)

"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and **he that formed thee from the womb,** I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth **by myself**" (Isaiah 44:24)

Men Live on the Moon and Sun:

Astronomers and philosophers have, from time almost immemorial until very recently, asserted that the moon was uninhabited, that it had no atmosphere, etc. But recent discoveries, through the means of powerful telescopes, have given scientists a doubt or two upon the old theory.

Nearly all the great discoveries of men in the last half century have, in one way or another, either directly or indirectly, contributed to prove Joseph Smith to be a Prophet.

Oliver B. Huntington, Young Woman's Journal, Official LDS Church Publication, 1892, Vol. 3, pp. 263-264

Men Live on the Moon and Sun:

As far back as 1837, I know that he said the moon was inhabited by men and women the same as this earth, and that they lived to a greater age than we do--that they live generally to near the age of 1000 years.

He described the men as averaging near six feet in height, and dressing quite uniformly in something near the Quaker style. In my Patriarchal blessing, given by the father of Joseph the Prophet, in Kirkland, 1837, I was told that I would preach the gospel to the inhabitants upon the moon, even the planet you can now behold with your eyes.

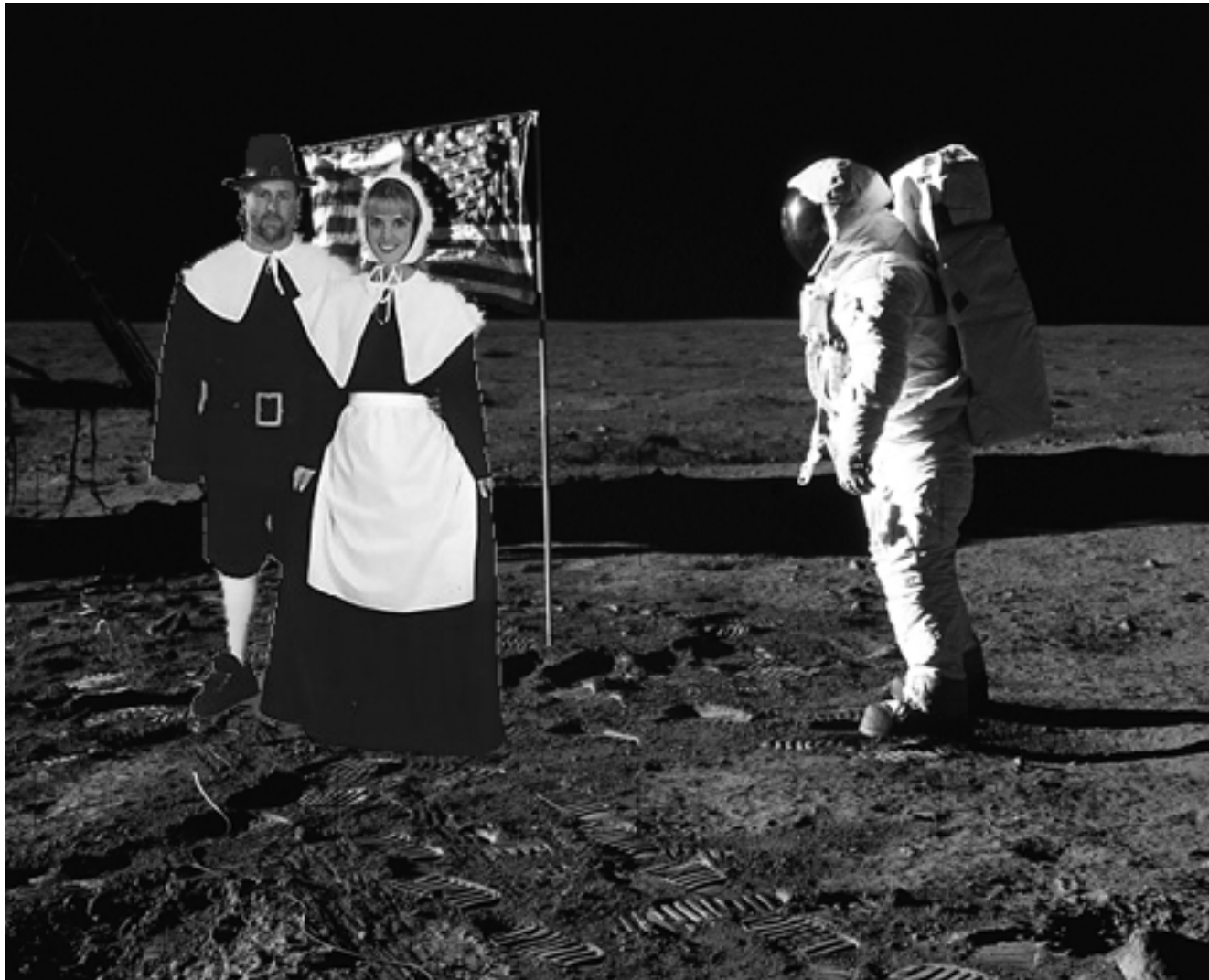
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Who can tell us of the inhabitants of this little planet that shines of an evening called the moon? ...when you inquire about the inhabitants of that sphere you find that the most learned are as ignorant in regard to them as the ignorant of their fellows. So it is in regard to the inhabitants of the sun. Do you think it is inhabited? I rather think it is. Do you think there is any life there? No question of it; it was not made in vain

(Prophet Brigham Young,
Journal of Discourses, Vol. 13, p. 271)

Men Live on the Moon and Sun:



Men Live on the Moon and Sun:

Since Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were wrong about life on the moon and the sun, does it make sense that we should trust their teachings about eternal life?

Update on Moon and Sun Men:

What do today's Mormon's say about the moon/sun men claim?

I did a google search and found overwhelmingly Mormon apologists make the claim that a "prophet" is still human and can make mistakes.

But one apologist added...

Update on Moon and Sun Men:

Another aspect of the matter needs to be considered. At the present time, man has no scientific or revealed knowledge of whether or not there are inhabitants on the earth's moon. The fact that a handful of astronauts didn't see any inhabitants in the tiny area they viewed when they landed on the moon decades ago certainly gives no definitive information, any more than visitors to earth who might land in barren Death Valley would have any idea of the billions of inhabitants elsewhere.

John the Revelator "saw an angel standing in the sun" (Rev. 19:17). Perhaps we have much to learn about inhabitants of other heavenly spheres.

Gibson, Stephen R., *Did Joseph Smith Teach That the Moon Was Inhabited?*
<http://www.lightplanet.com/response/answers/moon.htm>

Cults

Week 9

August 14, 2005

Mark Edward Sohmer
mark@sohmer.net

Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

Review

God Was Once Like Us:

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!...He was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did; and I will show it from the Bible.

(Prophet Joseph Smith, LDS History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 305).

God Was Once Like Us:

The Father is a glorified, perfected, resurrected, exalted man who worked out his salvation by obedience to the same laws he has given to us so that we may do the same

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.64)

God Is Not Like Us:

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Psalm 90:2

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:24

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Luke 24:39

Jesus and Lucifer Are Brothers:

The appointment of Jesus to be the Savior of the world was contested by one of the other sons of God. He was called Lucifer, son of the morning. Haughty, ambitious, and covetous of power and glory, this spirit-brother of Jesus desperately tried to become the Savior of mankind

(Milton Hunter of the LDS First Council of the Seventy, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, p. 15)

Jesus and Lucifer Are NOT Brothers:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of **the only begotten** of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the **only begotten Son**, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his **only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the **only begotten Son of God**." (John 3:18)

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his **only begotten Son** into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9)

Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit:

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and that these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.

(Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 370.)

Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit:

Jesus Christ...was filled with the divine substance or fluid called the Holy Spirit, by which He comprehended and spake the truth in power and authority, and by which He controlled the elements and imparted health and life to those who were prepared to partake of the same...The purest, most refined and subtle of all these substances and the one least understood or even recognized by the less informed among mankind is that substance called the Holy Spirit.

(Parley P. Pratt, *Key to Theology*, pp. 38, 46.)

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God: has intellect, sensibilities, and will; personal acts performed by him; he is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent; Spirit created, inspired scriptures, raised the dead, etc.

Men Can Become God:

"As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may be"
(Prophet Lorenzo Snow)

"The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods like himself. We are created to become gods like unto our father in heaven"

(Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, volume 10, page 223)

"man is the king of kings and lord of lords in embryo"

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"The Father is a glorified, perfected, resurrected, exalted man who worked out his salvation by obedience to the same laws he has given to us so that we may do the same."

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Men Can NOT Become God:

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"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isaiah 45:5)

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The scriptures are clear: We are not a God, nor will we be a God. There is and never shall be anyone/thing like God.

Ye Are Gods?

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34)

"I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." (Psalm 82:6)

"But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Psalm 82:7)

Ye Are Gods?

Jesus' statement must be understood as part of his overall reasoning here which is an a fortiori argument: "If God even called human judges 'gods,' then how much more can I call myself the Son of God." Christ had just pronounced himself one with the Father, saying, "I and My Father are one" (10:30). The Jews wanted to stone him because they thought Christ was blaspheming, making himself out to be equal with God (vv. 31–33). Jesus responded by quoting Psalm 82:6 which says, "I said, you are gods." So, Jesus reasoned, if human judges could be called "gods," then why can't the Son of God be called "God"?

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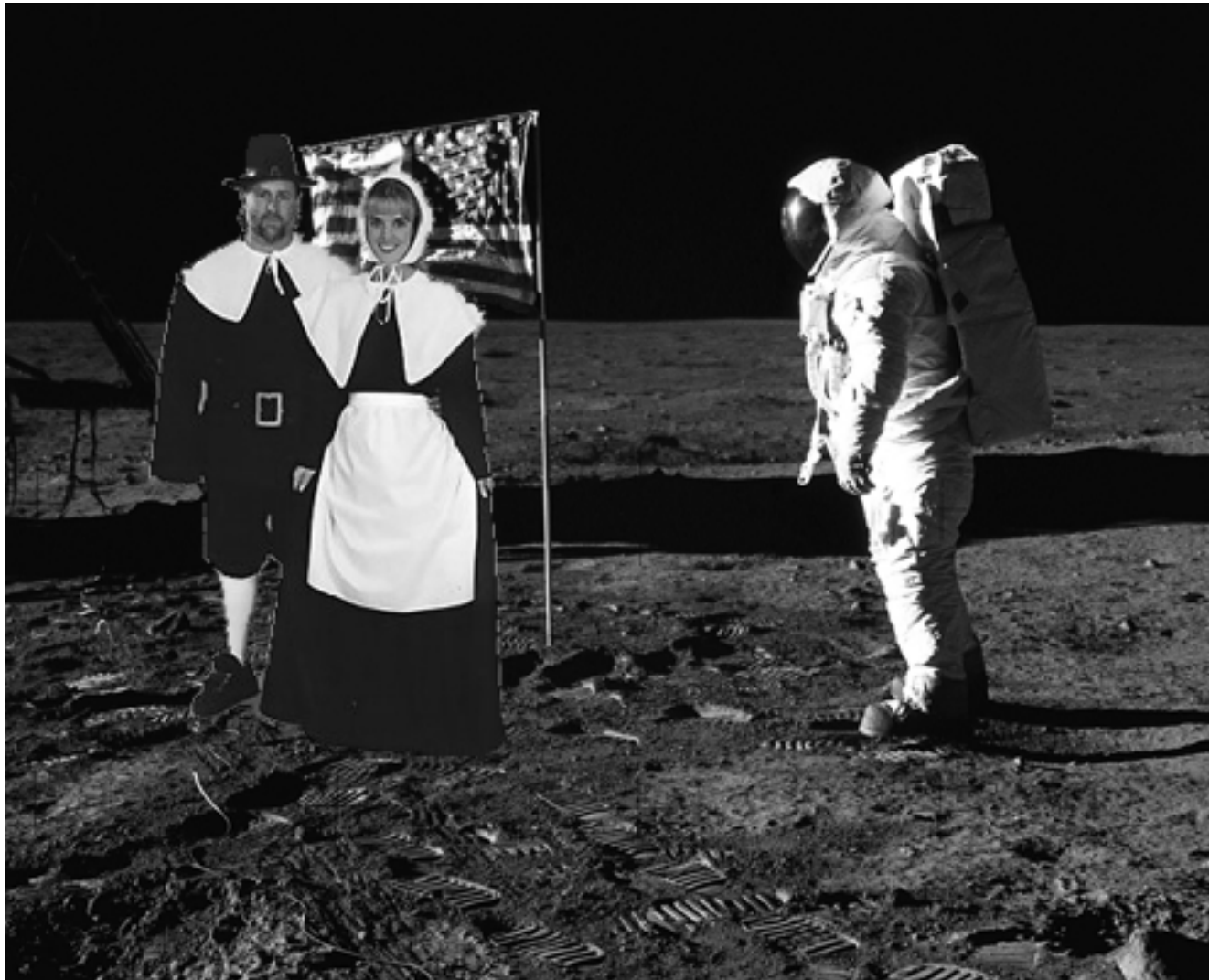
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New Material

Origins Of Black People:

The appointment of Jesus to be the Savior of the world was contested by one of the other sons of God. He was called Lucifer, son of the morning. Haughty, ambitious, and covetous of power and glory, this spirit-brother of Jesus desperately tried to become the Savior of mankind

(Milton Hunter of the LDS First Council of the Seventy, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, p. 15)

Origins Of Black People:

- Lucifer and 1/3 of the angels rebelled.
- Began "War in heaven."
- Jesus and his 2/3 angels won this war.
- Lucifer became Satan.
- His angels became demons.

Origins Of Black People:

According to LDS some of those who fought on God's side "were more valiant than others... Those who were less valiant in pre-existence and who thereby had certain spiritual restrictions imposed upon them during mortality are known to us as the negroes. Such spirits are sent to earth through the lineage of Cain, the mark put upon him for his rebellion against God and his murder of Abel being a black skin... The present status of the negro rests purely and simply on the foundation of pre-existence"

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.527, 1966 ed.).

Origins Of Black People:

According to Brigham Young, Joseph Smith who classified these people as The Seed of Cain. Young said that "Joseph Smith had declared that the Negroes were not neutral in heaven, for all the spirits took sides, but 'the posterity of Cain are black because he (Cain) committed murder. He killed Abel and God set a mark upon his posterity.'"

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
The Improvement Era, p.105).

Origins Of Black People:

there is a reason why one man is born black and with other disadvantages, while another is born white with great advantages. The reason is that we once had an estate before we came here, and were obedient; more or less, to the laws that were given us there. Those who were faithful in all things there received greater blessings here, and those who were not faithful received less

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
Doctrines of Salvation 1:61)

Origins Of Black People:

Not only was Cain called upon to suffer, but because of his wickedness he became the father of an inferior race

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
The Way to Perfection, p.101)

Origins Of Black People:

Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 10:110, March 8, 1863)

Origins Of Black People:

The negroes are not equal with other races where the receipt of certain spiritual blessings are concerned, particularly the priesthood and the temple blessings that flow therefrom...

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.527, 1966 ed.)

Origins Of Black People:

If that Negro is faithful all his days, he can and will enter the celestial kingdom. He will go there **as a servant**, but he will get a celestial resurrection.

(Apostle Mark E. Peterson, *Race Problems as they Affect the Church*, p.17)

Origins Of Black People:

And after the flood we are told that the curse that had been pronounced upon Cain was continued through Ham's wife, as he had married a wife of that seed. And why did it pass through the flood? Because it was necessary that the devil should have a representation upon the earth as well as God (Prophet John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses* 22:304, August 28, 1881)

Origins Of Black People:

The prophets have declared that there are at least two major stipulations that have to be met before the Negroes will be allowed to possess the Priesthood. The first requirement relates to time. The Negroes will not be allowed to hold the Priesthood during mortality, in fact, not until after the resurrection of all of Adam's children. The other stipulation requires that Abel's seed receive the first opportunity of having the priesthood....the last of Adam's children will not be resurrected until the end of the millennium. Therefore, the Negroes will not receive the Priesthood until after that time... this will not happen until after the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth.

(John Lund, *The Church and the Negro*, 1967, pp. 45-48.)

Origins Of Black People:

On September 30, 1978, at the 148th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the following was presented by President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church:

In early June of this year, the First Presidency announced that a revelation had been received by President Spencer W. Kimball extending priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the Church. President Kimball has asked that I advise the conference that after he had received this revelation, which came to him after extended meditation and prayer in the sacred rooms of the holy temple, he presented it to his counselors, who accepted it and approved it. It was then presented to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who unanimously approved it, and was subsequently presented to all other General Authorities, who likewise approved it unanimously.

(Declaration 2, *Doctrines and Covenants*)

Origins Of Black People:

In *Declaration 2*, Spencer Kimball stated that past prophets of the LDS Church had promised that at *some time* the ban would be lifted and that God, by revelation, had shown him that the day has come. This statement is certainly misleading. As previously mentioned, past prophets had said the time would not come until after the resurrection, not 1978!

Origins Of Black People:

A great majority of Latter-day Saints simply attributed this to "Latter-day Revelation" and questioned it no further; however, the timing for such a change is certainly suspect. In my opinion the fiasco in Brazil was one of the strongest reasons why the ban was lifted. In anticipation of the opening of its new temple in Sao Paulo, the LDS Church was ordaining hundreds of Brazilians to its priesthood. Did the LDS Church ignore Brazilian history?

Origins Of Black People:

Between 1538 and Brazil's abolition of slavery in 1888, about five million African slaves were brought to that country. Through mixed marriages, Mulattos make up a substantial portion of the Brazilian population. How would the LDS Church possibly know whether or not those being ordained were qualified? With the dedication of this temple only a few months away, it would seem imperative that the church either lift the ban or face the possibility of a public relations nightmare.

Origins Of Black People:

To be sure, the LDS curse upon the Blacks had no biblical justification. This teaching most certainly reflects the social upbringing and bigotry of Mormonism's early leaders rather than the will of the Christian God. The message of the New Testament proclaims that a person's past has no bearing on what he can receive from our gracious God. The Bible declares that God will not hold past transgressions against those who come to Him by faith. (Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34; Romans 4:5-7, 23; Hebrews. 8:12).

Origins Of Black People:

Declaration 2 definitely leaves us with reasons to question the validity of the LDS Church. One, there was no biblical reason for the discrimination in the first place; and two, there was no precedent according to Mormonism to lift it.

What God Thinks of Blacks/Africans:

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"

(Acts 10:34-35)

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"

(Revelation 5:9)

Baptism For the Dead:

The majority of the activity in the Mormon Temples is work done in behalf of the DEAD. Joseph Smith offers this explanation: "The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our DEAD." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 356).

Baptism For the Dead:

the Lord has ordained baptism for the dead as the means whereby all his worthy children of all ages can become heirs of salvation in his kingdom

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.73)

Baptism For the Dead:

this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel [is] namely the baptism for the dead

(Doctrine and Covenants, 128:17)

Baptism For the Dead:

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

1 Corinthians 15:29

Baptism For the Dead:

In order to understand this or any other Biblical passage, it is important to examine the context to understand what is being discussed. The entire fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians deals with the resurrection. False teachers had infiltrated the church at Corinth, teaching "that there is no resurrection of the dead," (15:13). Paul had stated that the heart of the gospel was Christ's resurrection (15:1-14). Christ died on the cross for mankind's sins, was buried, and that He rose again the third day. To be saved one must turn from their sins and trust in, or "keep in memory" Christ's work on their behalf. Christ's historical death, burial and resurrection is the gospel.

Baptism For the Dead:

But there were cultic leaders at Corinth that believed and taught that there was no resurrection. The whole chapter is devoted to reasons why this is a false teaching.

Reason # 1: There were eye witnesses of Christ's resurrection (15:5-7);

Reason # 2: If there is not resurrection, Christ has not risen (15:13, 16);

Reason # 3: If there is no resurrection, Paul's preaching is in vain (15:14);

Reason # 4: If there is no resurrection, their faith was in vain (15:14);

Reason # 5: If there is no resurrection, Paul and the other apostles were false witnesses (15:15);

Reason # 6: If there is no resurrection, the Corinthian Christians were lost in their sins (15:17);

Reason # 7: If there is no resurrection, all who have died trusting Christ have perished (15:18).

Baptism For the Dead:

In verses 20-28, Paul explains that Christ has been raised. He is the "firstfruits" of all that will be raised and that all "enemies" including death have been subjected and conquered by Christ. Then in verse 29, Paul points out a further reason that the resurrection is real. He says: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Baptism For the Dead:

The apostle is pointing out an inconsistency in the practice of these false teachers. Apparently, they did not believe that the dead would rise (15:12), but they practiced baptism for the dead. If the dead do not rise, why did they baptize them after death? It was a contradiction. By carefully noticing the pronouns, one can see who was actually practicing baptism for the dead.

Paul says, "...what shall they do which are baptized for the dead...why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Baptism For the Dead:

Paul did not say, "Why are you (Corinthian Christians) then baptized for the dead?"

He did not say, "Why are we (the followers of Christ) then baptized for the dead?"

He did not say, "Why then am I (Paul himself) then baptized for the dead?"

He was asking, in effect, why these false teachers, who did not even believe in the resurrection, would want to baptize for the dead if the dead do not rise at all.

Baptism For the Dead:

As pointed out in **The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology**, edited by Colin Brown: "The practice [baptism for the dead] could hardly be reconciled with the Pauline proclamation, and was cited by Paul as part of the Polemic: people who deny the resurrection for the dead ought not to get baptized for the dead!" (Vol. 1, p.147).

Mormon Inconsistencies Regarding the Dead:

Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.

(Book of Mormon, Alma 7:34)

Mormon Inconsistencies Regarding the Dead:

For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked.

(Book of Mormon, Alma 7:35)

The Dead Do NOT Get a Second Chance:

And as it is appointed unto men once to die,
but after this the judgment

(Hebrews 9:27)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

One may wonder how a religion that began in the nineteenth century can claim apostolic succession. According to the LDS Church, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized in 1829 and given the priesthood blessing by an angel who at one time in history was known as John the Baptist. They then received apostolic blessings from three resurrected persons who were none other than the Apostles Peter, James, and John. It is this event that cements in the minds of the Mormon faithful the notion of apostolic succession and priesthood authority.

Contender Ministries; *Where Do You Get Your Authority? Examining the Priesthood and Apostolic Office*

<http://www.contenderministries.org/mormonism/authority.php>

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

We still continued the work of translation, when, in the ensuing month (May, 1829), we on a certain day went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord respecting baptism for the remission of sins, that we found mentioned in the translation of the plates. While we were thus employed, praying and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying:

Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

He said this Aaronic Priesthood had not the power of laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter; and he commanded us to go and be baptized, and gave us directions that I should baptize Oliver Cowdery, and that afterwards he should baptize me.

Accordingly we went and were baptized. I baptized him first, and afterwards he baptized me—after which I laid my hands upon his head and ordained him to the Aaronic Priesthood, and afterwards he laid his hands on me and ordained me to the same Priesthood—for so we were commanded.

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

The messenger who visited us on this occasion and conferred this Priesthood upon us, said that his name was John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament, and that he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John, who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which Priesthood, he said, would in due time be conferred on us, and that I should be called the first Elder of the Church, and he (Oliver Cowdery) the second. It was on the fifteenth day of May, 1829, that we were ordained under the hand of this messenger, and baptized.

Pearl of Great Price, JOSEPH SMITH – HISTORY, 2:72

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Man cannot act legally in the name of the Lord unless he is vested with the priesthood, which is divine authority. No man has the power or the right to take this honor to himself. Unless he is called of God as was Aaron, he has no authority to officiate in any of the ordinances of the gospel: should he do so his act is not valid or recognized in the heavens.

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith,
Doctrine and Salvation, Vol.111, Pg. 80.)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

What is the Priesthood? It is nothing more or less than the power of God delegated to man by which man can act in the earth for the salvation of the human family... by which they may baptize for the remission of sins and lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and by which they can remit sin with the sanction and blessing of Almighty God. It is the same power and priesthood that was committed to the disciples of Christ while He was upon the earth

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 73)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

THERE are, in the church, two priesthoods, namely, the Melchizedek and Aaronic, including the Levitical Priesthood.

(Doctrine and Covenants 107:1)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Advancement in the lower Aaronic Priesthood is determined by chronological age except in the case of older converts to Mormonism. Aaronic Priesthood is conferred on boys at age 12 when they are ordained as deacons. At age 14 they are ordained as teachers, and at 16 they are ordained priests. At age 18 the higher Melchizedek Priesthood is conferred when they are ordained as elders.

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God (Hebrews 4:14)

And being made perfect, [Jesus] became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 5:9-10)

But [Jesus], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:24-25)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Hebrews 7:15-17)

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary
(Hebrews 8:13 – 9:1)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. (Revelation 1:5-6)

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Peter 2:9)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

The Book of Mormon states that Joseph Smith the Prophet was a descendant of Joseph, son of Jacob. By revelation we learn also that he is of the tribe of Ephraim

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 3, p. 61-64)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth. From this descent sprang **all the Egyptians**, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land... from Ham, sprang that race which **preserved the curse** in the land... Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but **cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood**

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On... And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

(Genesis 41:45, 50-52)

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

According to Abraham 1:21-22, 24, 26, Egyptians are cursed from being priests.

Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith said that Joseph Smith was from the tribe of Ephraim.

Genesis 45 says that Ephraim is half Egyptian.

Therefore, Joseph Smith is
INELIGIBLE TO BE PRIEST

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

Going back to what Joseph Smith claimed, that he and Oliver Cowdery, received the Aaronic Priesthood first from John the Baptist and then the Melchizedek Priesthood from Peter, James and John; there is no way Joseph Smith could have been given either priesthood, if his own scriptures be true. In addition to this, Hebrews 7 declares that the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood was abolished. It is also clear from the Bible that there was no Melchizedek priesthood. The Apostles did not have the Melchizedek Priesthood. Only Jesus can hold the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood:

LDS often ask others, "Where did you get your authority?" But, in the light of the foregoing information, Christians should ask LDS where they got their authority! All Mormon males over 12 years of age have priesthood certificates showing who ordained them. Thus, they can trace their line of authority back to Joseph Smith, whom they claim got his authority from Peter, James, and John, who got it from Christ. But, Christ's priesthood does not pass from person to person because He lives eternally (Heb. 7:24). Furthermore, Christ claims He has all power or authority in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18) which does not leave much "authority" for any man to claim! Therefore, anyone who claims that he has the priesthood of Christ has been misled.

Cults

Week 10

August 21, 2005

Mark Edward Sohmer
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Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

Review

Origins Of Black People:

- Lucifer and 1/3 of the angels rebelled.
- Began "War in heaven."
- Jesus and his 2/3 angels won this war.
- Lucifer became Satan.
- His angels became demons.

Origins Of Black People:

According to LDS some of those who fought on God's side "were more valiant than others... Those who were less valiant in pre-existence and who thereby had certain spiritual restrictions imposed upon them during mortality are known to us as the negroes. Such spirits are sent to earth through the lineage of Cain, the mark put upon him for his rebellion against God and his murder of Abel being a black skin... The present status of the negro rests purely and simply on the foundation of pre-existence"

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.527, 1966 ed.).

Origins Of Black People:

there is a reason why one man is born black and with other disadvantages, while another is born white with great advantages. The reason is that we once had an estate before we came here, and were obedient; more or less, to the laws that were given us there. Those who were faithful in all things there received greater blessings here, and those who were not faithful received less

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
Doctrines of Salvation 1:61)

Origins Of Black People:

Not only was Cain called upon to suffer, but because of his wickedness he became the father of an inferior race

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
The Way to Perfection, p.101)

Origins Of Black People:

Black people are barred from the priesthood

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.527, 1966 ed.)

The best a Black person can hope for is to be a servant in the celestial resurrection

(Apostle Mark E. Peterson, *Race Problems as they Affect the Church*, p.17)

Black people exist today because "it was necessary that the devil should have a representation upon the earth as well as God" (Prophet John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses* 22:304, August 28, 1881)

Origins Of Black People:

Blacks could become priests after Christ's 1000 year reign on earth.

(John Lund, *The Church and the Negro*, 1967, pp. 45-48.)

Late 1970's, LDS church was about to open temple in Brazil and was ordaining hundreds of Brazilians who doubtlessly had African ancestry.

1978, Prophet Spencer W. Kimball had a *revelation* saying that Blacks could now be priests.

(Declaration 2, *Doctrines and Covenants*)

Origins Of Black People:

Declaration 2 definitely leaves us with reasons to question the validity of the LDS Church. One, there was no biblical reason for the discrimination in the first place; and two, there was no precedent according to Mormonism to lift it.

What God Thinks of Blacks/Africans:

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"

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The majority of the activity in the Mormon Temples is work done in behalf of the DEAD. Joseph Smith offers this explanation: "The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our DEAD." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 356).

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According to *Pearl of Great Price*, JOSEPH SMITH – HISTORY, 2:68-69, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were visited by an angel who was once John the Baptist and were given the priesthood of Aaron. They were later visited by Peter, James, and John, and given the priesthood of Melchizedek.

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New Material

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

I discover that some of the Eastern papers represent me as a great blasphemer, because I said, in my lecture on Marriage, at our last Conference, that Jesus Christ was married at Cana of Galilee, that Mary, Martha, and others were his wives, and that he begat children.

(Apostle Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 210)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

Prophet Brigham Young, answering critics who claimed polygamy as a relic of barbarism:

Yes, one of the relics of Adam, of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, David, Solomon, the Prophets, of Jesus, and his apostles.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 328)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

The Scripture says that He, the LORD, came walking in the Temple, with his train; I do not now who they were, unless his wives and children;...

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 309)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

it will be seen that the great Messiah who was the founder of the Christian religion, was a polygamist,... the MESSIAH chose... by marrying many honorable wives himself, show to all future generations that he approbated the plurality of wives under the Christian dispensation, as well as under the dispensation in which his polygamist ancestors lived. We have now clearly shown that God the Father had a plurality of wives, one or more being in eternity, by whom He begat our spirits as well as the spirit of Jesus His first Born, and another being upon the earth by whom He begat the tabernacle of Jesus, as his only begotten in this world. We have also proved most clearly that the Son followed the example of his Father, and became the great Bridegroom to whom kings' daughters and many honorable wives were to be married.

(Apostle Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, page 172)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

We have also proved that both God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ inherit their wives in eternity as well as in time;... And then it would be so shocking to the modesty of the very pious ladies of Christendom to see Abraham and his wives, Jacob and his wives, Jesus and his honorable wives, all eating occasionally at the same table, and visiting one another, and conversing about their numerous children and their kingdoms. Oh, ye delicate ladies of Christendom how can you endure such a scene as this?... If you do not want your morals corrupted, and your delicate ears shocked, and your pious modesty put to the blush by the society of polygamists and their wives, do not venture near the New Earth; for polygamists will be honored there, and will be among the chief rulers in that Kingdom.

(Apostle Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, page 172)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 269)

Jesus Was Not Married At Cana:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. (John 2:1-2)

called: Strongs 2564 kaleo kal-eh'-o

1. to call aloud, utter in a loud voice
2. to invite

Jesus was invited to the wedding at Cana;
He was not the groom!

Jesus Has One Bride – The Church:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready (Revelation 9:7)

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife (Revelation 21:9)

History of Polygamy:

1856: The recently formed Republican Party called, in its national platform, for the abolition of the "Twin Relics of Barbarism, Slavery and Polygamy." ¹

1862: The Mormon practice of polygamy was criminalized by the federal Morrill Anti-Bigamy Law which President Abraham Lincoln signed into law on 1862-JUL-8... The anti-bigamy Morrill Act It made bigamy a federal offense and assigned a punishment of up to five years in jail and a \$500 fine. The law also annulled all acts passed by the Territory of Utah's Legislative Assembly "pertaining to polygamy and spiritual marriage." ²

1. Perry Porter, "A Chronology of Federal legislation on Polygamy," 1998-MAR-28, at: <http://www.xmission.com/>
2. "Backgrounder on the Morrill Act," infoUSA, U.S. Department of State, at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/>

History of Polygamy:

1874: In a test case, George Reynolds, Brigham Young's secretary, volunteered to be charged under the Morrill Act. The Church had claimed that the federal government had no jurisdiction to regulate marriage and other internal church practices. They also claimed that the act was a violation of Mormons' First Amendment rights. He was found guilty, given a two year jail sentence, and ordered to pay a \$500 fine.

1879: The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Reynold's conviction. They declared that the Morrill Act was constitutional, that the government had a right to enforce marital standards, and that polygamy was a barbarous practice.

History of Polygamy:

1880: LDS leader Wilford Woodruff submitted a revelation he had received from God to church president John Taylor and the Twelve Apostles. God promised retaliation against anyone who seeks "...to hinder my People from obeying the Patriarchal Law of Abraham...your enemies shall not prevail over you."¹

1882: The federal Edmunds Act amended the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Law of 1862. It canceled the citizenship rights of polygamous Mormons. They were no longer allowed to vote, run for public office, or serve on a jury.

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History of Polygamy:

1887: Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal that "...scores of the Leading Men of the Church [are] in prison and the Presidency and Twelve & many others in Exile for obeying the Law of God." The federal government passed the Edmunds-Tucker Act as a supplement to the Edmunds Law. This authorized the government to disincorporate the Church and to confiscate its assets.

1889: Wilford Woodruff, now president, received a revelation from Jesus Christ who promised that he would protect the church's practice of polygamy from attacks by the federal government.

History of Polygamy:

1890: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the government could deny the right to vote or hold office to all Mormons who practiced the Law of Abraham, or who merely believed in plural marriage. Later in the year, they ruled that the Edmunds-Tucker Act was constitutional, and that the federal government could repeal the LDS' charter and dissolve the church. The situation had reached a critical point in the Utah territory.

When the federal government announced that they would start to seize the temples, the LDS Church decided to obey the law. At that time, the Church received a revelation from God that changed church beliefs and practices. The fourth president of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, issued a manifesto (called the "Great Accommodation") on 1890-SEP-24. It generally suspended the solemnization of new plural marriages for an indefinite interval.

History of Polygamy:

Woodruff wrote, in part,

"And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land."

During the next thirteen and a half years, "members of the First Presidency individually or as a unit published twenty-four denials that any new plural marriages were being performed. The climax of that series of little manifestoes was the 'Second Manifesto' on plural marriage sustained by a vote of a general conference."¹

1. D.M. Quinn, "LDS Church authority and new plural marriages, 1890 - 1904," at: <http://www.lds-mormon.com/>

History of Polygamy:

In spite of the denials, a few such marriages were apparently sealed as late as 1910 for trusted leaders of the Church. ^{1,2} The polygamous weddings were generally performed secretly in Mexico or Canada.

U.S. President Cleveland issued a statehood proclamation for Utah on 1896-JAN-4, six years after the manifesto was declared. Although no new polygamous marriages were conducted after the 1920's, existing plural marriages continued to receive strong support from the Church.

1. Richard S. Van Wagoner, "*Mormon polygamy: A history*," Signature books, (1986)
2. B. Carmon Hardy, "*Solemn Covenant: The Mormon polygamous passage*," University of Illinois Press, (1992)

History of Polygamy:

According to a letter published in the Salt Lake Tribune, "polygamous weddings (or sealings, as we call them) are still performed in Mormon temples around the world today. These sealings unite living members of the church to deceased members in a 'spiritual' polygamy that the church teaches will become actual in the next life. For faithful LDS, in a very real sense it [polygamous marriages] never left." ¹

Some Mormons rejected the "Great Accommodation." They felt that plural marriages were a fundamental part of Church culture and were an important practice, ordered by God. Some small Mormon splinter groups formed at that time to preserve polygamy. They were excommunicated from the Church. The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (FLDS) is the largest of these. It is still in existence in the U.S. and Canada. Its members still practice polygamy.

1. Polygamy Facts, Salt Lake Tribune, Dec. 29, 2000
(Letters to the Editor)

Church Apostasy:

My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right — and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in His sight: that those professors were all corrupt

(Prophet Joseph Smith Jr., *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 18-19)

Church Apostasy:

But He did send His angel to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith junior, who afterwards became a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, and informed him that he should not join any of the religious sects of the day, for they were all wrong.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 171, 1855)

Church Apostasy:

Again, following the death of his apostles, apostasy once more set in, and again the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel were changed to suit the conveniences and notions of the people. Doctrines were corrupted, authority lost, and a false order of religion took the place of the gospel of Jesus Christ, just as it had been the case in former dispensations, and the people were left in spiritual darkness.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
Doctrines of Salvation, p. 266)

Church Apostasy:

We talk about Christianity, but it is a perfect pack of nonsense... Myself and hundreds of the Elders around me have seen its pomp, parade, and glory; and what is it? It is a sounding brass and a tinkling symbol; it is as corrupt as hell; and the Devil could not invent a better engine to spread his work than the Christianity of the nineteenth century.

(Prophet John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, p. 167, 1858)

Church Apostasy:

Apostasy:

A general falling away from the truth occurred after the death of Christ's Apostles. This is called the Apostasy...

After the Apostles and many righteous Church members were killed and other members departed from the truth, the Lord took the priesthood authority and His Church from the earth. Without God's priesthood authority, the Church no longer functioned as Christ had established it. The ordinances were changed and many plain and simple truths were lost. While many good people and some truth remained, the original Church was lost.

Definition: Mormon.org

<http://www.mormon.org/learn/0,8672,844-1,00.html>

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18)

Does NOT say:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, except between 100 AD and 1830 AD.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
(Matthew 28:19-20)

Does NOT say:

lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, except between 100 AD and 1830 AD.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

"the Devil could not invent a better engine to spread his work than the Christianity of the nineteenth century"

(Prophet John Taylor)

Some 19th Century Christians:

- Charles Spurgeon
- D. L. Moody
- J. C. Ryle
- George Müller
- William Carey
- Hudson Taylor
- David Livingstone
- Many, many others...

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

1. AND it came to pass when Jesus had said these words, he spake unto his disciples, one by one, saying unto them: What is it that ye desire of me, after that I am gone to the Father?
2. And they all spake, save it were three, saying: We desire that after we have lived unto the age of man, that our ministry, wherein thou hast called us, may have an end, that we may speedily come unto thee in thy kingdom.
3. And he said unto them: Blessed are ye because ye desired this thing of me; therefore, after that ye are seventy and two years old ye shall come unto me in my kingdom; and with me ye shall find crest.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

4. And when he had spoken unto them, he turned himself unto the three, and said unto them: What will ye that I should do unto you, when I am gone unto the Father?
5. And they sorrowed in their hearts, for they durst not speak unto him the thing which they desired.
6. And he said unto them: Behold, I know your thoughts, and ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews, desired of me.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

7. Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven.
8. And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father.
9. ... for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

According to 3 Nephi 1-9, there remains TODAY three original Mormon disciples of Jesus Himself still living on the earth. They have miraculously not died, but continue to "bring the souls of men unto [Jesus]."

According to this Mormon scripture, there could not have been a full apostasy. If no full apostasy, then Joseph Smith was wrong about his first vision when he was allegedly told by Jesus that all the churches were "all wrong" and all the Christian church's doctrines "were an abomination" (Joseph Smith - History 19, *Pearl of Great Price*).

Why was he not told to seek out the three living disciples of Jesus?

Without a full apostasy, there is no need for the Mormon Church.

How To Discern Truth:

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall **ask with a sincere heart, with real intent**, having faith in Christ, he will **manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.**

*(Book of Mormon, Moroni 10:4,
emphasis mine)*

How To Discern Truth:

Mormon Missionaries will use that verse from Moroni to get people to "pray about" the Book of Mormon.

If you're really sincere, you'll receive the testimony of the Holy Spirit, or a "burning in the bosom."

How To Discern Truth:

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, [Jesus] expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself... And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

(Luke 24:27,31-32)

How To Discern Truth:

A Mormon Missionary may site Luke 24 as an example of receiving this "burning in the bosom," but this is incorrect.

How To Discern Truth:

Please note the following: (1) They were already in the true faith before getting that burning; (2) The disciples didn't pray about anything before getting that burning—not one thing; (2) What happened came after Jesus taught about himself from the Old Testament (Moses and all the Prophets). Hence, there can justly be no connection between Lk. 24:27-32 and praying about a spurious book associated with a Bible-defined false prophet (Joseph Smith).

How To Discern Truth:

How should a Christian respond to the Mormon challenge to pray about the Book of Mormon? You can ask them the following questions: (a) Have you ever prayed about the Koran, the Jehovah's Witness Bible or Avesta? (b) Have you prayed about bowing before a Mary statue or reciting the rosary? (c) Should you pray about robbing a bank and giving the money to the poor?

The obvious answer is, there is no need to pray about anything that is not Biblical and is outside of God's will, including all of those. Because these things are unbiblical, if God would answer that prayer, it would always be in accord with His written word. But to ask God in prayer something he has already spoken about can be testing God, which is also forbidden.

How To Discern Truth:

Again, be on your guard. To pray about something like the Book of Mormon or bowing before a Mary statue can allow the devil to give you an experience that will deceive you. A burning in the bosom from such would not be the testimony of the Holy Spirit, as the LDS people like to say/think. This is very important to remember and tell others about.

How To Discern Truth:

Nowhere in the New Testament do the disciples tell people to "pray about" their message.

When a Mormon Missionary asks you to "pray about the Book of Mormon," tell him that the Bible says:

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"
(1 Thessalonians 5:21)

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

How To Discern Truth:

The Bible doesn't say to "pray to see if the Book of Mormon is true" but to test and prove all things. We'd be glad to test the Book of Mormon.

Book of Mormon Problems:

Reminder: Mormons claim the Book of Mormon (BOM) was translated one character at a time by the inspiration and help of God.

Book of Mormon Problems:

Drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine a piece of something resembling parchment would appear and on that appeared the writing one character a time would and under was an interpretation in English." Thus the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God, and not by any power of man." (An Address To All Believers In Christ, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, p. 12)

Book of Mormon Problems:

In 1844 Joseph Smith declared that the Book of Mormon was "the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book"

(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 194, and History of the Church, 4:461).

Book of Mormon Problems:

The Book of Mormon is the account of people who came from the Middle-East to the Americas.

Takes place 600 B.C. to 400 A.D.

Written by Mormon, the leader of the Nephite people in the 4th Century AD. Back in the 4th Century, Mormon wrote *The Book of Mormon* in Reformed Egyptian Hieroglyphics on golden plates and hid them near where Joseph Smith Jr. would one day live in Palmyra, New York.

Mormon's son, Moroni, came as an angel to Joseph Smith Jr. in the 19th Century to tell him about the golden plates.

Book of Mormon Problems:

Jaredites: people from the Tower of Babel who came to Central America and perished due to immorality.

Nephites and Lamanites: group of Jews who fled persecution in Jerusalem lead by Nephi.

Nephites defeated in 428 A.D.

Lamanites became American Indians.

Book of Mormon Problems:

1. Linguistics. Why, if the American Indians were descended from Lehi, was there such diversity in their languages, and why were there no vestiges of Hebrew in any of them?
2. Why does the Book of Mormon say that Lehi found horses when he arrived in America? The horse did not exist in the Americas until the Spaniards brought them over in the sixteenth century.
3. Why was Nephi stated to have a bow of steel? Jews did not have steel at that time, and no iron was smelted in the Americas until the Spanish colonization.
4. Why does the Book of Mormon mention "swords and cimeters" when scimitars (the current spelling) did not come about until the rise of Islam after 500 A.D.?
5. Why does the Book of Mormon mention silk, when silk did not exist in the Americas at that time?

Book of Mormon Changes:

"And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother of God, after the manner of the flesh."

1 Nephi 11:18, (1830 edition)

"And he said unto me: Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh."

1 Nephi 11:18, (1981 edition)

Book of Mormon Changes:

"...and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Eternal Father and the Savior of the world..."

1 Nephi 13:40, (1830 edition)

"...and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the World..."

1 Nephi 13:40, (1981 edition)

Book of Mormon Changes:

"Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear..."

1 Nephi 20:1 (1830 edition)

"Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism, who swear..."

1 Nephi 20:1 (1981 edition)

Book of Mormon Changes:

"...yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable, according to their wills..."

Alma 29:4 (1830 edition)

"...yea, I know that he allotteth unto men according to their wills..."

Alma 29:4 (1981 edition)

Book of Mormon Changes:

"...for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more."

3 Nephi 22:4 (1830 edition)

"...for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more."

3 Nephi 22:4 (1981 edition)

Book of Mormon Changes:

Until 1981 2 Nephi 30:6 in the Book of Mormon taught that dark-skinned Lamanites (Indians) would eventually experience a change in the color of their skin should they embrace the Book of Mormon. This passage of Mormon scripture read:

"...their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and a delightsome people."

However, in 1981, the LDS Church decided to change "the most correct book on earth" and switched the word "white" with the word "pure." Some Mormons insist that this was a clarification since the word was never meant to refer to a person with dark skin pigmentation who would magically turn white based upon a conversion to the Mormon gospel; rather, it is claimed that the change referred to a cleaner state of heart.

Book of Mormon Changes:

This assumption is definitely not supported in the Book of Mormon since 2 Nephi 5:21 says,

"And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity. For behold, they had hardened their hearts against him, and they had become like unto a flint; wherefore, as they were white, and exceedingly fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them."

Furthermore, we find another reference to a change in skin color in 3 Nephi 2:15. This passage reads:

"And their curse was taken from them, and their skin became white like unto the Nephites."

Book of Mormon Changes:

At the October 1960 LDS Church Conference, Spencer Kimball utilized 2 Nephi 30:6 when he stated how the Indians "are fast becoming a white and delightsome people." He said, "The [Indian] children in the home placement program in Utah are often lighter than their brothers and sisters in the hogans on the reservation" (Improvement Era, December 1960, pp. 922-3).

During the same message Kimball referred to a 16-year-old Indian girl who was both LDS and "several shades lighter than her parents..." He went on to say, "These young members of the Church are changing to whiteness and to delightsomeness. One white elder jokingly said that he and his companion were donating blood regularly to the hospital in the hope that the process might be accelerated."

Book of Mormon Changes:

It has also been taught in Mormonism that opposite repercussions could result when a white man abandoned his Mormon faith. For instance, the "Juvenile Instructor" (26:635) reads,

"... in fact, it has been noticed in our day that men who have lost the spirit of the Lord, and from whom his blessings have been withdrawn, have turned dark to such an extent as to excite the comments of all who have known them."

In 1857, Brigham Young declared that apostates would "become gray-haired, wrinkled, and black, just like the Devil" (*Journal of Discourse* 5:332).

Despite the comments from past Mormon leaders, skin color has nothing to do with a person's spirituality. To say 2 Nephi 30:6 was altered merely for clarification and had nothing to do with skin color is without merit. It was a false prophecy, nothing more, nothing less.

Book of Mormon Changes:

In the book of Mosiah, Ch. 21, verse 28, it is declared that "King Mosiah had a gift from God."; but in the original edition of the book, the name of the king was Benjamin - an oversight which thoughtful Mormon scribes corrected. This is, of course, no typographical error as there is little resemblance between the names Benjamin and Mosiah; so it appears that either God made a mistake when He inspired the record or Joseph made a mistake when he translated it. Mormons will not admit to either, thus they have an unexplained contradiction.

Book of Mormon Changes:

there was not one thing in the Book of Mormon or in the second edition or in any other edition since that in any way contradicts the first edition . . . there was no change of doctrine. Now, these sons of Belial who circulate these reports evidently know better. I will not use the word that is in my mind.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
The Improvement Era, pp.924-925, 1961)

Book of Mormon Changes:

For a complete side-by-side list of significant changes in the Book of Mormon, go to:

www.mazeministry.com/machine/machine.htm

Book of Mormon Error:

9. But behold, the Spirit hath said this much unto me, saying: Cry unto this people, saying—Repent ye, and prepare the way of the Lord, and walk in his paths, which are straight; for behold, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and the Son of God cometh upon the face of the earth.
10. And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.

(Book of Mormon, Alma 7:9-10)

Book of Mormon Error:

II Nephi 19:1 -

Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.

Isaiah 9:1

Nevertheless the dimness [shall] not [be] such as [was] in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict [her by] the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

The Book of Mormon qualifies the reference to "way of the sea" in Isaiah, and makes it the Red Sea. This is, however, quite impossible.

Book of Mormon Error:

During the Kingdom Age (about 1000 BC and onwards), the land of Naphtali bordered the Sea of Galilee to the West. The land of Zabulun bordered Naphtali to the West and South. It is within this region that we find many names from Jesus' ministry - Capernaum, Cana, Genneserat, Bethsaida and, of course, Galilee. The quotation from Isaiah thus neatly pinpoints the area of the Messiah's future ministry.

The Red Sea, however, is over 250 miles to the South of Galilee, near the Egyptian border. There is no way that Isaiah could at any stage have contained the geographical qualifier "Red".

There is further proof of this assertion. Firstly, the quotation also mentions that "the sea" is beyond Jordan, in Galilee. The Jordan River, of course, empties into the Dead Sea, and never reaches the Red Sea at all. Further, the Red Sea is definitely nowhere near Galilee.

Book of Mormon Error:

Secondly, this verse from Isaiah was quoted by Matthew in Matthew 4:12-16, specifically with reference to Galilee and Capernaum. The quotation in Matthew is also missing the reference to the Red Sea.

There is thus ample proof that the word "Red" was never a part of Isaiah 9:1. How then, did it get into the Book of Mormon? Could it be that the verse was altered by an imaginative, but woefully geographically challenged New York farmboy, as he was copying parts of Isaiah into the Book of Mormon?

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

The following is from a *Letter to Earnest L. English*, May 3, 1936, distributed to LDS church members by local leaders in Cleveland Ohio in 1959:

The inquiry you made regarding the Book of Mormon is a commendable one and I will be pleased to mention *the part which it has played in helping the government to unravel the problem of the aborigines....* it was 1920 before the *Smithsonian Institute officially recognized the Book of Mormon* as a record of any value. All discoveries up to this time were found to fit the *Book of Mormon* accounts and so the heads of the Archaeological Department decided to make an effort to discover some of the larger cities described in the Book of Mormon records.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

*All members of the department were required to study the account and make rough-maps of the various populated centers.... During the past fifteen years the Institute has made remarkable study of its investigations of the Mexican Indians and it is true that *the Book of Mormon has been the guide to almost all of the major discoveries.**

When Col. Lindbergh flew to South America five years ago, he was able to sight heretofore undiscovered cities which the archaeologists at the Institute had mapped out according to the locations described in the *Book of Mormon*. *This record is now quoted by the members of the Institute as an authority and is recognized by all advanced students in the field.*

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

During the early 1980s, reports circulated in LDS culture that the Book of Mormon was being used by the Smithsonian to guide primary archeological research. This urban legend was brought to the attention of Smithsonian directors who published a letter stating that it was the belief of the Smithsonian that they did not use the Book of Mormon to guide any research and that "no evidence" was available to validate the historicity of the Book of Mormon.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Smithsonian Form Letter regarding the Book of Mormon:

Your recent inquiry concerning the Smithsonian Institution's alleged use of the Book of Mormon as a scientific guide has been received in the Smithsonian's Department of Anthropology.

The Book of Mormon is a religious document and not a scientific guide. The Smithsonian Institution has never used it in archeological research and any information that you have received to the contrary is incorrect. Accurate information about the Smithsonian's position is contained in the enclosed "Statement Regarding the Book of Mormon," which was prepared to respond to the numerous inquiries that the Smithsonian receives on this topic.

Because the Smithsonian regards the unauthorized use of its name to disseminate inaccurate information as unlawful, we would appreciate your assistance in providing us with the names of any individuals who are misusing the Smithsonian's name. Please address any correspondence to...

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Official Smithsonian Statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

1. The Smithsonian Institution has never used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see no direct connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the book.
2. The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most closely related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. Archeological evidence indicates that the ancestors of the present Indians came into the New World - probably over a land bridge known to have existed in the Bering Strait region during the last Ice Age - in a continuing series of small migrations beginning from about 25,000 to 30,000 years ago.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Official Smithsonian Statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

3. Present evidence indicates that the first people to reach this continent from the East were the Norsemen who briefly visited the northeastern part of North America around A.D. 1000 and then settled in Greenland. There is nothing to show that they reached Mexico or Central America.

4. One of the main lines of evidence supporting the scientific finding that contacts with Old World civilizations if indeed they occurred at all, were of very little significance for the development of American Indian civilizations, is the fact that none of the principal Old World domesticated food plants or animals (except the dog) occurred in the New World in pre-Columbian times. American Indians had no wheat, barley oats, millet, rice, cattle, pigs, chickens, horses, donkeys, camels before 1492. (Camels and horses were in the Americas, along with the bison, mammoth, and mastodon, but all these animals became extinct around 10,000 B.C. at the time when the early big game hunters spread across the Americas.)

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Official Smithsonian Statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

5. Iron, steel, glass, and silk were not used in the New World before 1492 (except for occasional use of unsmelted meteoric iron). Native copper was worked in various locations in pre-Columbian times, but true metallurgy was limited to southern Mexico and the Andean region, where its occurrence in late prehistoric times involved gold, silver, copper, and their alloys, but not iron.

6. There is a possibility that the spread of cultural traits across the Pacific to Mesoamerica and the northwestern coast of South America began several hundred years before the Christian era. However, any such inter-hemispheric contacts appear to have been the results of accidental voyages originating in eastern and southern Asia. It is by no means certain that even such contacts occurred; certainly there were no contacts with the ancient Egyptians, Hebrews, or other peoples of Western Asian and the Near East.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Official Smithsonian Statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

7. No reputable Egyptologist or other specialist on Old World archeology, and no expert on New World prehistory, has discovered or confirmed any relationship between archeological remains in Mexico and archeological remains in Egypt.

8. Reports of findings of ancient Egyptian Hebrew, and other Old World writings in the New World in pre-Columbian contexts have frequently appeared in newspapers, magazines, and sensational books. None of these claims has stood up to examination by reputable scholars. No inscriptions using Old World forms of writing have been shown to have occurred in any part of the Americas before 1492 except for a few Norse rune stones which have been found in Greenland.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:



Information from the

National Museum of Natural History

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20560

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Anthropology Outreach Office
Department of Anthropology
National Museum of Natural History MRC 112
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20560

PREPARED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
1996

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

STATEMENT REGARDING THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Cults

Week 11

September 4, 2005

Mark Edward Sohmer
mark@sohmer.net

Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

Review

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

I discover that some of the Eastern papers represent me as a great blasphemer, because I said, in my lecture on Marriage, at our last Conference, that Jesus Christ was married at Cana of Galilee, that Mary, Martha, and others were his wives, and that he begat children.

(Apostle Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 210)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

Prophet Brigham Young, answering critics who claimed polygamy as a relic of barbarism:

Yes, one of the relics of Adam, of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, David, Solomon, the Prophets, of Jesus, and his apostles.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 328)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

The Scripture says that He, the LORD, came walking in the Temple, with his train; I do not now who they were, unless his wives and children;...

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 309)

Jesus Was a Polygamist and Had Children:

The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 269)

Jesus Was Not Married At Cana:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. (John 2:1-2)

called: Strong's 2564 kaleo kal-eh'-o

1. to call aloud, utter in a loud voice
2. to invite

Jesus was invited to the wedding at Cana;
He was not the groom!

Jesus Has One Bride – The Church:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready (Revelation 9:7)

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife (Revelation 21:9)

History of Polygamy:

1862: Polygamy criminalized.

1879: U.S. Supreme Court upheld that the government had a right to enforce marital standards, and that polygamy was a barbarous practice.

1880: LDS leader Wilford Woodruff received a revelation from God promising retaliation against anyone who seeks "...to hinder my People from obeying the Patriarchal Law of Abraham...your enemies shall not prevail over you."¹

1. Perry Porter, "A Chronology of Federal legislation on Polygamy," 1998-MAR-28, at: <http://www.xmission.com/>

History of Polygamy:

1882: Polygamous Mormons no longer allowed to vote, run for public office, or serve on a jury.

1887: Edmunds-Tucker Act authorized the government to disincorporate the Church and to confiscate its assets.

1889: Wilford Woodruff, now president, received a revelation from Jesus Christ who promised that he would protect the church's practice of polygamy from attacks by the federal government.

1890: Government announced it would begin to seize Temples. Wilford Woodruff received new revelation, called "Great Accommodation," that changed church beliefs and practices. No more polygamy.

History of Polygamy:

Some Mormons rejected the "Great Accommodation." They felt that plural marriages were a fundamental part of Church culture and were an important practice, ordered by God. Some small Mormon splinter groups formed at that time to preserve polygamy. They were excommunicated from the Church. The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (FLDS) is the largest of these. It is still in existence in the U.S. and Canada. Its members still practice polygamy.

Church Apostasy:

My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right — and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in His sight: that those professors were all corrupt

(Prophet Joseph Smith Jr., *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 18-19)

Church Apostasy:

But He did send His angel to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith junior, who afterwards became a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, and informed him that he should not join any of the religious sects of the day, for they were all wrong.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 171, 1855)

Church Apostasy:

Again, following the death of his apostles, apostasy once more set in, and again the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel were changed to suit the conveniences and notions of the people. Doctrines were corrupted, authority lost, and a false order of religion took the place of the gospel of Jesus Christ, just as it had been the case in former dispensations, and the people were left in spiritual darkness.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
Doctrines of Salvation, p. 266)

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18)

Does NOT say:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, except between 100 AD and 1830 AD.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
(Matthew 28:19-20)

Does NOT say:

lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, except between 100 AD and 1830 AD.

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

"the Devil could not invent a better engine to spread his work than the Christianity of the nineteenth century"

(Prophet John Taylor)

Some 19th Century Christians:

- Charles Spurgeon
- D. L. Moody
- J. C. Ryle
- George Müller
- William Carey
- Hudson Taylor
- David Livingstone
- Many, many others...

The Church Has NOT Apostatized:

According to 3 Nephi 1-9, there remains TODAY three original Mormon disciples of Jesus Himself still living on the earth. They have miraculously not died, but continue to "bring the souls of men unto [Jesus]."

According to this Mormon scripture, there could not have been a full apostasy. If no full apostasy, then Joseph Smith was wrong about his first vision when he was allegedly told by Jesus that all the churches were "all wrong" and all the Christian church's doctrines "were an abomination" (Joseph Smith - History 19, *Pearl of Great Price*).

Why was he not told to seek out the three living disciples of Jesus?

Without a full apostasy, there is no need for the Mormon Church.

How To Discern Truth:

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall **ask with a sincere heart, with real intent**, having faith in Christ, he will **manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.**

*(Book of Mormon, Moroni 10:4,
emphasis mine)*

How To Discern Truth:

Mormon Missionaries will use that verse from Moroni to get people to "pray about" the Book of Mormon.

If you're really sincere, you'll receive the testimony of the Holy Spirit, or a "burning in the bosom."

How To Discern Truth:

How should a Christian respond to the Mormon challenge to pray about the Book of Mormon? You can ask them the following questions: (a) Have you ever prayed about the Koran, the Jehovah's Witness Bible or Avesta? (b) Have you prayed about bowing before a Mary statue or reciting the rosary? (c) Should you pray about robbing a bank and giving the money to the poor?

The obvious answer is, there is no need to pray about anything that is not Biblical and is outside of God's will, including all of those. Because these things are unbiblical, if God would answer that prayer, it would always be in accord with His written word. But to ask God in prayer something he has already spoken about can be testing God, which is also forbidden.

How To Discern Truth:

Nowhere in the New Testament do the disciples tell people to "pray about" their message.

When a Mormon Missionary asks you to "pray about the Book of Mormon," tell him that the Bible says:

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"
(1 Thessalonians 5:21)

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

How To Discern Truth:

The Bible doesn't say to "pray to see if the Book of Mormon is true" but to test and prove all things. We'd be glad to test the Book of Mormon.

Book of Mormon Problems:

Reminder: Mormons claim the Book of Mormon (BOM) was translated one character at a time by the inspiration and help of God.

Book of Mormon Problems:

In 1844 Joseph Smith declared that the Book of Mormon was "the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book"

(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 194, and History of the Church, 4:461).

Book of Mormon Problems:

1. Linguistics. Why, if the American Indians were descended from Lehi, was there such diversity in their languages, and why were there no vestiges of Hebrew in any of them?
2. Why does the Book of Mormon say that Lehi found horses when he arrived in America? The horse did not exist in the Americas until the Spaniards brought them over in the sixteenth century.
3. Why was Nephi stated to have a bow of steel? Jews did not have steel at that time, and no iron was smelted in the Americas until the Spanish colonization.
4. Why does the Book of Mormon mention "swords and cimeters" when scimitars (the current spelling) did not come about until the rise of Islam after 500 A.D.?
5. Why does the Book of Mormon mention silk, when silk did not exist in the Americas at that time?

Book of Mormon Changes:

Significant changes in the Book of Mormon at:

- 1 Nephi 11:18
- 1 Nephi 13:40
- 1 Nephi 20:1
- Alma 29:4
- 2 Nephi 30:6
- 3 Nephi 22:4
- Mosiah 21:28
- more...

Book of Mormon Changes:

For a complete side-by-side list of significant changes in the Book of Mormon, go to:

www.mazeministry.com/machine/machine.htm

Book of Mormon Changes:

there was not one thing in the Book of Mormon or in the second edition or in any other edition since that in any way contradicts the first edition . . . there was no change of doctrine. Now, these sons of Belial who circulate these reports evidently know better. I will not use the word that is in my mind.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
The Improvement Era, pp.924-925, 1961)

Book of Mormon Errors:

Examples of errors in the Book of Mormon:

- Alma 7:10
- II Nephi 19:1

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

In 1936 a letter was written which claimed:

- The Smithsonian Institute officially recognized the *Book of Mormon* (BOM) in 1920.
- All discoveries up to this time were found to fit the *BOM*.
- Heads of the Archaeological Department made an effort to discover some of the larger cities described in the *BOM*.
- All members of the department were required to study the BOM.
- The *BOM* has been the guide to almost all of the major discoveries.
- Archaeologists at the Institute made maps according to the locations described in the *BOM*.
- *BOM* record is quoted by the members of the Institute as an authority and is recognized by all advanced students in the field.

This letter was re-distributed in 1959. Gained notoriety in the 1980's.

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

*All members of the department were required to study the account and make rough-maps of the various populated centers.... During the past fifteen years the Institute has made remarkable study of its investigations of the Mexican Indians and it is true that *the Book of Mormon has been the guide to almost all of the major discoveries.**

When Col. Lindbergh flew to South America five years ago, he was able to sight heretofore undiscovered cities which the archaeologists at the Institute had mapped out according to the locations described in the *Book of Mormon*. *This record is now quoted by the members of the Institute as an authority and is recognized by all advanced students in the field.*

The Smithsonian and the Book of Mormon:

Smithsonian Form Letter regarding the Book of Mormon:

Your recent inquiry concerning the Smithsonian Institution's alleged use of the Book of Mormon as a scientific guide has been received in the Smithsonian's Department of Anthropology.

The Book of Mormon is a religious document and not a scientific guide. The Smithsonian Institution has never used it in archeological research and any information that you have received to the contrary is incorrect. Accurate information about the Smithsonian's position is contained in the enclosed "Statement Regarding the Book of Mormon," which was prepared to respond to the numerous inquiries that the Smithsonian receives on this topic.

Because the Smithsonian regards the unauthorized use of its name to disseminate inaccurate information as unlawful, we would appreciate your assistance in providing us with the names of any individuals who are misusing the Smithsonian's name. Please address any correspondence to...

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Official Smithsonian Statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

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Information from the

National Museum of Natural History

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Washington, DC 20560

PREPARED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
1996

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New Material

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

The "Spalding-Rigdon theory" was first given wide publicity in 1834 with the publication of the book *Mormonism Unveiled*. In it, the author followed up on indications previously published in Ohio-based newspapers that a man named Solomon Spalding was the real (and unwitting) originator of the Book of Mormon...

The theory goes that Solomon Spalding authored a work called "Manuscript Found" (not to be confused with "Manuscript Story"!) but died while it was still at the publishing house. Supposedly Sidney Rigdon, who actually lived nearby and would later become Joseph Smith's right-hand man, was acquainted with the publisher. Rigdon procured Spalding's manuscript, edited it by inserting a great deal of religious material, and later turned it over to Joseph Smith who then used it, and not any golden plates, as full or partial source material for the Book of Mormon.

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

The Spalding document described in *Mormonism Unveiled* was rediscovered in Hawaii in 1884, but it was shown to be far from the expected word-for-word parallel to the Book of Mormon, so the theory went into hiatus. However, it must be noted that the recovered document, arbitrarily dubbed "Manuscript Story," contains plenty of strikeouts and additions. Not only that, but the document ends with a sudden cut-off in mid-sentence, suggesting that the recovered document was, at the very most, only a first draft, and that the final version, "Manuscript Found," is still missing.

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

For more information on the Spalding Theory, go to:

- <http://solomonspalding.com/Lib/library1.htm>
- *Who Really Wrote the Book of Mormon? The Spalding Enigma:*
<http://thedigitalvoice.com/enigma/enigma1.htm>
- read Spalding's manuscript at:
<http://www.antimormon.8m.com/spauldingindex.html>

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

Remember the Book of Mormon Timeline:

400 A.D. *Allegedly* Written by Mormon

1830 A.D. *Allegedly* Translated by Joseph
Smith one word at a time by
Divine guidance

Book of Mormon Plagiarism :

According to a careful survey of the Book of Mormon, it contains at least 25,000 words from the King James Version of the Bible. In fact, verbatim quotations, some of considerable length.

The comparison of Moroni Ch. 10 with 1 Cor. 12:1-11, 2 Nephi 14 with Isaiah 4, and 2 Nephi 12 with Isaiah 2 shows that Joseph Smith made free use of his Bible to supplement the alleged revelation of the golden plates. The book of Mosiah, Ch. 14 in the Book of Mormon, is a reproduction of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah the prophet; and 3 Nephi 13:1-18 copies Matthew 6:1-23.

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (*Book of Mormon*, Moroni 7:45)

Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not... is not puffed up... seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Corinthians 13:5-7, 1611 KJV)

Book of Mormon Plagiarism :

A common excuse Mormons naively use is that when Christ allegedly appeared on the American continent after His resurrection and preached to the Nephites he quite naturally used the same language as recorded in the Bible. They also maintain that when Nephi came to America he brought copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, which account for quotations from the Old Testament. The only difficulty with these excuses is that the miraculous plates upon which they were all inscribed, somehow or another, under translation, came out in King James English without variation approximately a 1000 years BEFORE this 1611 version was written. Amazing!

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Whenever the King James translators added a clarifying word or phrase to the text, they placed the phrase in italics to distinguish it from the original. Joseph Smith was obviously aware of this fact, and the majority of his changes to the Biblical text occur as modified or dropped King James italic phrases. However, this process is inconsistently applied in the Book of Mormon text. Often, we find that a King James clarifying phrase has been left intact in the copied text, even though the phrase was never a part of the original Biblical text.

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As an example, III Nephi 24:5, quoting Malachi 3:5 reads **'...and that turn aside the stranger, and fear not me...'**. The King James Text reads **'...and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me...'**. The Book of Mormon omits the phrase **'from his right'**, which was added to the Isaiah text in italics by the King James translators. However, in III Nephi 24:10, the phrase **'...that there shall not be room enough to receive it...'** follows the King James Version, even though seven of these words are not original to the text. The King James Version of Malachi 3:10 reads **'...that *there shall not be room enough to receive it...*'**.

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The gold plates are claimed to have been buried in 421 A.D. by Moroni. The King James Bible came out 1,190 years later. Thus the Book of Mormon couldn't be based on plates buried in 421 A.D. since the Book of Mormon contains translation errors that didn't occur until 1,190 years later. Additionally, the language of the King James Bible didn't exist in 421 A.D.

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

Thus the Book of Mormon isn't an original work. It also can't be the translation of an ancient document. What could it be? It's obviously a fiction novel, heavily plagiarized from books which were freely available at the time.

Book of Mormon Problems:

There are 4 crops mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

- Barley (Moses 7:22, 9:9, Alma 11:7, 15)
- Figs (3 Nephi 14:16)
- Grapes (2 Nephi 15:2, 4, 3 Nephi 14:16)
- Wheat (Moses 9:9, 3 Nephi 18:18)

There is no independent (non-Mormon) archeological evidence that Figs, Grapes, or Wheat existed in the area and time frame of the above references.

Book of Mormon Problems:

There are 16 animals and animal products mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

- Ass
- Bull
- Calf
- Cattle
- Cow
- Butter
- Elephants
- Milk
- Flocks
- Goat (The Nephites claimed to have found the domestic goat.)
- Herds
- Horse (The horse plays a major role in the Nephite and Lamanite societies.)
- Ox
- Sheep (This was a major animal in the Book of Mormon.)
- Sow
- Swine

There is no independent (non-Mormon) archeological evidence that any of these existed in the area and time frame of The Book of Mormon.

Book of Mormon Problems:

The following metals, metal products, or metal manufacturing are mentioned in the Book of Mormon record.

- Bellows
- Brass
- Breast Plates
- Chains
- Copper
- Iron
- Ore (mining)
- Plows
- Silver
- Swords (metal)
- Steel

Independent (non-Mormon) archeological evidence shows that none of these were manufactured or used in the area and time frame of 2 Nephi 5. The Smithsonian Institution's Dept. Of Anthropology declares the Americas did not have steel or horses before 1492. The Book of Mormon (600 B.C. to 421 A.D.) claims both steel (1 Nephi 4:9) and horses (Alma 18:9). Gordon H. Fraser, anthropologist and ethnologist, agrees with the Smithsonian Institution and adds that copper (Mosiah 8:10) was unknown at that early date as referred to in the Book of Mormon.

<http://www.whatismormonism.com/>

Book of Mormon Problems:

The 1830 edition calls Joseph Smith the "author and proprietor." Wasn't Moroni the author? Wasn't Joseph Smith the translator?

The theory that the American Indians are descendants of the Hebrews is genetically incorrect. No one questions this anymore due to the DNA testing available today which wasn't available in the 1800's.

There never was a reformed Egyptian language. And Hebrews didn't write in Egyptian.

Egyptians were pagans during the Old Testament era, so why would the Book of Mormon be based on pagan Egyptian writings?

The Book of Mormon places Jesus' birth in Jerusalem, not in Bethlehem as in the Bible.

Book of Mormon Problems:

There was no religious revival in 1820. The revival occurred from 1824 to 1825. Thus there was no basis in 1820 for Joseph Smith to be confused about religious revivals which would not occur until several years later.

There have been 3,913 changes made to the Book of Mormon since the original 1830 edition.

Not one piece of independent, non-Mormon archeological evidence supports the Book of Mormon.

There are 9 versions of the First Vision. They significantly contradict each other on major issues. The last official version was published in Times and Seasons 20 years after the First Vision and contains information which was not in any contemporaneous diaries. This information should have been in numerous contemporaneous diaries due to its significance.

Book of Mormon Problems:

Old and new archeological discoveries support the Bible. There is zero independent archeological evidence supporting the Book of Mormon.

The Smithsonian Institution does not use the Book of Mormon for reference. Their statement on this matter is available for the asking.

Strong historical evidence points to the historical story line of the Book of Mormon being taken from a manuscript written by Solomon Spalding called *Manuscript Found*, which was missing from the printer in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Sidney Rigdon lived near Pittsburgh and knew the printer, J. Lambdin.

The Book of Mormon contains some 27,000 words from the King James Bible, approximately 25,000 from the Old Testament and approximately 2,000 from the New Testament. If the King James Bible was published 1,190 years after Moroni buried the gold plates in 421, how did Moroni incorporate the 1611 King James Bible (including two Hebrew to English translation errors) into his gold plates?

<http://www.whatismormonism.com/>

Book of Mormon Problems:

There are also doctrinal discrepancies between the *Book of Mormon* and the *Doctrine and Covenants* and other source of LDS doctrine. If the *Book of Mormon* is the most correct book on earth, then why the contradictions? For example:

- D&C 130:3 says, *"The idea that the Father and the Son dwell in a man's heart is an old sectarian notion, and is false."* But in Alma 34:36, it says, *"And this I know, because the Lord hath said he dwelleth not in unholy temples, but in the hearts of the righteous doth he dwell."*
- Joseph Smith said, *"We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see."* (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 345) This introduced the doctrine of eternal progression, which Brigham Young forcefully expounded upon. [Eternal Progression teaches that God was once a man who progressed to Godhood, and we humans have the ability to do the same through strict adherence to LDS doctrines and temple rites.] Yet Moroni 8:18 says, *"For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable, from all eternity to all eternity."*

Book of Mormon Problems:

When Joseph Smith contradicts the *Book of Mormon*, we can reach only one of two conclusions. Either he did not write the *Book of Mormon* under divine guidance and is therefore a false prophet, or he decided to contradict the teachings of God, in which case he is a false prophet. Smith also stated that no one could see God without the Holy Priesthood. Yet according to his own account, he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ nine years before he himself received the priesthood!

Book of Mormon Problems:

All Mormons agree that the Book of Mormon is the foundation of the Mormon religion.

All Mormons agree that without the Book of Mormon, there is no basis for the Mormon religion.

Based on the historical and archeological facts and evidence, it's clear that the Book of Mormon is a work of fiction, heavily plagiarized from books freely available at the time. In fact, it's simply a rework of a stolen manuscript (Manuscript Found) that was meant to be nothing more than a romantic fiction novel of the American Indians.

Book of Mormon Problems:

[The Book of Mormon] must be either true or false. If true, it is one of the most important messages ever sent from God.... If false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked...impositions ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions

(Apostle Orson Pratt, *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 1-2, 1851)

Book of Mormon Problems:

The Book of Mormon is not the translation of an ancient document, regardless of any feelings, emotions, "burning in your bosom," or testimony. "Knowing" that it's true doesn't correlate with the historical and archeological facts and evidence. Wanting it to be true doesn't change the facts and evidence.

The Book of Mormon was not from God.

Where Are the Golden Plates?:

Can't we clear up these plagiarism claims by looking at the source? The golden plates?

After the work of translation ended, Moroni took back the golden plates.

No one can see/analyze/test them today.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Mormonism, as it is called, must stand or fall on the story of Joseph Smith. He was either a prophet of God, divinely called, properly appointed and commissioned, or he was one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith,
Doctrines of Salvation, p. 188)

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

In Doctrine and Covenants 87:2, Smith predicted that the American Civil War would "be poured out upon all nations." This did not occur. In Doctrine and Covenants 84:4-5, he prophesied that a temple would be built in Independence, Missouri during that generation. There is still no such temple. The list goes on. He obviously fails the test of a prophet as outlined in Deuteronomy 18:21-22.

The Bible Gives Us a Way to Test Alleged Prophets!

Deuteronomy 18:21-22

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Some of Joseph Smith's Failed Prophecies:

On Feb. 14, 1835 Joseph Smith said, "... go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or the coming of the lord, which was nigh even fifty-six years should wind up the scene" (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 182).

"On the 14th of Feb. 1835, Joseph Smith said that God had revealed to him that the coming of Christ would be within 56 years, which added to 1835 shows that before 1891 and the 14th of Feb. the Savior of the world would make his appearance again upon the earth and the winding up scene take place" (Journal of Oliver Boardman Huntington, Vol. 2, pp. 128,129).

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Referring to Oliver Granger Joseph Smith said, "... his name shall be had in sacred remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever, saith the Lord" (Doctrine & Covenants 117:12.). Why have most Mormons never heard of Oliver Granger?

On April 17, 1838, Joseph Smith prophesied that David W. Patten would perform a mission for him the next Spring. (Doctrine & Covenants 114:1). David Patten died before Spring came. (History of the Church, Vol. 3, p. 171, 10-25-38.)

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

"And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded..." (2 Nephi 3:14). Joseph Smith's enemies were not confounded, but successful when they killed Joseph Smith on June 27, 1844 in Carthage, Illinois.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Regarding Jackson County, Missouri:

"And the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there. . ."

Once again it is noteworthy that a temple was not built in Missouri, but that a temple WAS built in Salt Lake City. If the prophecy is true, Salt Lake City cannot be Zion. However, if Salt Lake City is indeed Zion, the prophecy is utterly false.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Revelation and prophecy on war, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, December 25, 1832...

1. VERILY, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls;
2. And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place.

(Doctrine and Covenants 87:1-2)

The Civil War was not poured out upon all nations.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Salem, Massachusetts, August 6, 1836...

2. I have much treasure in this city for you...
4. And it shall come to pass in due time that I will give this city into your hands, that you shall have power over it, insomuch that they shall not discover your secret parts; and its wealth pertaining to gold and silver shall be yours.
5. Concern not yourselves about your debts, for I will give you power to pay them.

(Doctrine and Covenants 111:2,4-5)

Joseph Smith did not get any gold in Salem MA as prophesied.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

"I prophecy in the name of the Lord God of Israel, unless the United States redress the wrongs committed upon the Saints in the state of Missouri and punish the crimes committed by her officers that in a few years the government will be utterly overthrown and wasted, and there will not be so much as a potsherd left for their wickedness in permitting the murder of men, women and children, and the wholesale plunder and extermination of thousands of her citizens to go unpunished" (History of the Church, Vol. 5, page 394).

Joseph Smith made this prophecy in May 6, 1843. However, the United States Government did not redress any of the wrongs committed against the Mormons in Missouri, and now over 150 years later, the U.S. Government still stands.

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Questions to ask about anyone claiming to be a prophet:

1. Have all of his prophecies come true?
2. Was even one of his prophecies revised to fit what already happened?
3. Does even one of his teachings utilize a small section of the Bible to the neglect of the whole?
4. Does even one of his teachings contradict the God of the Bible?
5. Does even one of his teachings contradict the Jesus of the Bible?
6. Is he or is Christ the focus of his followers? Whose name is heard more often?
7. Do any of his teachings speak negatively about other Christians?

Joseph Smith failed on all 7.

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

The present struggle (Civil War) will not free the descendants of Ham who are slaves.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 250, October 6, 1863)

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

as the Lord lives we will build up Jackson County in this generation

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Times & Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 956, April 6, 1845)

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

For more Mormon False Prophecies, see

How To Answer a Mormon

Robert A. Morey

<http://www.fithdefenders.com>

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False Prophets:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matthew 7:15)

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." (Matthew 24:11)

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
(1 John 4:1)

Missionary Zeal:

Young men between the ages of 19 and 26 who are considered worthy, or follow the teachings of the church, are encouraged to determine if it's right for them to go on a two-year, full-time proselyting mission. Young women who would like to serve a mission must be at least 21 and generally serve 18-month missions. Elderly, retired couples are encouraged to serve missions as well, but their length of service varies from 3 to 36 months.



Missionary Zeal:

Prospective missionaries receive a "call to serve"—an official notification of their location assignment—through the mail from the president of the Church, assigning them to a specific area and responsibility of service. Members of the Quorum of the Twelve are responsible for assigning missionaries, through continuing revelation, to various areas of service, both domestic and foreign...

Missionaries may have girlfriends, boyfriends or fiancées back home, but they are prohibited from meeting with them or calling them while serving their missions. They may write them once a week, just as they may do to family members and friends. Missionaries are, however, encouraged to end their relationships before serving their missions, as it is seen as the best option for both parties involved.

Missionary Zeal:



Full-time proselyting missionaries are required to adhere to a dress code: for men, conservative, dark trousers and suit coats, white dress shirts, and ties are generally required. For women, modest and professional dresses or blouses and skirts must be worn. In some areas this standard is altered slightly. For example, in hot, humid climates, suit coats are not required. Casual clothes may be worn when providing manual labor or during "preparation day" (called "P-day" by missionaries) when the missionaries recreate and do their cleaning, shopping, and laundry. All full-time missionaries wear a name tag that gives their surname with the appropriate title ("Elder" or "Sister" in English-speaking areas) and bears the church's name.

Missionary Zeal:

More information on Missionary Dress can be found at:

http://www.mission.net/en/main_clothingneeds.html

Missionary Zeal:

Near the same time as receiving the call and assignment, prospective missionaries are typically ordained to the office of an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood (if they do not hold this office already), and are "set apart" (through a priesthood blessing) to preach the gospel. They also typically go to the temple for the first time to receive their Endowment...

Missionaries pay their own expenses, usually with assistance from family and friends. In the past, each missionary paid his or her actual living expenses, but this approach created large burdens on missionaries who served in expensive areas of the world. So in 1990 a new program was introduced to equalize the burdens. Now, all young missionaries pay a flat monthly rate which is distributed according to regional costs of living.

Missionary Zeal:

Newly called missionaries attend a short training period at one of almost two dozen Church Missionary Training Centers (MTCs). The largest MTC is located in Provo, Utah adjacent to Brigham Young University (BYU). Missionaries serving English-speaking missions spend three or four weeks at the MTC and are trained in the use of proselytizing materials, taught expected conduct and study the scriptures. Missionaries bound for foreign-language missions spend longer periods at the MTC—eight to ten weeks—in order to learn the language. During this period, they are encouraged not to speak in their native tongue but rather to immerse themselves in the new language. Other MTC campuses exist in other parts of the world (usually where there is a denser population of returned missionaries to teach) for missionaries serving in their native countries outside the US.

Missionary Zeal:

<http://www.eldermissionary.com>



Website where you can find everything you need to be a Mormon Missionary:

- Approved clothing
- Approved backpack
- Approved luggage
- Alarm Clocks
- Travel needs
- etc.

They even have a "Guess Where I am Going" game!

Missionary Zeal:

<http://www.liahona-bike.com/>

"Whither the Mormon missionary goeth, so goeth the way-cool Liahona bicycle"

Liahona Mission Bike, a 21speed mountain bike sold exclusively to Mormon missionaries, also known as elders... Named after a compass in the Book of Mormon, the Liahona's design is based in part on recommendations from elders-its most Mormon-specific feature is a plastic sprocket guard to keep trouser cuffs oil-free.



Missionary Zeal:

There is a place for us to be impressed with the Mormon Missionaries and their zeal:

- 1.5 – 2-year commitment
- pay for it themselves (or raise support)
- training
- language school
- discipline
- support of church and family

"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2)

Cults

Week 12

September 25, 2005

Mark Edward Sohmer
mark@sohmer.net

Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

Review

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

The "Spalding-Rigdon" theory:

Theory that Joseph Smith Jr. plagiarized from the fiction novel "Manuscript Found" by Solomon Spalding.

Spaulding died while his book was being published. Sidney Rigdon was acquainted with the publisher and would become Joseph Smith's right-hand man.

The theory supposes that Rigdon took Spalding's manuscript, added religious subject matter, and gave it to Joseph Smith Jr. who used it as source material for the Book of Mormon.

There are arguments for and against this theory, and due to the lack of conclusive evidence, it is in my opinion not the strongest approach to use with Mormon missionaries.

Book of Mormon Plagiarism:

For more information on the Spalding Theory, go to:

- <http://solomonspalding.com/Lib/library1.htm>
- *Who Really Wrote the Book of Mormon? The Spalding Enigma:*
<http://thedigitalvoice.com/enigma/enigma1.htm>
- read Spalding's manuscript at:
<http://www.antimormon.8m.com/spauldingindex.html>

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Book of Mormon Problems:

There are doctrinal discrepancies between different canonical Mormon sources.

- D&C 130:3 teaches that God does not live in man's heart.
- Alma 34:36 (Book of Mormon) teaches that God does dwell in men's hearts.

- Joseph Smith taught that God was not always God. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 345)
- Moroni 8:18 (Book of Mormon) teaches that God is unchangeable from eternity.

"If the *Book of Mormon* is the most correct book on earth, then why the contradictions?"

<http://www.contenderministries.org/mormonism/bomproblems.php>

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When Joseph Smith contradicts the *Book of Mormon*, we can reach only one of two conclusions. Either he did not write the *Book of Mormon* under divine guidance and is therefore a false prophet, or he decided to contradict the teachings of God, in which case he is a false prophet. Smith also stated that no one could see God without the Holy Priesthood. Yet according to his own account, he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ nine years before he himself received the priesthood!

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Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Some of Joseph Smith's Failed Prophecies:

- Jesus will return before 1891 (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 182, and Journal of Oliver Boardman Huntington, Vol. 2, pp. 128,129).
- Joseph Smith prophesied that David W. Patten would perform a mission for him the next Spring. (Doctrine & Covenants 114:1). David Patten died before Spring came. (History of the Church, Vol. 3, p. 171, 10-25-38.)
- Joseph Smith prophesied that his enemies would not destroy him (2 Nephi 3:14). Smith's enemies killed him on June 27, 1844 in Carthage, Illinois.
- A Temple will be built in Jackson City Missouri. As of 2005, this has not come to pass. "Zion" has moved to Salt Lake City.
- The American Civil War would be poured out upon all nations (Doctrine and Covenants 87:1-2.) This did not come to pass.
- God would give the gold of Salem Massachusetts into Smith's hands to pay debts, (Doctrine and Covenants 111:2,4-5.) This never occurred.
- U.S. Government overthrown for "wrongs" against Mormons. (History of the Church, Vol. 5, page 394).

Joseph Smith a Prophet?:

Questions to ask about anyone claiming to be a prophet:

1. Have all of his prophecies come true?
2. Was even one of his prophecies revised to fit what already happened?
3. Does even one of his teachings utilize a small section of the Bible to the neglect of the whole?
4. Does even one of his teachings contradict the God of the Bible?
5. Does even one of his teachings contradict the Jesus of the Bible?
6. Is he or is Christ the focus of his followers? Whose name is heard more often?
7. Do any of his teachings speak negatively about other Christians?

Joseph Smith failed on all 7.

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

The present struggle (Civil War) will not free the descendants of Ham who are slaves.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 250, October 6, 1863)

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

as the Lord lives we will build up Jackson County in this generation

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Times & Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 956, April 6, 1845)

Other Mormon Prophecies?:

For more Mormon False Prophecies, see

How To Answer a Mormon

Robert A. Morey

<http://www.faithdefenders.com>

The Bible Gives Us a Way to Test Alleged Prophets!

Deuteronomy 18:21-22

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

False Prophets:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matthew 7:15)

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." (Matthew 24:11)

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
(1 John 4:1)

Missionary Zeal:

There is a place for us to be impressed with the Mormon Missionaries and their zeal:

- 1.5 – 2-year commitment
- pay for it themselves (or raise support)
- training
- language school
- discipline
- support of church and family

"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2)

New Material

Two Types of Salvation:

General (Unconditional) Salvation:

Mormons believe in two kinds of salvation: general salvation and individual salvation. General salvation is also called immortality. It is given to all mankind because of the atonement of Jesus Christ for Adam's transgression. This salvation is by grace alone—it is not conditioned upon any individual's faith or works. This salvation allows all mankind to be physically resurrected.

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Two Types of Salvation:

Individual (Conditional) Salvation:

This salvation is also known as exaltation or eternal life, and can be achieved only by individual faith, repentance, and obedience to God's laws and ordinances. One is exalted based on one's worthiness. These laws include temple marriage, obeying the Word of Wisdom, proper tithing, faithful church attendance, and obeying the Mormon prophets

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Two Types of Salvation:

If one gains exaltation, then one will attain ultimate salvation according to Mormonism: one will live forever in the presence of our Father in heaven, and one will become a god. Joseph Smith taught, "Here, then, is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves. . . . *When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation*" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 346, 348; italics in original).

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Life After Death:

According to Mormon doctrine, at death people either go to spirit prison or to paradise. Mormon spirits go to paradise where they will continue to progress toward godhood, and they also will have opportunities to present the Mormon gospel to the spirits in spirit prison. If the spirits in prison receive the Mormon gospel, they will also receive the benefit of proxy baptism—living Mormons will be baptized on their behalf (this is known as baptism for the dead).

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

Mormons believe that there are different levels or kingdoms in the afterlife: The Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom, the Telestial Kingdom and outer darkness. Where mankind will end up depends on what they believe and do in this mortal life.

Is Mormonism a cult? What do Mormons believe?

<http://www.gotquestions.org/Mormons.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

The Celestial Kingdom:

Those who are faithful in the things of God—baptism, membership in the Mormon Church, keeping the Word of Wisdom, etc.—will live with Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost forever in the Celestial Kingdom, and will have their faithful family members with them (hence the Mormon commercials regarding "Families are Forever"). Those who attain the highest level of the Celestial Kingdom— by means of complete faithfulness, which includes temple marriage— will become gods: creators of their own planets, and procreators of their own spirit children. (Doctrine and Covenants 76:51-53, 62; 131:1-4)

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

The Terrestrial Kingdom:

Those who did not receive the Mormon gospel while on earth but receive it in spirit prison, and those who did receive the Mormon gospel but were not faithful, will inherit this level of heaven. Their family unit will not be retained, and they will be eternally single. Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost will visit them, but Heavenly Father will not. (Doctrine and Covenants 76:73-79; 131:1-4)

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

The Telestial Kingdom:

This is the lowest of the heavenly kingdoms. The occupants did not receive the Mormon gospel either on earth or in spirit prison, and they suffer for their sins in hell, though only temporarily. They will be forever single, without their family members. Neither the Father nor Jesus Christ will visit them, but they will be visited by the Holy Ghost (Doctrine and Covenants 76:81-86, 103-106).

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

Hell:

Mormons believe hell is a place where the future inhabitants of the Telestial Kingdom (the lowest heaven) will suffer for their own sins; though their punishment is not eternal in duration. As Joseph Fielding Smith wrote, "Those who live lives of wickedness may also be heirs of salvation, that is, they too shall be redeemed from death and from hell eventually. These, however, must suffer in hell the torments of the damned until they pay the price of their sinning, for the blood of Christ will not cleanse them" (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 2, 133-134).

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

Outer Darkness:

Those who received the Mormon gospel and the Holy Ghost but reject both will be cast into outer darkness. Like the biblical doctrine of an eternal hell, assignment here is for all eternity (Doctrine and Covenants 76:28-35, 44-48).

Kevin Bywater, *Mormonism: A Survey and Biblical Critique*

<http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/beliefs/mormonism-overview.html>

Salvation and the Mormon Church:

no man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith... every man and woman must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p.289).

Salvation and the Mormon Church:

he that confesseth not that Jesus has come in the flesh and sent Joseph Smith with the fullness of the Gospel to this generation, is not of God, but is anti-christ

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p.312).

Salvation and the Mormon Church:

If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation outside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 670).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

(The Bible, 1 Timothy 2:5)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

How is eternal life obtained in Mormonism? Not by grace alone but by great effort on the part of the individual who seeks it. It is not a gift to be received but a reward to be earned. Joseph Fielding Smith wrote:

None shall receive eternal life save it be those who keep the commandments of the Lord and are entitled thus to enter into his presence. (*Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith, 2:4*).

Dave Johnson, *The Mormon View Of Salvation*
http://www.midwestoutreach.org/journals/mormon_view.html

LDS Plan For Salvation:

"Jesus kept the commandments of his Father and thereby worked out his own salvation, and also set an example as to the way and the means whereby all men may be saved"

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie,
The Mortal Messiah, Vol.4, p.434).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost

(The Bible, Titus 3:5)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

Salvation comes by grace, faith, and works. Unless a man will adhere to the doctrine and walk in faith, accepting the truth and observing the commandments as they have been given, it will be impossible for him to receive eternal life, no matter how much he may confess with his lips that Jesus is the Christ, or believe that his Father sent him into the world for the redemption of man... So it is necessary, not merely that we believe, but that we repent, and in faith perform good works until the end; and then shall we receive the reward of the faithful and a place in the celestial kingdom of God.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 2:311).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

(The Bible, Romans 4:1-8)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work

(The Bible, Romans 11:6)

The Bible is clear: **Grace + Works ≠ Grace**

LDS Plan For Salvation:

One of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation.

(Prophet Spencer W. Kimball,
The Miracle of Forgiveness, 1972 edition,
pp. 206-207)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
we shall be saved

(The Bible, Acts 15:11)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved

(The Bible, Acts 16:31)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,
and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him
from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

(The Bible, Romans 10:9)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 247; see also, Vol. 4, pp. 53-54, 219-220.)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin

(The Bible, 1 John 1:7)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

(The Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 25:23)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

(The Bible, Ephesians 2:8-9)

LDS Plan For Salvation For Women:

The first time a Mormon attends the temple endowment ceremony he/she will be given a new name [usually a Bible name like Peter or Mary or the name of European royalty]. These will supposedly be their names in eternity. The wife must tell her husband her new name, and no one else, as he is supposed to call her up in the resurrection. If he does not call her up she would still resurrect, but not as his wife.

Sandra Tanner, *How the LDS Husband Hopes to Resurrect His Wife According to the LDS Temple Ceremony*

<http://www.utlm.org/onlineresources/resurrectwife.htm>

LDS Plan For Salvation For Women:

Do you uphold your husband before God as your lord?... I ask, Can you get into the celestial kingdom without him?... No woman will get into the celestial kingdom, except her husband receives her, if she is worthy to have a husband; and if not, somebody will receive her as a servant.

(Apostle Erastus Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 291)

LDS Plan For Salvation For Women:

We were next led into what is called the Terrestrial Glory; where Brigham Young received us, . . . he gave each a pass-word and grip necessary, he said, to admit us into the "Celestial Glory;" . . . there are many gods, and they do not acknowledge the one Triune God of the Bible, but that every man will sometime be a "god;" and that women are to be the ornaments of his kingdom, and dependent upon him for resurrection and salvation; and that our salvation is dependent upon the recollection of these passwords

Mary Ettie Smith, recorded in N. W. Green, *Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress, and Present Condition. Embracing the Narrative of Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith, of Her Residence and Experience of Fifteen Years with the Mormons*, Hartford, 1870, pp. 42-48

Bible Plan For Salvation For Women:

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, **there is neither male nor female**: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(Galatians 3:26-28, emphasis mine)

The Bible is clear: Men and Women are saved **the same way!**

Defining Terms:

As with most cults, one must be VERY careful to define terms accurately. The Mormons use words that we're familiar with in ways that are not as we expect.

Defining Terms:

It is important to understand how the LDS Church defines these terms in order to communicate with Mormons effectively. Like virtually all cults, the Mormons use the same *vocabulary* as Christians but a different *dictionary*. When a Christian asks a Mormon, "Have you been saved?" the latter can respond "Yes" truthfully and sincerely according to his understanding. Yet, the Mormon may be answering a completely different question than the one the Christian intended to ask.

Dave Johnson, *The Mormon View Of Salvation*

http://www.midwestoutreach.org/journals/mormon_view.html

Defining Terms:

Mormons often use common terms that to them have completely different meanings than those used in the Bible or by orthodox Christian churches. Mormons may say they believe in "Jesus Christ," trust in the "scriptures," believe they are "saved by grace," and have been "born-again". They will talk about "eternal life" and things like "heaven," but they rarely explain what they mean when they use such terminology.

Michael Davis, *Biblical Terms Redefined by Mormons*

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

Defining Terms:

Jesus Christ: The spirit of Jesus Christ was the first spirit born to God the Father and his wife (Heavenly Mother). He progressed to become a God under the Father. (The Father is also the literal father of Jesus' body in the exact same way we were begotten by our earthly parents.) He now has a body of flesh and bones, but no blood. He is the spirit brother of Satan whose spirit was procreated in the same way as Jesus'. To Mormons, even the atonement of his shed blood is not enough to provide forgiveness of sin and bring eternal life. Stripped of his Deity and demoted to a partial Savior, the Jesus of Mormonism has been robbed of his power and authority. Not only is the Mormon Jesus one who had struggled to achieve his own salvation, he also failed to establish his church. Both in Jerusalem and in the America's where Jesus was supposed to have visited, he attempted to build a group of followers. But in each case, truth was overcome by the alleged early church apostasy into false teaching.

Michael Davis, *Biblical Terms Redefined by Mormons*

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

Defining Terms:

Grace: The Mormon concept of grace means making oneself worthy of the grace of God by doing good works in the church, temple, and community.

Salvation: A word that Mormons qualify in one of three ways: unconditional or general salvation is simply resurrection from the dead, granted to all through Christ's atonement; conditional or individual salvation involves entering the celestial kingdom through works of Mormonism; full salvation means exaltation to become a God as a result of temple ceremonies and other works

Son of God: Along with Jesus Christ, all of us are viewed as the children of God, his literal spirit children. This makes us all - Mormons, non-Mormons, Jesus Christ and Satan - spirit brothers.

Michael Davis, *Biblical Terms Redefined by Mormons*

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

Defining Terms:

Trinity: Mormons say they also believe in the Trinitarian concept of God. But really what they mean are that God the Father is a God, God the Son is another God, and God the Holy Ghost is a third God and they are "one God" because they are "one in purpose." Mormons often have an incorrect understanding of what Christians mean by the "Trinity." They say Christians believe that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one person (i.e., Monophysitism) or that God shows himself as the Father or the Son or the Holy Ghost (i.e. Modalism).

Michael Davis, *Biblical Terms Redefined by Mormons*

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

Defining Terms:

Virgin Birth: A concept negated by the view that God, a resurrected man with flesh and bones according to Mormon teachings, literally fathered Jesus in the flesh in the same way in which earthly men father their children. Despite the documented position of previous Mormon prophets, presidents, and apostles about the nature of Christ's conception, modern LDS apologists maintain that "Christ was born of a virgin". How can they? By changing the definition of the word "virgin". The reasoning goes like this: since Mary had sexual relations with an immortal man, not a mortal man, the phrase "virgin birth" still applies.

Michael Davis, *Biblical Terms Redefined by Mormons*

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

Defining Terms:

God is our Heavenly Father. He loves us and wants us to return to Him. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is our Savior. He redeems us from death by providing the Resurrection. He saves us from sin as we repent. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can return to live with God if we keep His commandments. The Holy Ghost helps us to recognize truth.

<http://mormon.org/learn/0,8672,1082-1,00.html>

Defining Terms:

Heavenly Father knew that while you were on Earth you would make mistakes—everyone does. So, as part of His plan, He provided a Savior, Jesus Christ, who would make it possible for sins to be forgiven, and for all people who accept His sacrifice to return to live with Heavenly Father.

<http://mormon.org/learn/0,8672,1294-1,00.html>

Defining Terms:

Be very careful of what the Mormons *mean* when they use terms.

Defining Terms:

For more information on what Mormons mean when they
certain words/phrases:

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

<http://www.concernedchristians.org/terms.php>

Unusual Practices:

Just two months after being initiated into Freemasonry, Joseph Smith introduced the wearing of garments to a select group of men. On Wednesday, May 4th, 1842, Joseph Smith initiated nine men into his new inner-circle called the "Holy Order," the "Quorum," the "Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood," or the "Quorum of the Anointed." This ritual would later come to be known as the temple endowment.

Performed in the upper story of Smith's Nauvoo store, this new ritual was a significant departure from the simple washings and anointings Joseph Smith taught in Kirtland. In addition to washing and anointings, these select men of Smith's "Quorum of the Anointed" received garments.

LDS Mormon Garments

<http://www.i4m.com/think/temples/mormon-garments.htm>

Unusual Practices:

The original purpose of wearing garments was to remind the men of their oaths - especially oaths of secrecy regarding the plural marriage doctrine. So the men wearing them would have something unforgettable on them as a constant reminder of their oaths. In this sense, wearing garments were much like wearing a talisman, except garments weren't supposed to protect you. That myth of protection didn't come until later, when Joseph Smith died not wearing his garments while John Talyor survived the same barrage of gunfire while wearing his.

LDS Mormon Garments

<http://www.i4m.com/think/temples/mormon-garments.htm>

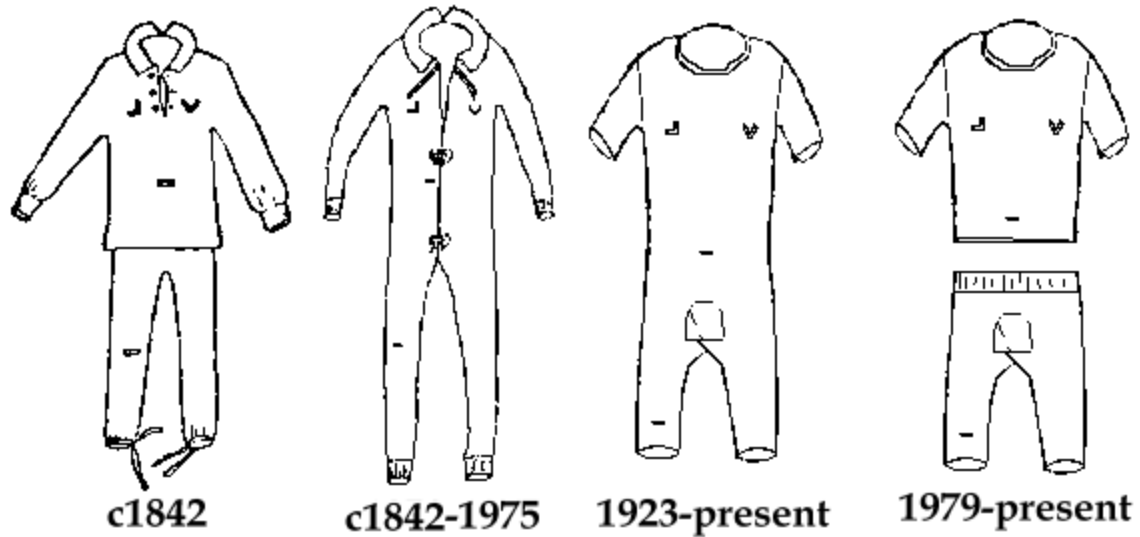
Unusual Practices:

The Saints should know that the pattern of endowment garments was revealed from Heaven and that the blessings promised in connection with wearing them will not be realized if any unauthorized change is made in their form or in the manner of wearing them.

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith,
Messages of the First Presidency 5:110, June 28 1906)

Unusual Practices:

The Evolution of the Temple Garment



<http://www.lds-mormon.com/veilworker/endowment1.shtml>

Unusual Practices:



http://molelog.molehill.org/blomt/archives/2003/05/mormon_garments.html

Unusual Practices:

The reality of Mormon life did not square with the picture our public relation writers painted of the typical Mormon family: parents and children smiling wholesomely at the world from the pages of paid advertising supplements in Readers Digest...

I watched helplessly as God's True Church placed tremendous social pressure on young brides to stay constantly pregnant, and then turned a blind eye on the queue of young mothers at the pharmacy for their weekly stash of Valium. I was becoming wary of smiles, stock answers and shallow thinking. I served the Mormon Church with zeal and faithfulness. Indeed, the Church was my god – now the god was becoming hostile and foreign.

Nevertheless, despite what I saw and heard, I continued to cling to the same hope – that something must be wrong with me. Perhaps I was not trying hard enough. That must be the answer. It was, in any case, the only one I could live with: that regardless of my opinions, the Church had to be right.

James R. Spencer, *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder's Story*
<http://www.mazeministry.com/resources/books/beyondtext/beyond07.htm>

Unusual Practices:

In regard to the Temple Ceremony:

One of the things I had liked most about Mormonism was the simplicity of its church services. I liked the inornate settings and the plain, frank people. I now found myself in a ceremony I didn't like at all. *What was wrong with me?*

...since the temple also exists for the dead who did not go through while alive, I went through on behalf of people who had died. Each time, I was given a slip of paper with some name on it... supplied by a Church member from personal genealogical research. And I went through the washings, anointings, oaths, Tokens, signs and penalties in proxy for that deceased person.

I still did not feel completely comfortable with the temple ceremony. It seemed alien to the simplicity of the Church.

James R. Spencer, *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder's Story*
<http://www.mazeministry.com/resources/books/beyondtext/beyond06.htm>

Famous Mormons

Mormons are to be found in high-ranking positions in government and business.

Allan O'Bryant, President, AFLAC International

Gary Ely, Chairman, Avista Corp.

Gary Crittenden, CFO and Exec. VP, American Express

Nolan D. Archbald, CEO, Black and Decker

Jonathan C. Coon, President & CEO, 1-800-Contacts

Kevin B. Rollins, Vice Chairman, Dell Computers

J.W. Marriott, Jr., Chairman, Marriott International

Stewart Nelson, COO, Novell

Mitt Romney, Governor, Massachusetts

Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services

Orrin Hatch, U.S. Senator, Utah

Evangelical Compromise:

Bringing Elizabeth Home: A Journey of Faith and Hope, by Ed & Lois Smart

From the description at christianbook.com:

Family, the prayers of so many friends and strangers, and trust in God are what got them through this experience--and having survived, they have no doubt that they can persevere in any situation as long as those three things are in their lives.

The Smart Family are devout Mormons.
Which "God" are they talking about?
The one who lives near Kolob?

Evangelical Compromise:

7 Habits series by Stephen R. Covey

Stephen R. Covey is a devout Mormon, so one must wonder why his books are sold in Christian bookstores?

I personally have attended training based on his "7 habits" and I recommend them. But I recommend them as secular, not as Christian.

Covey talks about morals and faith in God, but he is not a Christian. His books are not Christian books. They should have no place in a Christian bookstore.

Evangelical Compromise:

How Wide the Divide?: A Mormon & an Evangelical in Conversation

by Craig L. Blomberg (Evangelical), Stephen E. Robinson (Mormon), IVP

Conclusion of book:

"Both Mormons and Evangelicals trust that they will be brought into a right relationship with God by Jesus Christ, who is both the Son of God and God the Son. Both believe in the substitutionary atonement of Christ, justification by faith in Christ, and salvation by grace."

For critiques of this book:

<http://www.equip.org/free/DM388.pdf>

<http://www.mrm.org/multimedia/text/divide.html>

Mormonism Review:

The LDS Church structure has at its head a first presidency, consisting of the president (prophet, seer, revelator, etc.) and two counselors. Below the first presidency is the Quorum of the Twelve (apostles), followed by the Quorum of the Seventy (also known simply as "The Seventy"). Lower still are the stake presidencies and the bishopric. These latter offices are concerned with the temporal day-to-day matters of the Church, whereas the upper echelon (also known as The Brethren) are the creators and guardians of Church doctrine, concerned with matters of eternal consequence.

Contender Ministries; *Where Do You Get Your Authority? Examining the Priesthood and Apostolic Office*

<http://www.contenderministries.org/mormonism/authority.php>

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Polytheism ("Plurality of Gods")
- God is not eternal
- God was once like us
- Jesus and Lucifer were brothers, and Lucifer desperately wanted to be the savior of the world
- The Holy Ghost is a member of the "godhead"
- The Holy Spirit is an impersonal force
- Men become gods based on good works and merit
- God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob.

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- God the Father is married to the Mother God
- All humans are offspring of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother
- Men live on the Moon and the Sun
- Black people are colored due to misdeeds in the pre-existence
- Practice "baptism for the dead"
- Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthood
- Jesus was a polygamist and had children
- There are different levels of heaven

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Salvation for a woman is dependant on her husband
- works are necessary for salvation
- Temple rituals include secret handshakes, secret names, even secret undergarments
- more...

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

Walter Martin entitled one of his books on Mormonism:

The Maze of Mormonism

It's easy to see why that title applies.

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

Remember how they see us:

- Biblically ignorant
- members of a apostatized "church"

Have them read:

- When we read they don't listen, but think about their next statement/argument

Emphasize truth over feelings:

- They trust their subjective "burning in the bosom"
- The Bible tells us to test and prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21, Acts 17:11, 1 John 4:1)

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

Show the Book of Mormon as unreliable:

- plagiarism
- DNA and archeological evidence against

Show Joseph Smith as unreliable:

- false prophecies

Remember to stress idolatry:

- They are guilty of the 2nd Commandment
- Use Bible verses to show them the gravity of this

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

The Word of God is powerful:

- God will use His Word to change hearts

Be clear on definitions:

- Mormons are great at misusing "Christian" words

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

Be nice!

- And of some have compassion, making a difference (Jude 22)

Be firm!

- And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. (Jude 23)
- Jesus held false religious leaders to a higher standard

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

In summary, Christians need to realize that the Evangelism Explosion question that is usually effective with most unbelievers doesn't work well with LDS Church members. When a Mormon is asked, "If you were to die today, do you know for certain that you would go to heaven?" he is likely to respond by saying, "Which heaven? I believe in three different heavens."

Dave Johnson, *The Mormon View Of Salvation*

http://www.midwestoutreach.org/journals/mormon_view.html

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

To be more effective, Christians should ask Mormons, "If you were to die today, do you know that you have eternal life? Are you certain that you will spend all eternity with God the Father?" This gets to the heart of the matter because a knowledgeable and honest Mormon must answer these questions "No!" This opens the door for the Christian to present the true gospel of Christ, that we can know with assurance that we have eternal life (1 John 5:11-13); because, by His death on the cross, Jesus "hath perfected forever them that are being sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). This is the good news that brings eternal life.

Dave Johnson, *The Mormon View Of Salvation*

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Resources:

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Contender Ministries – <http://www.contenderministries.org>

The Watchmen Fellowship - <http://watchman.org/>

<http://www.whatismormonism.com>

<http://www.helpingmormons.org>

Resources:

(no particular order)

<http://www.christiananswers.net>

Mormonism Research Ministry - <http://www.mrm.org>

Utah Lighthouse Ministry - <http://www.utlm.org/>

Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry - www.carm.org

Christian Research Institute - www.equip.org

Alpha and Omega Ministries - <http://www.aomin.org>

<http://www.apologeticsindex.org>

Notes and Files from this class - <http://cults.sohmer.net>

Cults

Week 13

October 2, 2005

Mark Edward Sohmer
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Fellowship Bible Church
Summer 2005

notes and other materials available at:
<http://cults.sohmer.net>

Review

Two Types of Salvation:

General (Unconditional) Salvation:

This salvation allows all mankind to be physically resurrected.

Individual (Conditional) Salvation:

This salvation is also known as exaltation or eternal life, and can be achieved only by individual faith, repentance, and obedience to God's laws and ordinances.

Different Kingdoms in the Afterlife:

Mormons believe that there are different levels or kingdoms in the afterlife: The Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom, the Telestial Kingdom and outer darkness. Where mankind will end up depends on what they believe and do in this mortal life.

Is Mormonism a cult? What do Mormons believe?

<http://www.gotquestions.org/Mormons.html>

Salvation and the Mormon Church:

No Salvation without consent of Joseph Smith:

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p.289).

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p.312).

(Apostle Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 670).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

(The Bible, 1 Timothy 2:5)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

"Jesus kept the commandments of his Father and thereby worked out his own salvation, and also set an example as to the way and the means whereby all men may be saved"

(Apostle Bruce R. McConkie,
The Mortal Messiah, Vol.4, p.434).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost

(The Bible, Titus 3:5)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

Salvation comes by grace, faith, and works. Unless a man will adhere to the doctrine and walk in faith, accepting the truth and observing the commandments as they have been given, it will be impossible for him to receive eternal life, no matter how much he may confess with his lips that Jesus is the Christ, or believe that his Father sent him into the world for the redemption of man.

(Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 2:311).

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work

(The Bible, Romans 11:6)

The Bible is clear: **Grace + Works ≠ Grace**

LDS Plan For Salvation:

One of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation.

(Prophet Spencer W. Kimball,
The Miracle of Forgiveness, 1972 edition,
pp. 206-207)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
we shall be saved

(The Bible, Acts 15:11)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved

(The Bible, Acts 16:31)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,
and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him
from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

(The Bible, Romans 10:9)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it.

(Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 247; see also, Vol. 4, pp. 53-54, 219-220.)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin

(The Bible, 1 John 1:7)

LDS Plan For Salvation:

for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

(The Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 25:23)

Biblical Plan For Salvation:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

(The Bible, Ephesians 2:8-9)

LDS Plan For Salvation For Women:

Do you uphold your husband before God as your lord?... I ask, Can you get into the celestial kingdom without him?... No woman will get into the celestial kingdom, except her husband receives her, if she is worthy to have a husband; and if not, somebody will receive her as a servant.

(Apostle Erastus Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 291)

Bible Plan For Salvation For Women:

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, **there is neither male nor female**: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(Galatians 3:26-28, emphasis mine)

The Bible is clear: Men and Women are saved **the same way!**

Defining Terms:

As with most cults, one must be VERY careful to define terms accurately. The Mormons use words that we're familiar with in ways that are not as we expect.

Defining Terms:

For more information on what Mormons mean when they
certain words/phrases:

<http://www.leaderu.com/offices/michaeldavis/docs/mormonism/definitions.html>

<http://www.concernedchristians.org/terms.php>

Unusual Practices:

Just two months after being initiated into Freemasonry, Joseph Smith introduced the wearing of garments to a select group of men. On Wednesday, May 4th, 1842, Joseph Smith initiated nine men into his new inner-circle called the "Holy Order," the "Quorum," the "Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood," or the "Quorum of the Anointed." This ritual would later come to be known as the temple endowment.

Performed in the upper story of Smith's Nauvoo store, this new ritual was a significant departure from the simple washings and anointings Joseph Smith taught in Kirtland. In addition to washing and anointings, these select men of Smith's "Quorum of the Anointed" received garments.

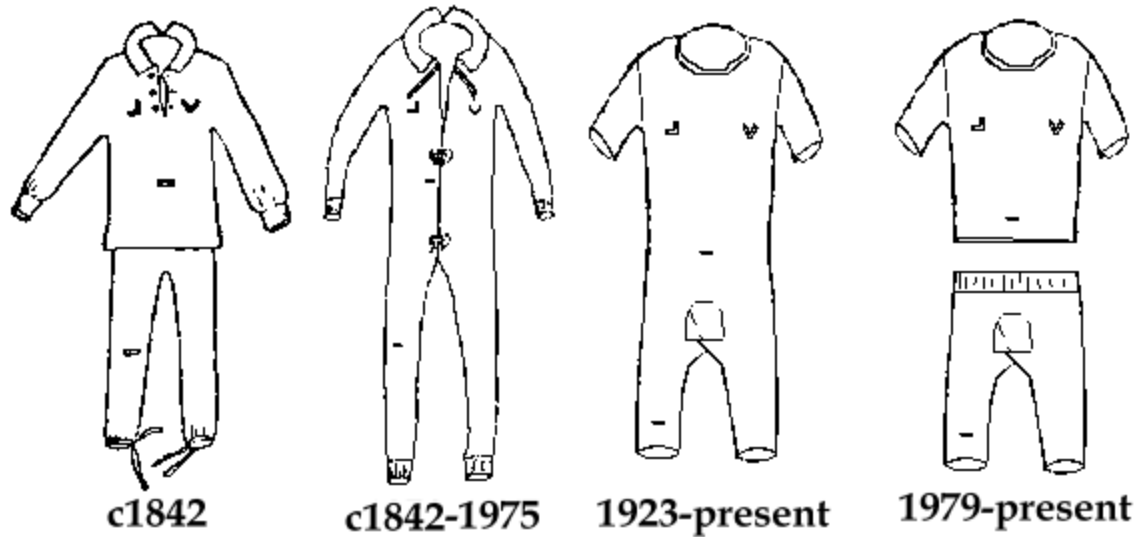
Unusual Practices:

The Saints should know that the pattern of endowment garments was revealed from Heaven and that the blessings promised in connection with wearing them will not be realized if any unauthorized change is made in their form or in the manner of wearing them.

(Prophet Joseph F. Smith,
Messages of the First Presidency 5:110, June 28 1906)

Unusual Practices:

The Evolution of the Temple Garment



<http://www.lds-mormon.com/veilworker/endowment1.shtml>

Unusual Practices:



http://molelog.molehill.org/blomt/archives/2003/05/mormon_garments.html

Unusual Practices:

James Spencer's testimony on how the higher up he got in Mormonism, the more drastically different it was from the simple public relations picture the church put out in paid advertisements.

Famous Mormons

Mormons are to be found in high-ranking positions in government and business.

Allan O'Bryant, President, AFLAC International

Gary Ely, Chairman, Avista Corp.

Gary Crittenden, CFO and Exec. VP, American Express

Nolan D. Archbald, CEO, Black and Decker

Jonathan C. Coon, President & CEO, 1-800-Contacts

Kevin B. Rollins, Vice Chairman, Dell Computers

J.W. Marriott, Jr., Chairman, Marriott International

Stewart Nelson, COO, Novell

Mitt Romney, Governor, Massachusetts

Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services

Orrin Hatch, U.S. Senator, Utah

Evangelical Compromise:

The following are found at Christian Bookstores everywhere:

Bringing Elizabeth Home: A Journey of Faith and Hope, by Ed & Lois Smart

7 Habits series by Stephen R. Covey

How Wide the Divide?: A Mormon & an Evangelical in Conversation

by Craig L. Blomberg (Evangelical),
Stephen E. Robinson (Mormon), IVP

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Polytheism ("Plurality of Gods")
- God is not eternal
- God was once like us
- Jesus and Lucifer were brothers, and Lucifer desperately wanted to be the savior of the world
- The Holy Ghost is a member of the "godhead"
- The Holy Spirit is an impersonal force
- Men become gods based on good works and merit
- God the Father's name is Elohim and he lives on a planet near the star Kolob.

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- God the Father is married to the Mother God
- All humans are offspring of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother
- Men live on the Moon and the Sun
- Black people are colored due to misdeeds in the pre-existence
- Practice "baptism for the dead"
- Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthood
- Jesus was a polygamist and had children
- There are different levels of heaven

Overview of LDS Doctrines:

- Salvation for a woman is dependant on her husband
- works are necessary for salvation
- Temple rituals include secret handshakes, secret names, even secret undergarments
- more...

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

Remember how they see us:

- Biblically ignorant
- members of a apostatized "church"

Have them read:

- When we read they don't listen, but think about their next statement/argument

Emphasize truth over feelings:

- They trust their subjective "burning in the bosom"
- The Bible tells us to test and prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21, Acts 17:11, 1 John 4:1)

Tips on Witnessing to a Mormon:

Show the Book of Mormon as unreliable:

- plagiarism
- DNA and archeological evidence against

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