

# Understanding Mormonism

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# "Understanding Mormonism" Their beliefs, and what the Bible has to say about them

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- Course Outline:**
- Week 1:** Introductions and outline presented. Brief overview of the LDS plan of eternal progression.
  - Week 2:** Eternal progression, a look at the Mormon view of God – His nature and evolution. The lie of becoming a god.
  - Week 3:** The gods of Mormonism, and the Jesus Christ of Mormonism.
  - Week 4:** Sin, atonement and forgiveness – Salvation in Mormonism.
  - Week 5:** Joseph Smith Jr. – Prophet of God, or Pretentious Pied Piper?
  - Week 6:** The Book of Mormon – Part I.
  - Week 7:** The Book of Mormon – Part II.
  - Week 8:** The Mormon view of the Bible, The inspiration, inerrancy and authority of the Bible.
  - Week 9:** The Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods – Priests, or Pretenders?
  - Week 10:** The Mormon Temple Rituals – Ordinances of Man, Masonry or Misunderstanding?
  - Week 11:** Wrap up – special topics.
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This class is comparing the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons) with the teachings of the Bible, so you are encouraged to bring your Bible for every class. We will use LDS publications and scriptures for the majority of our references, and do not advocate the use of inflammatory or disrespectful materials. It is our hope and intention to win Mormon souls for Jesus, and therefore choose to show the love of Christ towards them – loving the member of the Mormon Church, but contending vigorously against the lies of their doctrine and religion. We would follow the admonition of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2: 24-26 which says,

"... A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in **humility** correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and **that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.**"

### ***Preferred Web Sites***

1. The Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry – Matt Slick: [www.carm.org](http://www.carm.org)
2. Mormons In Transition – Institute for Religious Research: [www.irr.org/mit](http://www.irr.org/mit)
3. The Mormonism Research Ministry – Bill McKeever: [www.mrm.org](http://www.mrm.org)
4. The Utah Lighthouse Ministry – Jerald and Sandra Tanner: [www.utlm.org](http://www.utlm.org)
5. Letters To A Mormon Elder – By James R. White: [www.alphamin.org/letters/mainpage.htm](http://www.alphamin.org/letters/mainpage.htm)
6. The Mormon Temple Endowment Home Page: <http://members.aol.com/VeilWorker/endowment.index.html>
7. Recovery From Mormonism – Eric Kettunen: [www.exmormon.org](http://www.exmormon.org)

1. CARM is one of the most valuable sites I've ever been to. It's great for apologetics and information on other organizations besides the LDS Church.
2. MIT – IRR is full of well-written, deep material. Make sure to jump to the Institute for Religious Research home page too!
3. MRM – Great information and research material.
4. UTLM – Sandra Tanner's site – excellent – though somewhat difficult to navigate.
5. Alpha Internet Ministries – Letters to a Mormon Elder by James White is, perhaps, the best treatment of this subject I have ever read. He is thorough and fair, and approaches the subject out of love. **THIS IS A "MUST READ."**
6. The Mormon Temple Endowment Home Page is not for the faint of heart. You will find all of the transcripts for all of the temple ceremonies in full. It is useful to see how they continue to change the endowment, but pretty frightening to read just the same.
7. Recovery from Mormonism is a great site to help you to see that you are not alone. There are hundreds of personal accounts of why people came to the light and walked away from the Mormon Church.

### ***Recommended Reading***

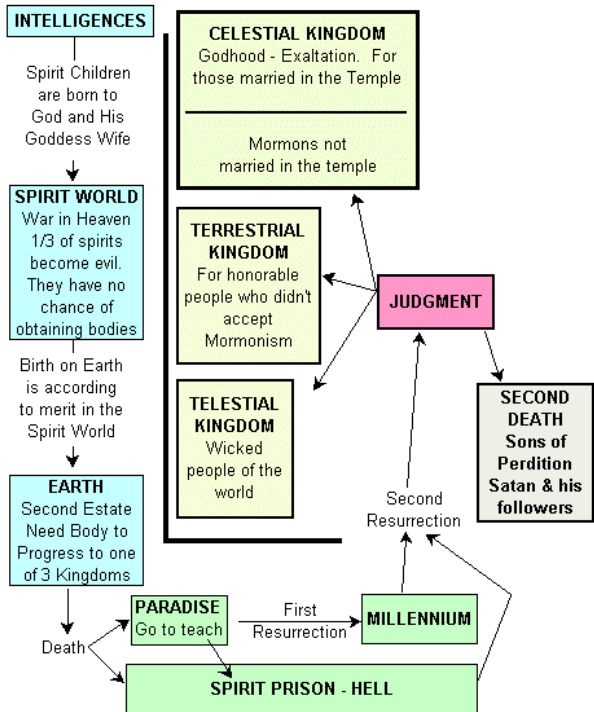
1. ***Reasoning From The Scriptures with the Mormons***, Ron Rhodes and Marian Bodine
2. ***Letters to a Mormon Elder***, James R. White
3. ***Mormonism 101***, Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson
4. ***The Case for Christ***, Lee Strobel
5. ***The Temple – Its Ministry and Services***, Alfred Edersheim
6. ***Witness to Mormons***, Concerned Christians

### ***Even MORE Preferred Web-Sites!***

1. <http://members.aol.com/exmormons/exmor.html>
2. [www.mindspring.com/~engineer\\_my\\_dna/mormon](http://www.mindspring.com/~engineer_my_dna/mormon)
3. [www.lds-mormon.com](http://www.lds-mormon.com)
4. <http://mormonism-web.com>
5. <http://teachingministry.com/index.htm>
6. [www.lds.npl.com](http://www.lds.npl.com)
7. <http://mormon.8k.com>
8. [www.exmormon.org/goodsite.htm](http://www.exmormon.org/goodsite.htm)
9. [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org)

1. A great site for a question and answer format. Lots of good information.
2. A good site if you're interested in looking at scanned-in images of the "real McCoy."
3. A veritable cornucopia of resources related to the LDS church. Be prepared to spend some time though... Lots of info to cover.
4. A good link that will take you to all kinds of places, to include all three versions of the Mormon Temple Endowment ritual...even the one where you covenant to allow your tongue to be torn from its roots.
5. More academic, but useful, none the less.
6. A good source for LDS information, from an LDS point of view. Access to publications that support LDS thinking – a real eye opener.
7. From a strictly research point of view, this site provides a non-biased look at LDS claims, and then provides the facts that refute them.
8. A great source for apologetic arguments for the truth-seeking LDS friend or family member... or for your benefit as a believing Christian that needs some materials to bolster your defense of the faith.
9. The official web site of the Mormon Church. A great resource – it has archives of all the church magazine publications, transcripts of General Conferences, and a complete on line set of all of the Mormon Scriptures – KJV Bible (complete with Joseph Smith's translations in the footnotes), the Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. There is a lot of statistical information as well as biographies of the LDS leadership.

**The Mormon Plan of Eternal Progression**

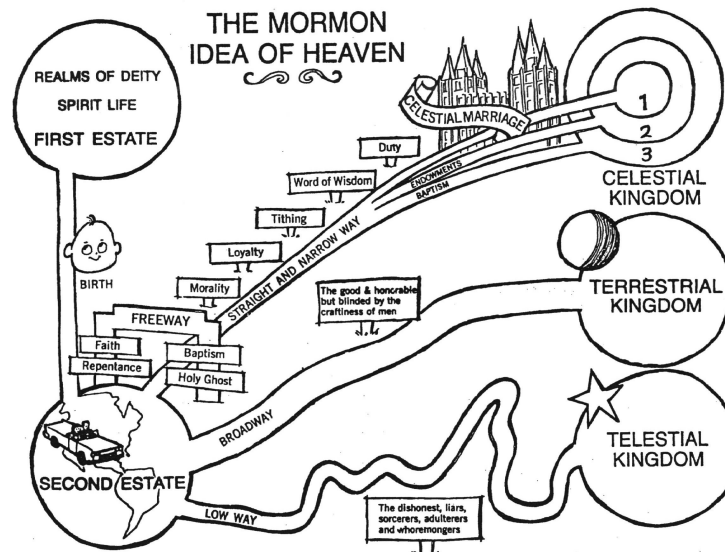


\*Look in the appendix at the back of the booklet for an LDS rendition of this

**The Christian Apologetics Research Ministry**

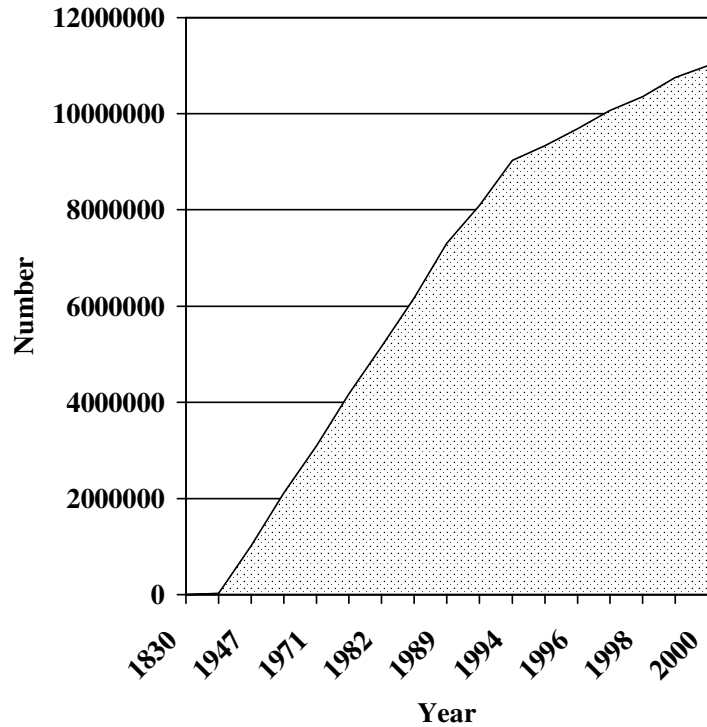
Site can be accessed at [www.carm.org](http://www.carm.org)  
 Copyright Matthew J. Slick, 1998

This is a simplified version of a diagram that was produced by the Mormon Church to visually show Primary-aged children the plan of Eternal Progression. This was created by Concerned Christians and can be found in their excellent booklet called "Witness to Mormons". This booklet is available at The Utah Lighthouse Ministry – Sandra Tanners organization.

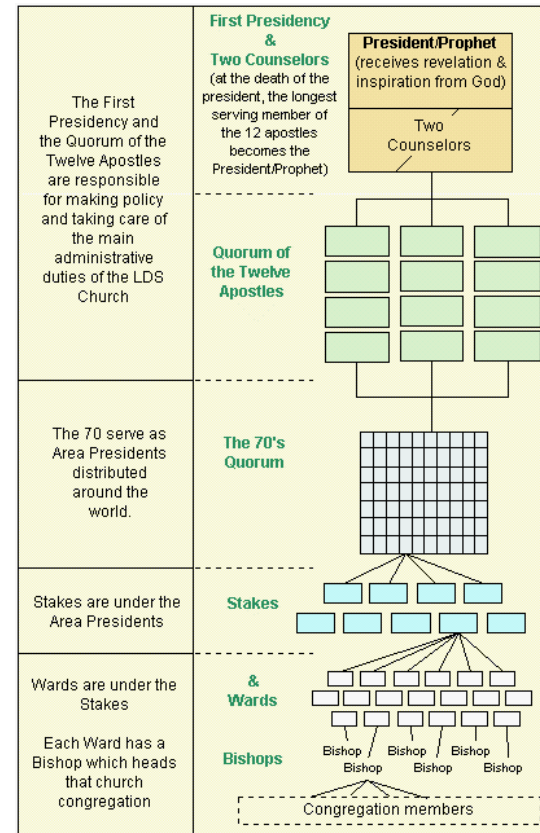


There is no doubt that the Mormon Church is growing at a phenomenal rate. The well-made, feel good television and magazine ads do have a certain appeal. And most members of the Church are decent, upstanding citizens. They work hard, are active in community and politics and are one of the biggest supporters of the Boy Scouts of America in the nation. Their family focus and stringent morals and health codes are to be respected. All of these things combine with Satan's deceptive influence to make them one of the most attractive "protestant" faiths in America. Their growth from 6 members in 1830 to a staggering reported number of over 11 million members in October of 2000 attests to the attractive nature of this cult.

**Membership Growth in the LDS Church**



**LDS Church Hierarchy**



**The Christian Apologetics Research Ministry**

Site can be accessed at [www.carm.org](http://www.carm.org)  
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## The Articles of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.
3. We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.
4. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.
6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth.
7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.
8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.
9. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.
10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.
11. We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.
12. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.
13. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

**Joseph Smith**

## Eternal Progression

**"Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where and I going?"  
The LDS view of eternity, and of becoming a god.**

**"I expect, if I am faithful, with yourselves, that I shall see the time, with yourselves, that we shall know how to prepare to organize an earth like this – know how to people that earth, how to redeem it, how to sanctify it, and how to glorify it, with those who live upon it who hearken to our counsels." "After men have got their exaltations and their crowns – have become gods, even the sons of God – are made kings of kings and lords of lords, they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit. Power is then given to them to organize the elements, and then commence the organization of tabernacles. The Father and Son have attained to this point already; I am on the way, and so are you, and every faithful servant of God."**  
Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Wistsoe, p. 98.

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### First Estate – Pre-existence

**In the Beginning... All humans are *literal* spirit children – begotten by God.**

**"Things were first created spiritually; *the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with him...*"**Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Wistsoe, p. 50.

The LDS church will teach you that even though Elohim has a body of flesh and bones, you were created as a spirit and lived with God in the pre-existence – that literally, through marital relations, you were first created spiritually: **"We are the sons and daughters of celestial beings, and the germ of the Deity dwells within us."**Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Wistsoe, p.50. This is referred to as your **First Estate**.

### The War in Heaven... Decisions, decisions – and the source of racism!!

During our first estate, there was a war in heaven, centered on a decision that God made to accept Jesus Christ's plan of Salvation instead of Lucifer's plan of forcing man into obedience, and thereby forcing them to return to God. The Mormons agree that **Isaiah 14:12 – 17** speaks of Lucifer, (who, in Mormon theology is the spirit brother of Jesus Christ). The theology diverges though with the Mormon doctrine that he presented a plan to Heavenly Father that would force all of God's children to be obedient and come back to Him. This plan was rejected in favor of Jesus', which was to come down and die for them and redeem them with his blood. Satan got angry, and drew away a third of the hosts of heaven and they became the demons, who then declared war on the angels and God.

We are taught that some of us fought valiantly...and some of us did not. **"There is a reason why one man is born black and with 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.*"**Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 61.

Joseph Fielding Smith tells us that there were no neutrals in heaven. *"All took sides either with Christ, or with Satan. Every man had his agency there and men receive rewards here based upon their actions there, just as they will receive rewards hereafter for deeds done in the body. The Negro, evidently, is receiving the reward he merits."* Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 66.

Those who are white and born into the church "under the covenant", in these latter days (since the restoration of the gospel) are considered to be the MOST valiant of all of God's spirit children, and are therefore blessed to be born in the great dispensation.

Those who followed Lucifer and rebelled, were denied bodies, and so therefore, go about seeking to "steal" bodies. A Mormon can be possessed! *"At times these fallen spirits steal possession of the bodies of men and women, overpowering the spirit who has rightful ownership. They realize what they have lost and are willing, when opportunity is given them, of possessing bodies of lower animals, so anxious are they to be clothed with flesh even for a season."* Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 65.

### **Second Estate – Mortality**

*"This mortal probation was to be a brief period, just a short span linking the eternity past with the eternity future. Yet it was to be a period of tremendous importance. It would either give to those who received it the blessing of eternal life, which is the greatest gift of God, and thus qualify them for godhood as sons and daughters of our Eternal Father, of, if they rebelled and refused to comply with the laws and ordinances which were provided for their salvation, it would deny them the great gift and they would be assigned, after the resurrection, to some inferior sphere, according to their works."* Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 69.

This mortal probation is the time for the Mormon to accomplish all of the works that will ensure that they get to the highest level of the Celestial Kingdom (see diagram from Intro class). As the Mormon does not believe in the total saving power of the grace of Jesus Christ, they are required to do several things to "qualify" them for heaven. The requirements are noble, but sorely misguided. Some of them are,

- A confessed faith in the LDS Gospel
- Repentance
- Baptism by an authorized priesthood holder
- Confirmation of the Holy Ghost, and as a member of the "true" church
- A strict adherence to a high moral code
- An absolute, unwavering loyalty to the "brethren"
- Compulsory tithing and offerings
- Observation of the "Word of Wisdom"
- Unquestioned willingness to serve in church callings
- And finally, participation in the rituals of the Mormon Temple.

ALL of these things are an absolute requirement for "salvation and exaltation" in the Kingdom. *"Mortality is the testing or proving ground for exaltation to find out who among the children of God are worthy to become Gods themselves, and the Lord has informed us that few there be that find it."* Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 69. If you are somehow capable of doing all of these things, you will be given eternal life, and the opportunity to become a god.

The State of Utah currently holds the dubious distinction of having the highest teen suicide rate in the nation. Right behind it, they hold the honor of having the second highest rate of adult female suicides. They have the highest number of people in the nation on Prozac, and the highest rate of adults on maintenance medications for clinical depression. The State of Utah is roughly 80% LDS – all of them are expected to "work out their own salvation".

### **The Lie of Becoming A God**

Since ancient times, man has always wanted to attain godhood. The Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Romans, (and now the Mormons) believed that it was possible for man to advance in knowledge and power to the point that they would attain divine attributes and become gods. History is full of story after story of man being endowed with godhood – for heroic deeds, or conquests, or extreme acts of charity and compassion.

Recent history is full of people claiming to be gods, or possessing the power to become gods. David Koresh, the Reverend Jim Jones, and the Reverend Sung Myung Moon are just a few examples. What makes Mormonism's claim of divine potential so dangerous is that it is couched in happy, feel good metaphors that mask the true non-Christian theology behind it.

Joseph Smith taught, in his famous King Follett discourse, that God was once a man. *"I will go back to the beginning, before the world was, to show what kind of a being God is. What sort of a being was God in the beginning? Open your ears and hear, all ye ends of the earth; for I am going to prove it to you by the Bible, and to tell you the designs of God in relation to the human race, and why he interferes with the affairs of man. God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens. That is the great secret. If the veil was rent to-day, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible, -- I say, if you were to see him to-day, you would see him like a man in form -- like yourselves, in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image, and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked, and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another. In order to understand the subject of the dead, for the consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary that we should understand the character and being of God, and how he came to be so; for 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 will take away and do away the veil, so that you may see."* Joseph Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, Number 1, pp 1 –11

Lorenzo Snow took this doctrine and came up with this couplet to explain the nature and origin of God: **"As man is, God once was; as God is, man can become."** (We will explore the nature of the Mormon ideas of God in a later class.)

Thus, we come full circle. If a member of the Mormon Church is somehow able to live up to the unrealistic expectations of their beliefs, they attain godhood, and can then create their own worlds and spirit children, and start the entire process over again – hence, "Eternal Progression."

## Mormon Teaching

### Pre-existence:

**Jeremiah 1:5** – If God knew Jeremiah before he was born, then we all existed before.

**John 17:5** – The Mormons use this passage to prove that Jesus existed before the world was – and in that he is our elder brother, we must have existed too!

**Acts 17: 28 – 29** – This passage says that we are his “offspring”. That must indicate that we were born as spirit children to a Heavenly Mother and Father.

### Attaining God-hood:

**Romans 8: 16 – 17** – Mormons will use this verse to suggest the ultimate result of eternal progression, to become a god.

## Biblical Teaching

### Pre-existence:

The word “know” in the Hebrew (*yada*) indicates God’s act of making Jeremiah a special object of His special sovereign choice – NOT of having known him as a spirit child.

**Jeremiah 27:5** – This verse tells us that God *created* man – not *pro-created* him!

**Genesis 2:7** – This passage reveals that the spirit of man and his physical form were created at the same time.

**1 Corinthians 15:46** – Tells us that the natural is first, then the spiritual.

**John 3: 13, 31** – This tells us that the only “man” that existed before was Jesus.

**John 8: 23 – 24** – Tells us that Jesus is from above, and that we are from below.

This scripture is taken out of context. Closer reading of the passage will reveal that Paul is calling us the offspring of God because, as he states earlier in **17: 24,26** that God made all nations of one blood and that for that reason, and that God created us, we are considered His offspring.

**Malachi 2:10** – States that we have one father, and that he *created us!*

There is no biblical support whatsoever of a “heavenly mother”.

**John 1:12, Galatians 4: 4 – 6** – tells us that we become the “sons of God” when we believe, and that we are his children through adoption – **not birth**.

### Attaining God-hood:

This verse is also taken out of context – we cannot become children of God as the result of progression. We become the children of God by *adoption*. (See **Rom 8:15**).

Paul was a devout monotheist. Look at **Acts 14: 8 – 15** for an example of how repulsive the idea that we can become gods was to Paul.

**Acts 12: 21 – 23** – Herod discovered how God feels about human pretenders who do not give honor and glory to God.

**Exodus 9: 13 –14** – God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that there is none like him in all the earth.

**Isaiah 44:8** – No other God

**Isaiah 43:10** – No Gods before, or after our God.

**Alma 11: 22 – 31** – Only one God! (B of M reference)

## Mormon Teaching

**Matthew 5:48** – Mormons use this verse to argue that if God suggested that we can be perfect, *we can be perfect!* This road ultimately leads to Godhood.

## Biblical Theology

**Matthew 5:48** – When taken in context, we see that Jesus is talking about the law of love. The Jewish leaders taught that we should love those near to us, and hate our enemies. Jesus, on the other hand, taught that we should love everyone, and that God’s love extends to all people, and since God is our righteous standard, we should seek to imitate his example. We are to be “perfect” *in showing love* just as He is perfect in showing love. This passage has NOTHING to do with *perfection* and becoming a God.

**Matthew 12:34** – We are, by nature, EVIL!

**Mark 7: 20 – 23** – We are capable of great wickedness.

**Luke 19:10** – We are lost.

**Luke 15:10** – We are sinners.

**Mark 1:15** – We are in need of repentance.

**John 3:3,5,7** – We need to be born again.

**Hebrews 10:14** – Christ became *perfect* for all of us.

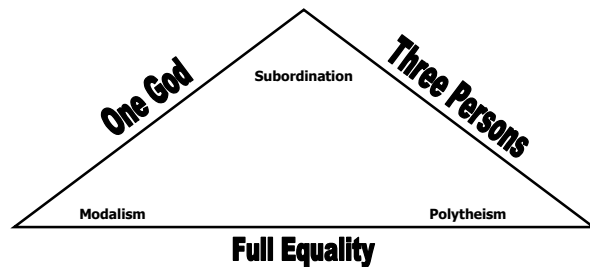
**James 2:10** – Tells us that if we keep the law, yet offend in one point, we are guilty of all. The Mormon needs to know that Jesus paid the price, and became the perfect sacrifice for us. There is no way that we can be perfect.

**God, Jesus Christ, Jehovah, Elohim (etc. etc.)  
The Anthropomorphic\* Theology of the LDS Church**

"**God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens.** That is the great secret. If the veil was rent to-day, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible, -- I say, if you were to see him to-day, you would see him like a man in form -- like yourselves, in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image, and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked, and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another. In order to understand the subject of the dead, for the consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary that we should understand the character and being of God, and how he came to be so; **for 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 will take away and do away the veil, so that you may see.** These are incomprehensible ideas to some; but they are simple. It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and **that 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.**" Joseph Smith (*Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6 pp.1 – 11*)

"This explains the mystery. If we should take a million worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that **there are more Gods than there are particles of matter in those worlds.**" Orson Pratt (LDS Apostle), (*Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2 p. 345*) AND "We were begotten by our Father in Heaven; **the person of our Father in Heaven was begotten by a still more ancient Father and so on, from generation to generation, from one heavenly to another still more ancient, until our minds are wearied and lost in the multiplicity of generations and successive worlds, and as a last resort we wonder in our minds, how far back the genealogy extends, and how the first world was formed and the first Father was begotten.**" (*The Seer, p. 132*)

In James R. White's *Letters to a Mormon Elder*, he explains the aspects of the trinity like this: If you deny one aspect of the trinity, the remaining sides point to the resultant theology.



**One God (Jehovah/Elohim)**

*All verses from the King James Version of the Bible (KJV)*

**Deuteronomy 6:4** "Hear, O Israel: The **LORD** our **God** *is* one **LORD**" Commonly called the Shema... (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Deuteronomy 4:35, 39** "Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the **LORD** he *is* **God**; **there is none else beside him**... Know therefore this day, and consider *it* in thine heart, that the **LORD** he *is* **God** in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: **there is none else.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Deuteronomy 32:39** "See now that I, *even* I, *am* he, and **there is no god with me**: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand."

**2 Samuel 7:22** "Wherefore thou art great, O **LORD God**: **for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee**, according to all that we have heard with our ears." (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**1 Chronicles 17:20** "O **LORD, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee**, according to all that we have heard with our ears." (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Psalms 83:18** "That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* **Jehovah**, *art* the most high over all the earth." (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah)

**Psalms 86:10** "For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: **thou art God alone.**" (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Isaiah 43:10** "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.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Isaiah 44:6 – 8** "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.** <sup>7</sup>And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. <sup>8</sup>Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it*? ye *are* even my witnesses. **Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Isaiah 44:24** "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**;" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah)

**Isaiah 45:5 – 6** "I *am* the **LORD**, and **there is none else, there is no God beside me**: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: <sup>6</sup>That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that **there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Isaiah 45:18** "For thus saith the **LORD** that created the heavens; **God** himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the **LORD**; and **there is none else.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**Isaiah 45:21 – 22** "Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the **LORD**? and **there is no God else beside me**; a just **God** and a **Saviour**; **there is none beside me.**  
<sup>22</sup>Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* **God**, and **there is none else.**" (Stongs #3068 Y'ehovah) (Stongs #430 Elohiym) (Saviour: Stongs #3467 *vasha*) means to save or be delivered)

**Isaiah 46:9 – 10** "Remember the former things of old: for I *am* **God**, and **there is none else**; I *am* **God**, and **there is none like me**, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Stongs #430 Elohiym)

**1 Corinthians 8:4** "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one."

**Ephesians 4:4 – 6** "There *is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.**"

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

**1 John 5:7** "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and **these three are one.**"

#### ***Verses from the Book of Mormon (BOM)***

**Mosiah 15: 1 – 4** "And now Abinadi said unto them: I would that ye should understand that **God himself shall come down among the children of men and shall redeem his people.** And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son – The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son – **And they are one God, yea the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth.**"

#### **Mormon Teaching**

##### **God is an exalted man**

"God himself was once as we are now, and is an *exalted man*, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens. That is the great secret. If the veil was rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible, - I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form – like yourselves, in all person, image and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from and walked and talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another. ...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 will take away and do away with the veil, so that you may see. ...Here then is eternal life – to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you, - namely by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one, - from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power." Joseph Smith March 9, 1844

##### **God has a body of flesh and bones**

"The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us." D&C 130:22

#### **Biblical Teaching**

##### **God has always existed**

"You are my witnesses," says the Lord, "And My chosen servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. *Before me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. I even I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior*" Isaiah 43:10-11

"I am the First and the Last; *Besides Me there is no God.*" Isaiah 44:6

"...And *there is no other God besides Me. A just God and Savior; There is none besides Me. Look to Me and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God and there is no other!*" Isaiah 45:21-22

"For I am God and *there is no other*; I am God and *there is none like Me.*" Isaiah 46:9

"yet for us *there is only one God*, the Father, of whom are all things and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live." 1 Cor. 8:6

"one Lord, one faith, one baptism; *one God and Father of all*, who is above all and through all and in you all" Eph 4:5-6

"Hear O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is One!" Deut. 6:4

*Psalms 90:2, Malachi 3:6, Numbers 23:19, Hosea 11:9, Jeremiah 23:24, 2Chronicles 6:18*

##### **God is a spirit**

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through

Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Colossians 1:15-17

"because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they become fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things." Romans 1:21-23

#### **God was Adam – was Michael**

"And also with Michael, or Adam, the *Father of All*, the *Prince of All*, the *Ancient of Days*." D&C 27:11

"Spring Hill is named by the Lord Adam-on-di-Ahman, because, said he, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the prophet." D&C 116

(Daniel 7:9-22 – The vision of the Ancient of Days)

#### **God can be seen by man**

"It no sooner had appeared (*the pillar of light*) than I found myself delivered from the enemy that held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other – This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him!" Joseph Smith History 1:17

"For without this (*the LDS priesthood*) no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live." D&C 84:22

#### **God was NOT Adam OR Michael**

"God is not a man that He should lie, Nor the son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken and will He not make it good?" Numbers 23:19

#### **No man can see God – He's invisible!**

"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." John 1:18

"Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father" John 6:46

"No one has seen God at any time." 1 John 4:12

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." Colossians 1:15

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God, who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." 1 Timothy 1:17

"...who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen." 1 Timothy 6:16

#### **Seven things the Bible tells us about God:**

- 1. HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN GOD – in the past and in the future:** Habakkuk 1:12, Malachi 3:6, Psalms 90:2, Numbers 23:19, Romans 1:22-25. *The LDS god started as a finite man and progressed to godhood.*
- 2. HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HOLY – in the past and in the future:** Deuteronomy 32:4, Hosea 11:9, Psalms 145:17, 1 John 1:5, Psalms 119:142. *The LDS god achieved holiness.*
- 3. GOD IS ALL KNOWING – in the past and in the future:** Isaiah 40:13, 14, 28, Psalms 147:4 *The LDS god had to learn everything.*
- 4. GOD IS ALL POWERFUL:** Revelation 19:6, Romans 1:20 *The LDS god attained his power.*
- 5. GOD IS OMNIPRESENT:** Isaiah 66:1, Jeremiah 23: 23 – 24 *The LDS god can only be in one place at a time.*
- 6. GOD ACTED ALONE IN THE CREATION:** Isaiah 44:24, Psalms 33:6, Nehemiah 9:6 *The LDS god cooperated with the Council of Gods to create.*
- 7. THERE ARE NO OTHER GODS:** Isaiah 43:10 – 11, Isaiah 44: 6 & 8, Isaiah 46: 5 & 9, Isaiah 42:8 *The LDS god evolved to his current status as godhood, and was only one in an infinite line of gods.*

Core to the LDS religion are the beliefs that man can eternally progress, and eventually, provided they keep all of the commandments, become gods. This is a belief that is instilled in them from childhood throughout their lives. Recently while speaking with a devout member of the LDS church, I was told that if all there was to heaven was being with and praising Jesus Christ forever and forever that *they didn't want to have any part of it*. They said if there wasn't more to it than that, *they didn't want to be in heaven!* On another occasion, I was listening to the conversation of three Mormons on the train to work. They were talking about how that even though "Johnny" had died before he could accept the Gospel and be baptized, but that was OK because he would have another opportunity on the other side of the veil!

These are examples of how deeply they believe that they will have the opportunity to progress in knowledge and understanding until they eventually become gods. This is obviously an area that required careful stepping, and gentle reproof.

**\*ANTHROPOMORPHIC:** The attribution of human characteristics and feelings to non-human beings, objects or natural phenomena.

*From the Greek "anthropo" (with human feeling)+ morphus (manlike appearance).*

## ***Sin, Atonement, and Forgiveness***

### **Salvation in the Mormon Church**

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#### **SIN – Or lack thereof**

The LDS Church teaches that the fall of Adam was a blessing – he didn't "sin", rather, he "transgressed" God's commandments:

*"Latter-day Saints hold quite a different concept of the Fall from the traditional point of view...In our belief, the Fall of Man was not a misfortune. **God's plan did not go awry in the beginning. Adam was not a sinner who plunged mankind into a depraved and utterly helpless condition...Adam and Eve were not sinners in the traditional sense of the word.** We believe God gave them a choice of remaining in the pre-mortal state or of taking on mortality with its attendant opportunities and suffering. They were given a choice between two conditions. They could obey the laws of their "pre-mortal" natures and remain free from death and moral responsibility associated with mortality, or they could become mortal and subject to death and learn the hard lessons of life. Adam and Eve chose the courageous role, **the one that God wanted them to choose.** They "broke" the law of their pre-mortal life, becoming mortal and subject to death...Just how they became mortal, we do not know. But of one thing we are sure, they were not sinners."*

Lowell L. Bennion, *An Introduction to The Gospel*, pp. 136, 137

In the *Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. I*, Joseph Fielding Smith teaches that Adam committed a *transgression* rather than a *sin*, and that God gave Adam and Eve a *choice* to keep the commandment to not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He quotes the book of Moses, part of the Pearl of Great Price, the fourth Mormon book of scripture, which says, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, *nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself.*" Compare this to what we find in Genesis 2: 16 – 17 which says, "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: *for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" Notice the difference?

The Book of Mormon looks at the fall of man this way:

*"And now behold, if Adam had not transgressed, he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the Garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. **Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.**"* 2 Nephi 2:22 – 25.

Even Adam and Eve allegedly rejoiced in what they had done according to the book of Moses. It says:

*"And in that day, Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, **for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God.** And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad,*

*saying: **Were it not for our transgression we should not have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.**"*

Moses 5:10 – 11.

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#### **Atonement – Who needs the Cross?! (Or who needs a Savior for that matter?)**

As most Christians know, the LDS church does not use the cross in any way, shape or form. It will never appear on their literature, or on their church buildings. The reason why, is that the Mormon Church teaches that the cross was simply the instrument of Jesus' death, and that the atoning work of the Savior actually took place in the Garden of Gethsemane. They say that they worship a living savior, instead of glorifying the cross – the instrument used to kill an innocent man. They point to the account of the Garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22:44 where it says "...His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" as being the basis for the doctrine that the atonement took place in the garden, rather than on the cross. Only one account in the entire bible mentions this event, a medical condition known as hematomidrosis, or bloody sweat. Under great emotional stress, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. There are numerous accounts where the cross is mentioned as the instrument of atonement however – the most notable for those who discount the cross, is found in 1 Corinthians 1:18, which says *"The preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. But to those of us who are saved, it is the very power of God."*

*"Forgiveness is available because **Christ the Lord sweat great drops of blood in Gethsemane as he bore the incalculable weight of the sins of all who ever had or ever would repent.**" And "In a garden called Gethsemane, outside Jerusalem's walls, in agony beyond compare, **he took upon himself the sins of all men on condition of repentance.**" Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* pp. 337, 552.*

*"For behold, I God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and **to bleed at every pore**, and to suffer both body and spirit – and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink – Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men."* D&C 19:16 – 19.

One of the more controversial doctrines of atonement in the LDS faith is called **"Blood Atonement."** This simply means that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and the blood he shed was not sufficient for all sin. That there were sins that the blood of Jesus Christ would not atone for, that you would need to shed your own blood in order to achieve forgiveness:

*"Man may commit certain grievous sins - according to his light and knowledge - **that will place him beyond the reach of the atoning blood of Christ. If then he would be saved, he must make sacrifice of his own life to atone - so far as the power lies - for that sin, for the blood of Christ alone under certain circumstances will not avail.** Joseph Smith taught that there were certain sins so grievous that man may commit, that they will place the transgressors beyond the power of the atonement of Christ. If these offenses are committed, then the blood of Christ will not cleanse them from their sins **even though they repent**"* Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:134,138

"...You say, "That man ought to die for transgressing the law of God." *Let me suppose a case. Suppose you found your brother in bed with your wife, and put a javelin through both of them, you would be justified, and they would atone for their sins, and be received into the kingdom of God. I would at once do so in such a case; and under such circumstances, I have no wife whom I love so well that I would not put a javelin through her heart, and I would do it with clean hands.* But you who trifle with your covenants, be careful lest in judging you will be judged.

**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; and the judgments of the Almighty will come, sooner or later, and every man and woman will have to atone for breaking their covenants.**" Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, p. 243-249.

"...**There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood split upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins; and the smoking incense would atone for their sins, whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.**

*I know, when you hear my brethren telling about cutting people off from the earth, that you consider it is strong doctrine; but it is to save them, not to destroy them...*

*I know that there are transgressors, who, if they knew themselves, and the only condition upon which they can obtain forgiveness, would beg of their brethren to shed their blood, that the smoke thereof might ascend to God as an offering to appease the wrath that is kindled against them, and that the law might have its course. I will say further; I have had men come to me and offer their lives to atone for their sins.*

**It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall and those committed by men, yet men can commit sins, which it can never remit.** As it was in ancient days, so it is in our day; and though the principles are taught publicly from this stand, still the people do not understand them; yet the law is precisely the same. There are sins that can be atoned for by an offering upon an altar, as in ancient days; and there are sins that the blood of a lamb, of a calf, or of turtledoves, cannot remit, but they must be atoned for by the blood of the man." Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 51-57.

"...suppose that he is overtaken in a gross fault, that he has committed a sin that he knows will deprive him of that exaltation which he desires, and that he cannot attain to it without the shedding of his blood, and also knows that by having his blood shed he will atone for that sin, and be saved and exalted with the Gods, is there a man or woman in this house but what would say, **"shed my blood that I may be saved and exalted with the Gods?"**

*All mankind love themselves, and let these principles be known by an individual, and he would be glad to have his blood shed. That would be loving themselves, even unto an eternal exaltation. Will you love your brothers or sisters likewise, when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? That is what Jesus Christ meant."*

"...I could refer you to plenty of instances where men, have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins. I have seen scores and hundreds of people for whom there would have been a chance (in the last resurrection there will be) if their lives had been taken and their blood spilled on the ground as a smoking incense to the Almighty, but who are now angels to the devil, until our elder brother Jesus Christ raises them up—conquers death, hell, and the grave. I have known a great many men who have left this Church for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation, but if their blood had been spilled, it would have been better for them.

**The wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid this principle's being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force.**

**This is loving our neighbor as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it.** Any of you who understand the principles of eternity, if you have sinned a sin requiring the shedding of blood, except the sin unto death, would not be satisfied nor rest until your blood should be spilled, that you might gain that salvation you desire. **That is the way to love mankind.** Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 215-224.

Leaders within the church even taught that the Apostles of Jesus Christ actually exacted blood atonement from Judas Iscariot by kicking him to death! The index to the *Journal of Discourses* (26 volumes of recorded sermons by early Mormon leaders) gives seven entries under the subject of Blood Atonement. One of the more interesting is a quote from Mormon leader, Heber C. Kimball, grandfather of the late 12<sup>th</sup> Mormon President, Spencer Kimball. Kimball stated that because of Judas' betrayal of Christ, the twelve disciples *actually kicked him to death in order that he would atone for his sin.* Volume 6:125,126 reads:

*"Jesus said to His disciples, 'Ye are the salt of the earth, and if salt loses its saving principle, it is then good for nothing but to be cast out.' Instead of reading it just as it is, almost all of you read it as it is not. Jesus meant to say, 'If you have lost the saving principles, you Twelve Apostles, and you believe in my servants the Twelve, you shall be like unto the salt that has lost its saving principles: it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.'* **Judas lost that saving principle, and they took him and killed him it is said in the Bible that his bowels gushed out, but they actually kicked him until his bowels came out."**

Despite the evidence that shows that such a doctrine of blood atonement was indeed taught among the Latter-day Saints in the 1800's, Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie insists that enemies of the Mormon Church fabricated the idea that it was actually taught and practiced:

*"From the days of Joseph Smith to the present, wicked and evilly-disposed persons have fabricated false and slanderous stories to the effect that the Church, in the early days of this dispensation, engaged in a practice of blood atonement where the blood of apostates and others was shed by the Church as an atonement for their sins ... there is not one historical instance of so-called blood atonement in this dispensation, nor has there been one event or occurrence whatever, of any nature, from which the slightest inference arises that any such practice either existed or was taught."* Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pg. 92.

There is well-documented evidence that this is simply not the case. On September 8, 1857, the Mountain Meadow Massacre was led a zealous disciple of Brigham Young named John D. Lee. Lee was ordered by President Brigham Young to oversee the killing of the settlers from

Arkansas by leading a group of Mormons and Indians against the wagon train. 127 innocent men, women and children were slaughtered on orders from the leadership of the church. Once the massacre became common knowledge – even in Washington DC, Lee was abandoned by Young and the brethren, excommunicated and set up to be the scape-goat for the whole crime. Young is reported to have told the brethren of the church that the only way that Lee could atone for his “sin” was to allow his own blood to be spilt. After having been excommunicated from the church, Lee spent 19 years wandering and hiding in the wilderness until a “faithful” member of the church betrayed him to Federal troops. On March 23, 1877, while sitting on his own coffin, and after having dug his own grave, Lee fearlessly faced a firing squad – but not before being comforted and blessed by a *Methodist* Minister. Upon hearing that Lee had, indeed allowed his own blood to be spilled, Young is reported as having said that this act of contrition would secure “Brother” Lee a place in the Kingdom of God, and that he had been forgiven. (A more complete account of these proceedings can be found in Thelma Geer’s *Mormonism, Mama & Me*. Geer was a great grand-daughter of Lee)

McConkie then proceeded to accuse critics of taking one sentence from one page and another from a succeeding page and even by taking a part of a sentence on one page and a part of another found several pages away --all wholly torn from context - dishonest persons have attempted to make it appear that Brigham Young and others taught things just the opposite of what they really believed and taught.

After making such an adamant denial, McConkie, on the same page no less, makes a remarkable turnabout! *“But under certain circumstances there are some serious sins for which the cleansing blood of Christ does not operate, and the law of God is that men must then have their own blood shed to atone for their sins”* Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pg. 92.

On page 93 of the same book, McConkie quotes his father-in-law, Joseph Fielding Smith, and church founder Joseph Smith, Jr. Both taught there are some offenses for which a sinner must atone for his sins by shedding his own blood. McConkie went on to write, *“This doctrine can only be practiced in its fullness in a day when the civil and ecclesiastical laws are administered in the same hands.”* (In that the LDS faith believes that one day this arrangement of law will exist – and that THEY will exercise it, you might want to take this thought seriously.)

The one thing that’s ironic in this belief is that the blood of God – a sinless being (even in Mormon theology) isn’t powerful enough save you from your sins, **yet it implies that the blood of sinful man can finish the job and substitute for sin where God’s blood fails!**

Go to the following web site for a great treatment on the Atonement:  
<http://www.mrm.org/articles/blood-atonement.html>

## Forgiveness

The LDS concept of obtaining forgiveness of sin is often a long protracted experience. Instead of trusting in the all-cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, they have a detailed process that all members of the church are expected to follow. Consider this quote by Spencer W. Kimball:

*“There is no **royal road to repentance**, no privileged path to forgiveness. Every man must follow the same course whether he be rich or poor, educated or untrained, tall or short, prince or pauper, king or commoner...**There is only one way. It is a long way spiked with thorns and briars and pitfalls and problems**”* Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 149

The members of the church are expected to follow a seven step process to repentance in order to obtain forgiveness from the Lord – and from their locally appointed priesthood authority. The idea of confessing your sins to the Lord, and those injured by your actions and turning away from the sin, leaving it at the cross is foreign to the average Mormon. These are the seven required steps:

1. WE MUST RECOGNIZE OUR SINS “The first step on the road to repentance is to admit to ourselves that we have sinned. If we do not admit to ourselves that we have done wrong, we cannot repent...As we learn truth from error, we must examine our lives and admit the things we do that are wrong”
2. WE MUST FEEL SORROW FOR OUR SINS “In addition to recognizing our sins, we must also have feelings of sincere sorrow for what we have done. We must come to feel that our sins are disgusting and loathsome.”
3. WE MUST FORSAKE OUR SINS “Our sincere sorrow should lead us to forsake (stop) our sinning. It does little good to admit that we have sinned if we do not stop the evil thing.”
4. WE MUST CONFESS OUR SINS “Confessing our sins is very important. The Lord has commanded that we confess them...We cannot hide any act of our lives from ourselves or from the Lord. We must confess all our sins to him. In addition, serious sins, such as adultery, fornication, and robbery, which might affect our standing in the Church must be confessed to the proper priesthood authority.”
5. WE MUST MAKE RESTITUTION “Part of repentance is to make restitution. This means that insofar as possible we must make right any wrong that we have done...**If we do these things, then when we are judged by God our sins will not be mentioned to us.**”
6. WE MUST FORGIVE OTHERS “A vital part of repentance is to forgive those who have sinned against us. The Lord will not forgive us unless our hearts are fully cleansed of all hate, bitterness and bad feelings against our fellowmen.”
7. WE MUST KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD “To make our repentance complete we must always keep the commandments of the Lord. **A person is not fully repentant who does not pay his tithes, or does not keep the Sabbath day holy, or refused to obey the Word of Wisdom. He is not repentant if he does not sustain the authorities of the Church and does not love the Lord or his fellowmen. A man who fails to have his family prayers and**

**who is unkind to his family and others is surely not repentant.** When a persons is repentant, his life changes." *Gospel Principles*, pp. 121 – 122

Even after following all seven steps, your forgiveness is never assured in the Mormon Church. Consider this final quote"

"Repentance means not only to convict yourself of the horror of the sin, but to confess it, abandon it, and restore to all who have been damaged to the total extent possible; **then spend the balance of your lives trying to live the commandments of the Lord so he can eventually pardon you and cleanse you.**" Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 200

#### Mormon Teaching

##### **SIN – Adam didn't "sin"...through sin came life**

"And now behold, if Adam had not **transgressed**, he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the Garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy." *2 Nephi 2:22 – 25.*

"And in that day, Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we should not have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient." *Moses 5:10 – 11.*

#### Biblical Teaching

##### **ALL are sinners – Adam SINNED! Death is the result of sin**

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so **death** passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" *Romans 5:12*

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." *Romans 5:19 – 21*

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" *Romans 3:23*

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *Romans 5:6 - 8*

#### **ATONEMENT – Gethsemane – NOT Calvary**

"Forgiveness is available because Christ the Lord sweat great drops of blood in Gethsemane **as he bore the incalculable weight of the sins of all who ever had or ever would repent.**" And "In a garden called Gethsemane, outside Jerusalem's walls, in agony beyond compare, **he took upon himself the sins of all men on condition of repentance.**" Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* pp. 337, 552

"For behold, I God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; **Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore,** and to suffer both body and spirit – and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink – Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men." *D&C 19:16 – 19.*

"Christians speak often of the blood of Christ and its cleansing power. Much that is believed and taught on this subject, however, **is such utter nonsense and so palpably false that to believe it is to lose one's salvation. For instance, many believe or pretend to believe that if we confess Christ with our lips and avow that we accept him as our personal Savior, we are thereby saved. They say that his blood, without any other act than mere belief, makes us clean!**" *What the Mormons Think About Christ*, pp. 19-20

#### **FORGIVENESS - Uncertain**

Mormons are never assured that they are forgiven. They often carry the load of sin their entire lives.

#### **On the CROSS, at CALVARY!**

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." *John 19:30*

"For this is my blood of the new testament, **which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**" *Matthew 26:28*

"For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell; And, **having made peace through the blood of his cross,** by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say,* whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven." *Colossians 1:19 –20*

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **nailling it to his cross.**" *Colossians 2: 13 – 14*

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers, **but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot**" *1 Peter 1: 17 – 19*

"**For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**" *1 Corinthians 1:18*

#### **FORGIVEN – Period**

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *1 John 1:9*

## Joseph Smith Jr.

*Prophet of God, or Pretentious Pied Piper?*

"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**. If Joseph Smith was a deceiver, who willfully attempted to mislead the people, then he should be exposed; his claims should be refuted, and his doctrines shown to be false, for the doctrines of an impostor cannot be made to harmonize in all particulars with divine truth. If his claims and declarations were built upon fraud and deceit, there would appear many errors and contradictions, which would be easy to detect. **The doctrines of false teachers will not stand the test when tried by the accepted standards of measurement, the scriptures.**" Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation, 1:188*

**Joseph is nothing new... we are told that 'false prophets' will come.**

"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, **who will secretly bring in destructive heresies**, even denying the Lord who brought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed." *2 Peter 2:1 – 2*

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth." *1 Timothy 4:1 – 3*

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves... Many will say to Me in that day 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" *Matthew 7:15, 22 – 23.*

Other examples of 'false prophets' from the same era are Mary Baker Eddy, the founder and prophet of the *Church of Christ, Scientists*, Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the *Jehovah's Witnesses* and Ellen G. White, the founder of the *Seventh Day Adventist*. Like Joseph Smith, they all claimed to have founded the one true Christian church on the earth, and have all written some kind of book that is revered as canonized scripture by their followers.

**Examples of Joseph's Failed Prophecies...**

*There are numerous examples of failed prophecies given by the founder of the LDS Church. Most of these are explained away, deemed as 'non-prophetic' utterances, or covered up completely. Here are but a few:*

**The Coming of the Lord** – "President Smith then stated that the meeting had been called because God had commanded it; and it was made known to him by vision and by the Holy Spirit... it was the will of God that they should be ordained to the ministry and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, for the coming of the Lord, which was nigh – even fifty six years should wind up the scene." *History of the Church, Vol. 2, page 182*

This prophesy of Joseph Smith was recorded by Oliver Cowdery in 1835. 1891 marked the fifty-sixth anniversary of this false prophesy. Obviously, Jesus did not return in 1891.

**David W. Patten to serve a mission** – "Verily, thus saith the Lord; It is wisdom in my servant David W. Patten, that he settle up all his business as soon as he possibly can, and make disposition of his merchandise, that he may perform a mission unto me **next spring**, in company with others, even twelve including himself, **to testify of my name and bear glad tidings unto the world.**" *Doctrine and Covenants 114:1*

Joseph Smith gave this prophecy on April 17, 1838. But, while leading a group of Mormons in a charge against the mobs in Missouri at the battle of Crooked River on October 25, 1838, Patten was mortally wounded and died – never serving the mission. In the book *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* by Joseph's brother, Hyrum, we find the following explanation: "His mission was on the other side of the veil" *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, page 739. While most Mormons will tell you this, there are a couple nagging questions to be answered – such as, did the other eleven men who were supposed to accompany Patten on his mission die and go to serve a mission in the 'spirit world' as well? How do you define "spring" in the spirit world? Are there seasons there? And lastly, the revelation says that Patten would "testify of my name and bear glad tidings unto all the world," not "...all the **spirit** world." This is a revelation dealing with an earthly mission in the spring of 1839 – NOT a mission to the spirit world in the fall of 1838.

**The United States Government to be overthrown in a few years** – "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; Millennial Star, 22:455*

Joseph Smith made this prophesy on May 6, 1843. The United States Government has never redressed the wrongs committed against the Mormon people in Missouri, and 156 years later, the U.S. Government still stands.

**Congress to be broken up as a government** – "While discussing the petition to Congress, I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them, and there shall be nothing left of them – not even a grease spot." *Millennial Star, Vol. 22, page 455. See also History of the Church, Vol. 6, page 116*, (though when this prediction was incorporated into the official history, Mormon Church leaders decided to leave out the "grease spot" part.)

The petition was not heard, nor was protection granted. *Deseret News*, Vol. 1, page 59. Yet, Congress was never broken up and continues to function to this day.

**New York, Albany and Boston to be destroyed if they reject the Mormon "gospel"** – "Nevertheless, let the bishop go unto the city of New York, also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the gospel with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolishment which await them if they do reject these things. For if they do reject these things, the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate." *Doctrine and Covenants 84:114 –115*

Newell K. Whitney, the bishop referred to here, and Joseph Smith went to New York, Albany and Boston and preached there. These cities did not accept the gospel, and still stand to this day.

**Thomas Marsh to be exalted and preach the gospel to every creature on earth who had not yet heard it** – “Nevertheless, inasmuch as thou hast abased thyself, thou shalt be exalted; therefore, all thy sins are forgiven thee” (v. 3); “And by thy word many high ones shall be brought low, and by thy word, many low ones shall be exalted.” (v. 8); “I know thy heart, and have heard thy prayers concerning thy brethren...” (v. 11); “But purify your heart before me; and then go ye into all the world, and preach my gospel unto every creature who has not received it.” **Doctrine and Covenants 112**

Apparently, Jesus Christ didn't really know Thomas Marsh's heart. Less than two years later, on March 17, 1839, Marsh was excommunicated and became a bitter enemy of the Mormon Church for many years. Sometime later he repented, and rejoined the church, but this prophecy was never fulfilled.

**Prophecy about George Miller** – “And again, verily I say unto you, my servant George Miller is without guile; he may be trusted because of the integrity of his heart; and for the love which he has to my testimony I, the Lord, love him...Let no man despise my servant George, for he shall honor me.” **Doctrine and Covenants 124:20 – 21**

God is no respecter of persons. And apparently, he was mistaken about George's integrity and willingness to honor God – George Miller was disfellowshipped by the Mormon Church on December 3, 1848!

There are numerous other examples of Joseph's failing as a prophet. Excellent materials on his failed prophecies can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.exmormon.org/prophet.htm>

<http://www.irr.org/mit/jsfalpro.html>

<http://www.alphamin.org/letters/letter07.html>

You draw your own conclusions after reading the following:

*“If there arises among you a prophet or dreamer of dreams an he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying ‘Let us go after other gods which you have not known, and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to now whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul...**But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God...**” Deuteronomy 13:1 – 5*

*“But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, **that prophet shall die.** And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’ – when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, **if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.**” Deuteronomy 18:20 – 22*

*“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” 2 Corinthians 11:13 – 15*

For a great example of what happens to a false prophet, read about Hananiah in Jeremiah 28.

For exposing these lies, YOU are considered a ‘false prophet’ by the leadership of the Mormon Church!

*Consider the following quote given by Elder M. Russell Ballard, Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in his address given during an LDS General Conference entitled “Beware of False Prophets and False Teachers”:*

*“Now let me give you a few examples of the false teachings of those who read by the lamps of their own conceit, who, though “ever learning” are “never able to come to the knowledge of truth” (2 Timothy 3:7). False prophets and false teachers are those who declare that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a duplicitous deceiver; they challenge the First Vision as an authentic experience. They declare that the Book of Mormon and other canonical works are not ancient records of scripture. They also attempt to redefine the nature of the Godhead, and they deny that God has given and continues to give revelation today to His ordained and sustained prophets... Regardless of which particular false doctrines they teach, false prophets and false teachers are an inevitable part of the last days. “False prophets,” according to the Prophet Joseph Smith, “always arise to oppose the true prophets”. **Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 365** However, in the Lord's Church, there is no such thing as “loyal opposition.” One is either for the kingdom of God and stands in defense of God's prophets and apostles, or one stands opposed.”*

*So, in conclusion I ask you to answer which of the choices offered in the first quote given is accurate? Was Joseph Smith “a prophet of God, divinely called, properly appointed and commissioned” or “the biggest frauds this world has ever seen?” If you chose the latter, then, “he should be exposed; his claims should be refuted, and his doctrines shown to be false, for the doctrines of an impostor cannot be made to harmonize in all particulars with divine truth. If his claims and declarations were built upon fraud and deceit, there [will] appear many errors and contradictions, which [are] easy to detect. The doctrines of false teachers will not stand the test when tried by the accepted standards of measurement, the scriptures.”*

## The Book of Mormon

### ***Another Testament of Jesus Christ – Or A Dubious Witness? Part I***

"...I told the brethren 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." Joseph Smith, Introduction to the Book of Mormon

"We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; **we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.**" *The Eighth Article of Faith*

#### ***What is the Book of Mormon?***

According to the LDS Church, the Book of Mormon (BoM) is a sacred book of scripture, chronicling the migration of a groups of Jews from Jerusalem to Central and South America in about 600 BC, and another group, called the Jaredites, that left the old world at the time the Lord confused the languages of man at the tower of Babel. The first group eventually split into two major civilizations, the Nephites and the Lamanites, and proceeded, through a series of major battles, to eliminate the Nephites, and scatter the Lamanites across North, Central and South America.

Ezra Taft Benson, a Prophet of the Mormon Church had this to say about the Book of Mormon: "The Lord Himself has stated that the Book of Mormon contains the 'fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ' (**D&C 20:8-9** – "...to translate the Book of Mormon; **Which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also...**). *That does not mean it contains every teaching, every doctrine ever revealed. Rather, it means that in the Book of Mormon we will find the fullness of those doctrines required for our salvation. And they are taught plainly and simply so that even children can learn the ways of salvation and exaltation.*" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1986, p. 6).

#### ***How did Joseph Smith obtain the Book of Mormon?***

**According to Joseph Smith**, he received an angelic visitation in the fall of 1823. We find his narrative in the front of the BoM entitled "Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith," as it is included with "The Testimony of the Three Witnesses," and "The Testimony of the Eight Witnesses." (See the resources section in the back of the pamphlet) He states that "while [he] was in the act of calling upon God, [he] discovered a light appearing in [his] room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday..."

A deceased Nephite, now an "angel", named Moroni, told him that there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent. Along with the plates were "two stones in silver bows" that were intended to be fastened to a breastplate and constituted the Urim and Thummim – and were called the *Seers* in ancient times and that they were to be used to translate the book.

Joseph went to where he was instructed the plates were hidden and discovered them in a stone box deposited in the side of a hill in rural New York. It was not until September 1827 that Joseph was allowed to remove the plates and begin translating, having been required to return to the site every year on the same date for four years.

Using various scribes, and disputed methods, Joseph translated the BoM word for word, in perfect Elizabethan English, and included several passages, word for word, directly from the King James Version of the Holy Bible. Upon completion of the translation, the golden plates were

taken back into heaven by the angel Moroni, leaving only Joseph's testimony, and that of a few select men to bear witness to the validity and truthfulness that the plates even existed at all, let alone contained that, which the Prophet Joseph Smith claimed they did.

There are several theories as to where the young Joseph obtained the material for the BoM. Some allege that he plagiarized several books, among them, "*View of the Hebrews*" by Ethan Smith, and "*A History of the American Indians*" by James Adair. It was a popular pastime during Joseph Smith's youth to speculate on the origins of the Native Americans, and most popular among these theories was the idea that they were of possible Hebrew descent. Many of these theories were published in newspapers available in the region of Joseph's home, as were the afore-mentioned books.

#### ***What are some basic theological ideas from the Book of Mormon?***

The BoM is remarkably similar to the Bible in theological ideology. The following is a sample of some of the precepts found in the BoM:

1. **There is only one God.** (*Alma 11:27-39, 44; 2 Nephi 31:21; Mormon 7:7; 3 Nephi 11:27, and the Testimony of the Three Witnesses.*)
  - a. Alma 11:27-39,44 – "And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now Zezrom said: **Is there more than one God? And he answered, No.** Now Zezrom said unto him again; How knowest thou these things? And he said: An angel had made them known unto me...(44) **be arraigned before the bar of Christ the Son, and God the Father and the Holy Spirit, which is one Eternal God...**"
  - b. 2 Nephi 31:21 "...And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, **which is one God without end.** Amen"
  - c. Mormon 7:7 "...to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, **which are one God...**"
  - d. 3 Nephi 11:27 "...**I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one...**"
2. **God dwells in the heart.** (*Alma 34:36*)
  - a. Alma 34:36 "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.**"
3. **God's word is unchangeable.** (*Alma 41:8*)
  - a. Alma 41:8 "**Now the decrees of God are unalterable;** therefore, the way is prepared that whosoever will may walk therein and be saved."
4. **God is a spirit** (*Alma 18:26-28; 22:8-11*)
  - a. Alma 18:26-28 "And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said: **This is God.**"
5. **Creation – One God** (*2 Nephi 2:14; Jacob 4:9*)
  - a. 2 Nephi 2:14 "And now my sons, I speak unto you these things for your profit and learning; **for there is a God, and he hath created all things,** both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are..."
  - b. Jacob 4:9 "For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the power of his word. **Wherefore if God being able to speak and the world was,** and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?"
6. **Salvation by Grace is not enough.** (*2 Nephi 25:23*)

- a. 2 Nephi 25:23 "For we labor diligently to write, and to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ and to be reconciled to God; **for we know it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.**
- 7. **Death seals man's fate.** (Mosiah 2:36-39; Alma 34:32-35)
  - a. Mosiah 2:36-39 "...if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demand of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever. And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment."
  - b. Alma 34:32-35 "For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. 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."

**Insurmountable Problems with the Book of Mormon**

To a Mormon, the Book of Mormon is considered infallible, and they contend that there is plenty of evidence – physical and spiritual – that prove that the book is, in fact, true. There are many glaring problems that need to be addressed with the book, that when shown to a Mormon, they will deny. Here are but a few:

**Plagiarism of King James Version of the Bible**

King James Version of the Bible	Book of Mormon
"...the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him." (Luke 3:22)	"...the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove." (1 Nephi 11:27)
"...bare record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34)	" bear record that this is the Son of God." (1 Nephi 11:7)
"the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8)	"the same yesterday, to-day, and forever" (1 Nephi 10:18)
"pervert the right ways of the Lord" (Acts 13:10)	"pervert the right ways of the Lord" (1 Nephi 13:27)
"death and hell delivered up their dead" (Revelation 20:13)	"death and hell must deliver up their dead." (2 Nephi 9:12)
"and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16)	"and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (1 Nephi 22:25)

"old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17)	"Old things are done away, and all things have become new." 3 Nephi 12:47
"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...hopeth all things, endureth all things." (1 Corinthians 13: 4 – 7)	"charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not...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...hopeth all things, endureth all things." (Moroni 7:45)

Some specific issues related to this plagiarism of the Bible are: that the Book of Mormon's historical record is alleged to have ended in 421 A.D. ... and the KJV of the Bible was not translated from the Latin Vulgate until 1611. The Mormon version of the KJV Bible has a dictionary in the back of it, and it tells us that the italics found in the KJV Bible were the additions of the translators, and **were not** found in the original Hebrew and Greek, but were added as a way of making the language more understandable in English. So, why do those italicized word appear verbatim in the Book of Mormon? - A book allegedly written more than 1200 – 2000 years before the KJV Bible? If this is the most correct book on the earth, and the translation took place the way we are told it did, one letter and character at a time, then why did God have to add the italicized words from the 1611 King James Version of the Holy Bible? The fact that there is so much that is the same in both the Book of Mormon and the Bible, is one of the primary arguments put forth for the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

**Archeological Evidence – or Lack thereof...**

**Metallurgy** – Throughout the Book of Mormon, you will hear tales of Nephite civilizations possessing the technology to produce iron, steel, coinage and even machinery. However, there is no evidence that any New World civilization attained such an industry during the Book of Mormon times (421 A.D.). In fact, all non-Mormon archeologist or historical entities, to include the Smithsonian Institute and the National Geographic Society, will tell you that there is no evidence to support the alleged civilizations spoken of in the Book of Mormon, including their alleged modes of transport, their metal working, or their armor producing capabilities, nor have any coins ever been found in the New World that pre-date Columbus. Added to this, there are accounts of massive battles taking place in one particular location on the North American continent. In these battles, several **hundred thousand** steel sword wielding, armor-wearing soldiers were killed. Yet to this date, there has not been one sword, shield, chariot axle, or metal weapon of war found in the New World that pre-dates Columbus.

**Agriculture** – The Book of Mormon contains numerous references to specific crops that were used by the Nephite, Jaredite and Lamanite civilizations. Some of these are wheat, barley and flax. All plants will leave pollen behind – in fact, pollen is one of nature's most indestructible materials. Core samples taken throughout South, Central and North America reveal that wheat, barley and flax did not exist at all in the New World pre-dating Columbus. There was a report in a 1983 *Science* magazine describing a strain of barley that was found that pre-dated Columbus, but it should be noted that the barley found was not a domesticated old-world barley that could be cultivated as a crop – instead, it was a native plant.

**Livestock** – Joseph Smith included many old-world domesticated animals in his account in the Book of Mormon. These included asses, cows, goats, sheep, horses, oxen, swine and elephants. (Ether 9:18-19; Alma 18:10; 20:6,8,9) It should be noted however, that once again, these animals **did not** exist in the Western Hemisphere in pre-Columbian times! The very first horse in the Americas can be traced to Columbus – none of these animals existed before then.

**Genes** – The Smithsonian Institute states that “ 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.” The Book of Mormon contends that the inhabitants of the Americas are, in fact, some of the lost tribes of Israel and of Hebrew descent. The reason that the American Indians, and all peoples of the central and south American continents have dark skin, are that they were cursed with a dark skin for rebellion, and so that they would be “loathsome” so they would not be attractive to the “white and delightsome” Nephite people. (2 Nephi 5:21 - 25) There is no genetic or archeological evidence to support the theory that the people of the Americas are of Semitic descent.

Mormon apologist, specifically FARMS, currently are reporting that new archeological evidence points to European ancestry of the ancient Central and South American inhabitants. They contend that because there are many “blond, blue eyed” Israelis of European descent, that it is entirely feasible that the ancestors of the Nephites and Lamanites were, in fact, of Hebrew descent. Reputable institutions of higher learning have debunked this theory, but in an overly zealous attempt to bolster their faith, they are reporting these findings as fact – a practice, not uncommon amongst Mormon apologist.

All in all, there are many problems just with the historicity of the book – let alone the doctrines. But this should not surprise anyone. Joseph Smith did what most people who write books without research do – they include the environment that they are most familiar with in their writings. This would explain the inclusion of domesticated livestock, the food crops and the working of metals and ores – none of which have ever been found in the new world to pre-date Columbus – and that was 1492!

## **The Book of Mormon** **Another Testament of Jesus Christ – Or A Dubious Witness? Part II**

*“...I told the brethren 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.” Joseph Smith, Introduction to the Book of Mormon*

*“We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; **we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.**” The Eighth Article of Faith*

### **The Book of Mormon is a LIE perpetuated before it was even published!**

*“...after my arrival there I commenced copying the characters off the plates. I copied a considerable number of them, and by means of the Urim and Thummim I translated some of them... Sometime in the month of February, the aforementioned Mr. Martin Harris came to our place, got the characters which I had drawn off the plates, and started with them to the city of New York. For what took place relative to him and the characters, I refer to his own account of the circumstances, as he related them to me after his return, which was as follows: “ I went to the city of New York and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more than any he had before seen translated from Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic; and he said they were true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that there were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct... I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them (to be translated). He replied, **‘I cannot read a sealed book’.**” Joseph Smith – History 1:63-65.*

Mormons contend that Anthon fulfilled prophesy when he said that he was unable to “read a sealed book,” and will point you to Isaiah 29:11 which says: *“The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one who is literate, saying “Read this please”; and he says “I cannot, for it is sealed.”* They will even go so far as to point out that Anthon almost quoted Isaiah verbatim – thus lending support to the idea that this was a divine fulfillment of prophesy. But a close reading of Isaiah 29 shows that God is berating Israel for their disobedience, and saying that he has stopped prophesy, and made the prophets spiritually blind (see vs. 10).

In response to Martin Harris and Joseph Smith using Anthon’s name to lend validity to the Book of Mormon, Charles Anthon had this to say in a letter sent to a prominent newspaper in New York City: *“The whole story about me having pronounced the Mormonite inscription to be “reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics” is **perfectly false!** ... Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick, perhaps a hoax...On hearing this odd story, I changed my opinion about the paper, and, instead of viewing it any longer as a hoax upon the learned, I began to regard it as part of a scheme to cheat the farmer (Martin Harris) of his money, and I communicated my suspicions to him, warning him to beware **of rogues.**” Letter by Charles Anthon, New York, February 17, 1834.* It is curious however, that Anthon makes no mention whatever, of the sealed portion of the book, and making an offer to translate it. He does however offer to risk incurring the wrath of God by opening the trunk that holds the plates – “provided [he] could only extricate him (Martin Harris) from the grasp of rogues.” Anthon has been made an unwilling participant in “proving the Book of Mormon true.”

Even to this day the Mormon Church tries to use this story to add validity to their unsubstantiated claims about the Book of Mormon. Gordon B. Hinckley, the current Prophet, Seer and Revelator and President of the LDS Church, while still a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles (the ruling body of the Mormon Church) wrote a small book called "Truth Restored." (Published by the Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and is copyrighted 1979.) On pages 7 – 19 he recounts how the Book of Mormon came in to being, and specifically on pages 15 – 17, under the heading "**I Cannot Read a Sealed Book,**" recounts the entire Anthon incident *without* Professor Anthon's rebuttal! The LDS Church always encourages others to seek the truth, but will, when it suits them, withhold, or cloak the truth if it furthers the cause of the "gospel".

**"And when ye shall receive these things...(Moroni 10:4)" Should I pray about it?**

Even in the face of mounting evidence that the Book of Mormon is a fabrication and a hoax, the faithful member of the Mormon Church will encourage you to follow the admonition of Moroni and pray and ask God if the book is true. They suggest that if it is true, that you will receive a confirmation of it with a "burning in your bosom." This is a reference to Doctrine and Covenants 9:7-9 which states: "...you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall **feel** that it is right. But if it be not right you shall have no such **feelings**, but you shall have a stupor of thought..." Brigham Young has this to say: (Talking about the Book of Mormon) "...We believe all this, but we do not ask you to believe it. What we do ask is that you will believe what is recorded in the Holy Bible concerning God and his revelations to the children of men. Do this in all honesty and sincerity, then you will know that the Book of Mormon is true. Your minds will be opened and you will know by the vision of the Spirit of God that we teach the truth." **Brigham Young, Discourses of Brigham Young, page 109**

With so much riding on your feelings, we, as believing Christians need to know what the Bible says about our feelings, and trusting them.

**Proverbs 14:12 – "There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death."** If it seems right to me – then it BETTER line up with the word of God, or it is the way of death!

**Jeremiah 17:9 – "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"** If I am to trust a burning in my bosom (heart) and believe that it is telling me that something is right, I put my trust in something that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!

**Acts 17:11 – "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."** All things need to be examined in the light of God's Word – the Bible... if they don't line up, then they don't have a place in my life.

**1 Thessalonians 5:21 – "Test all things; hold fast what is good."** I need to run all "truth" through the spiritual test of God's Word...if it lines up, hold fast to it, if not, cast it away!

**James 1:5 – "If any of you lacks wisdom (gr. *sophia* – wisdom; *not* gr. *gnosis* – knowledge), let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach,**

**and it will be given to him."** If I lack wisdom and am unsure what I should do, I should ask God for it and He will provide it to me through His Word.

James R. White suggests these five reasons for not praying to know if the Book of Mormon is true. He likens praying about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon to praying to find out if Anton LeVay's *Satanic Bible* is true. We already know it isn't – so why temp God?

1. The Book of Mormon is historically inaccurate.
2. The Book of Mormon contains false doctrines.
3. The Book of Mormon was given through a false prophet.
4. The Book of Mormon has grave textual problems.
5. The Book of Mormon has been purposely changed in thousands of places.

James R. White, *Letters to a Mormon Elder*, pp. 134 - 157

**"I don't know...it SOUNDS OK...sort of familiar, like I've heard it in the Bible...are you SURE it's not true?"**

*LeGrand Richards, a Mormon Apostle, wrote a tract called "The Mormons and the Jewish People." In it he quotes Isaiah 29:4 which says: "And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust." He goes on to say the following: "It would appear from these words that Isaiah looked far into the future, and beheld the destruction of a people like unto the people of Jerusalem, and that after their destruction, they would "speak out of the ground." Obviously, this could only be possible through a written record. The prophesy stated that the voice of this people would have "a familiar spirit." **When the prophets of the Lord speak, they always have "a familiar spirit."** This prophesy will be better understood when it is known that the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated were deposited in a stone box in the Hill Cumorah." He cites the same passage in his book "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder" on pages 67 – 68 and then goes on to say: "They would be brought down and would speak out of the ground. Their speech would be "low out of the dust"; their voice would be as one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground; and their speech would whisper out of the dust. Now, obviously, the only way dead people could speak "out of the ground" or "low out of the dust" would be by the written word, and this the people did through the Book of Mormon. **Truly it has a familiar spirit,** for it contains the words of the prophets of the God of Israel."*

As an apostle of Jesus Christ, you would think that Richards would know what a "familiar spirit" really is. A familiar is a demonic spirit, or a demon. Notice what **Deuteronomy 18: 10 – 12** says: "*There shall not be found among you anyone who maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.*"

Knowing that the Book of Mormon has a "familiar spirit," and knowing what a familiar spirit really is, why does the Mormon church still continue to use this as an argument to support their faith? Why does the leadership of the church continue to hold on to something that is so

false and wicked, and try to convert others to their perversion of God's truth? The answer lies in psychology, and in the Bible. Modern psychology has two terms that fit the faithful member of the LDS Church.

They are:

**The Belief Perseverance Effect** which simply states that people tend to judge as valid only those conclusion that they agree to; conversely, they judge invalid those things which they do not agree to – regardless of the overwhelming evidence; and the other is called

**Confirmation Bias and Fixation**, which is the tendency to search for information that confirms their own perceptions. They strain out all other information – regardless of validity or truth, and select only information that confirms their mindset and biases and supports their version of reality.

The Bible gives us the best answer however, as to why Mormonism seeks to imitate Christianity, and why the "church" continues this lie:

**2 Corinthians 11: 13- 15 says: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."**

## Mormon Teaching

### There is need for modern scripture:

**2 Nephi 29:3 – 10** "And because my words shall hiss forth – many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a bible, and there cannot be any more Bible...Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews? Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth? ...Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written."

### The Bible tells of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon:

**Ezekiel 37:16 – 17** "As for you son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it: 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will be come one in your hand." (The idea being that the stick of Judah is the Bible, and the stick of Ephraim is the Book of Mormon.)

### The Book of Mormon is a second witness of Christ:

**2 Corinthians 13:1 – 2** "This will be the third time I am coming to you. 'By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.'"

## Biblical Teaching

### **Authority of God's Word**

**Proverbs 30:5 – 6:** "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar."

**Proverbs 13:13** "He who despises the word will be destroyed, but he who fears the commandment will be rewarded."

**Isaiah 40:8** "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

**Matthew 24:35** "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away."

### The Bible teaches us what those "sticks" really are:

**Ezekiel 37: 22** "and I will make them on NATION in the land, on the mountains of Israel: and one king shall be king over them all; and they shall no long be TWO NATIONS, nor shall the ever be divided into TWO KINGDOMS again."

### Scripture will interpret scripture:

Paul is writing to a carnal church that is in need of repentance. He is quoting from **Deuteronomy 19:15** which lays down the law of witnesses – and gives instruction in the "rules of evidence." Jesus referred to these passages many times when giving instruction to the disciples on church discipline. (see Matt. 18:16; John 8:17; 1Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28; 1John 5:8)

Keep in mind too, that we already have more than one witness to Christ and His gospel. The Bible contains 66 books written by some 40 authors – so even if we conceded that the verse in 2 Cor. 13 demanded more than one witness, there are plenty of them to be had within the pages of the Bible – bear in mind that these books were not compiled into one volume for years after they were written, so each one, taken on its own, is a powerful witness to Jesus and His Gospel... Do we need yet another? Especially if it contradicts the Bible?

The Book of Mormon	Mormon Doctrine
<b>There is only one God</b> <i>Mosiah 15:1,5; Alma 11:28; 2 Nephi 31:21</i>	<b>Mormonism teaches there are many gods.</b> <i>Joseph Smith, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6, p. 5</i>
<b>The Trinity is one God</b> <i>Alma 11:44; Mosiah 15:5; 2 Nephi 31:21</i>	<b>The Trinity is three separate gods.</b> <i>James Talmage, Articles of Faith, p. 35. 1985.</i>
<b>God is unchanging</b> <i>Mormon 9:9,19; Moroni 8:18; Alma 41:8; 3 Nephi 24:6</i>	<b>God is increasing in knowledge.</b> <i>Joseph Smith, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6, p. 120</i>
<b>God is spirit</b> <i>Alma 18:24,28; 22:9,11</i>	<b>God has the form of a man.</b> <i>Joseph Smith, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6, p. 3.</i>
<b>Eternal hell</b> <i>Jacob 3:11; 6:10; 2 Nephi 19:16; 28:21-23.</i>	<b>Hell is not eternal.</b> <i>James Talmage, Articles of Faith, p. 55.</i>
<b>Polygamy condemned</b> <i>Jacob 1:15; 2:23,24,27,31;3:5; Mosiah 11:2,4; Ether 10:5,7</i>	<b>Polygamy was taught and practiced.</b> <i>Brigham Young, Journal fo Discourses, Vol. 3, p. 266</i>

## 12 Essential Mormon Doctrines not Found in the Book of Mormon

If the Book of Mormon is the "most correct book of any on earth" (History of the Church, vol. 4:461), then why does it not contain essential Mormon doctrines such as...

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Church organization         | 7. Men may become God      |
| 2. Plurality of Gods           | 8. Three degrees of glory  |
| 3. Plurality of wives doctrine | 9. Baptism for the dead    |
| 4. Word of Wisdom              | 10. Eternal progression    |
| 5. God is an exalted man       | 11. The Aaronic Priesthood |
| 6. Celestial marriage          | 12. Melchizedek Priesthood |

The founder of Mormonism said the Book of Mormon was the most correct book of any book, including the Bible (History of the Church, Vol. 4, page 461), and that a man could get closer to God by following it than any other book. Yet, essential Mormon doctrines aren't even found in it.

This is because the Book of Mormon is nothing more than a fictional account made up by Joseph Smith. It wasn't until after the book had been printed that the additional heretical doctrines of Mormonism started to develop. That is why the Book of Mormon sounds so Christian -- at first.

## ***The Mormon View of The Holy Bible***

***If it supports us – Great! Otherwise, it isn't translated correctly!***

The low LDS opinion of the Bible, its truths and its inerrancy

*"We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God" **Eighth Article of Faith***

*"What shall we say then, concerning the Bible's being a sufficient guide? Can we rely upon it in its present known corrupted state, as being a faithful record of God's word? We all know that but a few of the inspired writings have descended to our times, which few quote the names of some twenty other books which are lost. **What few have come down to our day, have been mutilated, changed, and corrupted, in such a shameful manner that not two manuscripts agree. Verses and even whole chapters have been added by unknown persons; and even we do not know the authors of some whole books; and we are not certain that all those which we do know, were wrote by inspiration. Add all this imperfection to the uncertainty of the translation, and who, in his right mind, could, for one moment, suppose the Bible in its present form to be a perfect guide Who knows that even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original...**There can be no certainty as to the contents of the inspired writings until God shall inspire some one to rewrite all those books over again....No reflecting man can deny the necessity of such a new revelation" (Orson Pratt's Works, "The Bible Alone an Insufficient Guide," pp. 44-47.)*

*"Wherefore, thou seest that after the book (the bible) hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, **that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.**" 1 Nephi 13:28 (BoM)*

*"And because my words shall hiss forth – many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible...Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible." 2 Nephi 29: 3, 6 (BoM)*

*"The Bible bears true witness of God and his gospel as far as it is translated correctly. Many plain and precious things have been deleted, however; **and the Book of Mormon is the means, provided by divine wisdom, to pour forth the gospel word as it was given in perfection to the ancients.** It has come to preserve and sustain the Bible, not to destroy or dilute its message....Satan guided his servants in taking many plain and precious things, and many of the covenants of the Lord, from the Bible, so that men would stumble and fall and lose their souls. **When these truths and doctrines and covenants are restored through the Book of Mormon, what may we expect from Satan and from his servants? Their natural reaction – their craft is in danger! – will be to poison the minds of men against the Nephite scripture, so they will continue to stumble as they rely on the Bible alone.**" Bruce R McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah*, pp. 160, 161, 164*

*"What makes us different from most other Christians in the way we read and use the Bible and other scriptures is our belief in continuing revelation. **For us, the scriptures are not the ultimate source of knowledge, but what precedes the ultimate source.** The ultimate knowledge comes by revelation." Dallin Oaks, *Ensign* (January 1995): pg. 7*

*"The most reliable way to measure the accuracy of any biblical passage **is not by comparing different texts, but by comparison with the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelation.**" The*

First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, *Church News*, (June 20, 1992): pg. 3

**"Soon after the New Testament was written there were persons among the Gentiles who systematically, with wicked motives and evil intent, removed portions of the sacred word, and took from the Bible much very important doctrinal information....In order to do this effectively two things were necessary: (1) It had to be done early, before there were multiple copies of the various books; and (2) It had to be an inside job by someone near the source, who had access to the original or earliest copies....In the first century, and continued in the second and third centuries A.D."** Robert J. Matthews, *What the Book of Mormon Tells Us About the Bible*, Brigham Young University, 26 October 1991

**"The Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible from which translations have been made, are evidently very much corrupted....The learned are under the necessity of translating from such mutilated, imperfect, and, in very many instances, contradictory copies as still exist. This uncertainty, combined with the imperfections of un-inspired translators, renders the Bibles of all languages, at the present day, emphatically the words of men, instead of the pure word of God."** Orson Pratt, *A Series of Pamphlets* (Liverpool, England: n.p., 1851), pp. 70 – 71

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### Transmission vs. Translation

**Transmission** is the process by which a manuscript is *copied* word for word, dot for dot, stroke for stroke – from the original (jots and tittles). There was often a numerical count associated with the manuscript, and if the number of characters was not exact, the manuscript was destroyed. Copying manuscripts could take years, sometimes even a lifetime. If one mistake was made, the manuscript was destroyed, and the scribe would be required to start over again.

So serious was the process of transmission, or copying, that the unspeakable name of Jehovah (YHWH) required an entire ritual just to write it. The priest, or scribe would have to disrobe, ceremoniously bathe in the temple, put on clean priest's garments, and use a new pen **every time the letters Y H W H were written!** Some passages contain the name YHWH (written as **LORD** in our Bibles) several times in a very short space – **each time** the scribe was required to go through this ritual!

**Translation** involves the process of converting existing text into another language. The process of taking text and translating from Latin to Greek to French to German to Spanish to English certainly could cause some of the original meaning to "be lost in the translation," but is that really what the Mormons were thinking about in their Eighth Article of Faith? I don't think so. To say that the Bible is the word of God as far as it is translated correctly is, in fact, a true statement that merits our agreement, but, as the previous quotes indicate, it was not the *translation* that was concerning – rather, the *transmission* of the Bible that is being discounted.

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### Manuscript Evidence

There are currently more than **24,000** complete or partial manuscript copies of the New Testament. Compare this to the virtual lack of any manuscript evidence whatsoever for the Book of Mormon! Those 24,000 manuscript copies are available *now* for our inspection, and are the very manuscripts used to give us our modern-day translations of the Bible.

The 24,000 manuscripts of the New Testament contain approximately 150,000 "variants." A variant can be defined as a small, insignificant change in the text such as writing "Christ Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ." Some involve a missing letter, or the omission of partial, or entire insignificant words all together. Of the 150,000 variants, **99 percent** hold virtually no significance whatsoever:

"For more than ninety-nine percent of the cases the original text can be reconstructed to a practical certainty. Even in the few cases where some perplexity remains, this does not impinge on the meaning of Scripture to the point of clouding a tenet of the faith or a mandate of life. Thus, in the Bible as we have it (and as it is conveyed to us through faithful translations) we do have for practical purposes the very Word of God, inasmuch as the manuscripts do convey to us the complete vital truth of the originals." *Explaining Inerrancy: A Commentary* (Oakland, CA: International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, 1980), p. 24

Ancient Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Number of Copies	Accuracy of Copies
Caesar	1 <sup>st</sup> Century B.C.	A.D. 900	10	----
Livy	1 <sup>st</sup> Century B.C.	----	20	----
Tacitus	c. A.D. 100	A.D. 1100	20	----
Thucydides	5 <sup>th</sup> Century B.C.	A.D. 900	8	----
Herodotus	5 <sup>th</sup> Century B. C.	A.D. 900	8	----
Demosthenes	4 <sup>th</sup> Century B.C.	A.D. 1100	200	----
Mahabharata	----	----	----	90%
Homer	9 <sup>th</sup> Century B.C.	----	643	95%
New Testament	1 <sup>st</sup> Century A.D. (A.D. 50 – 100)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Century A.D. (c. A.D. 130)	5,000 complete copies – 19,000+ fragments	99+%

Added to the 24,000 partial and complete manuscripts, are over 84,000 quotations of the New Testament from the early church fathers, and several thousand lectionaries – or church-service books containing scripture quotations used in the early centuries of Christianity. *"There are enough quotations from the early church fathers that even if we did not have a single copy of the Bible, scholars could still reconstruct all but 11 verses of the entire New Testament from materials written within 150 to 200 years from the time of Christ."* Dan Story, *Defending Your Faith: How to Answer the Tough Questions* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), pp. 38 – 39. Consider the following sampling from early church fathers:

#### Early Patristic Quotations of the New Testament

Writer	Gospels	Acts	Pauline Epistles	General Epistles	Revelation	Totals
<b>Justin Martyr</b>	268	10	43	6	3	<b>330</b>
<b>Irenaeus</b>	1,038	194	499	23	65	<b>1,819</b>
<b>Clement Alexandria</b>	1,017	44	1,127	207	11	<b>2,406</b>
<b>Origen</b>	9,231	349	7,778	339	165	<b>17,922</b>
<b>Tertullian</b>	3,822	502	2,609	120	205	<b>7,258</b>
<b>Hippolytus</b>	734	42	387	27	188	<b>1,378</b>
<b>Eusebius</b>	3,258	211	1,592	88	27	<b>5,176</b>
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>19,368</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>14,035</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>36,289</b>

As we can see from this chart above, we have over *36,000* quotations from the New Testament by just **seven** early church fathers. No other work of antiquity has such widespread and reliable support.

The **Old Testament** has just as much documented support – the Jews have seen to that. Of note however, is the fact that when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, there was found among the manuscripts, a complete copy (scroll) of the Book of Isaiah. It is currently on display in Israel. The reassuring part of this story is that if you were to hold your current version of the Bible up to it, and were able to read from the Hebrew, you would find that it is exactly, *word for word* the same: *"Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (A.D. 980), they prove to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text."* Dr. Gleason Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1964), p. 19.

## The Lost Books of the Bible...Lost, or unnecessary?

### Extrabiblical material quoted or referenced in the Bible

Book of the Wars of the Lord -- Num. 21:14  
 Book of Yashar [or Jashar] (the Upright) -- Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18  
 David's letter to Joab -- 2 Sam 11:14  
 Solomon's lost proverbs and songs -- 1 Ki. 4:32  
 Jezebel's letters to the officials of Naboth's city -- 1 Ki. 21:8-11  
 Aram's letter to the king of Israel -- 2 Ki. 5:5-6  
 Jehu's letters to Samaria -- 2 Ki. 10:1-2; 6-7  
 Book of the annals of Solomon -- 1 Ki. 11:41  
 Books of the annals of the kings of Israel and Judah -- 1 Ki. 14:19; 14:29  
 Sennacherib's letter to Hezekiah -- 2 Ki. 19:9-13; 2 Chr. 32:17; Isa. 37:9-13  
 Merodach-baladan's letters to Hezekiah -- 2 Ki. 20:12; Isa. 39:1  
 The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel -- 1 Chron. 9:1; 2 Chron. 20:34  
 The Records of the Chronicles of King David -- 1 Chron. 27:24  
 The Words of Samuel the Seer -- 1 Chron. 29:29  
 The Word of Nathan the Prophet -- 1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron 9:29  
 The Words of Gad the Seer -- 1 Chron. 29:29  
 Hiram's letter to Solomon -- 2 Chron. 2:11-16  
 The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite -- 2 Chron. 9:29  
 The visions of Iddo the Seer -- 2 Chron. 9:29  
 The Visions of Shemaiah the Prophet -- 2 Chron. 12:15  
 The Words of Jehu the son of Hanani -- 2 Chron. 20:34  
 Elijah's letter to Jehoram -- 2 Chr. 21:12  
 The Commentary on the Book of Kings -- 2 Chron. 24:27  
 The Deeds of Uzziah by Isaiah the Prophet -- 2 Chron. 26:22; 32:32  
 The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah -- 2 Chron. 27:7; 35:27; 36:8  
 Hezekiah's Passover invitations to Manasseh and Ephraim -- 2 Chr. 30:1,6  
 The Word of the Kings of Israel -- 2 Chron. 33:18  
 The Chronicles of Hozai (Seers) -- 2 Chron. 33:19  
 The Decree of David the King of Israel and the Decree of Solomon his son -- 2 Chron. 35:4  
 Proclamation of Cyrus -- 2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4  
 Letter of Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel to Artaxerxes -- Ezra 4:7-16  
 Letter of Artaxerxes -- Ezra 4:17-22  
 Letter of Tattenai and Shethar-bozenai to King Darius -- Ezra 5:6-17  
 Decree of Cyrus -- Ezra 6:1-12  
 Ezra's letter of authorization from Artaxerxes -- Ezra 7:11-26  
 Nehemiah's letters of authorization from Artaxerxes -- Neh. 2:7-9  
 Sanballat's letter to Nehemiah -- Neh. 6:5-7  
 Letters between Tobiah and the nobles of Judah -- Neh. 6:17  
 Priests' and Levites' contract -- Neh. 9:38-10:27  
 The book of the annals (genealogies?) -- Neh. 12:23  
 The book of the annals (of Xerxes) -- Esther 2:23  
 First edict of Xerxes -- Esther 3:12  
 Chronicle of Xerxes -- Esther 6:1  
 Second edict of Xerxes -- Esther 8:9-11  
 Mordecai's Purim announcement -- Esther 9:20  
 Esther's confirmation of Purim -- Esther 9:29-30  
 The book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia -- Esther 10:2  
 Jeremiah's letter to the exiles -- Jer. 29:1  
 Shemaiah's letter to the priests -- Jer. 29:25

Decree of Darius -- Dan. 6:7-9  
 High priest's letter to Damascus -- Acts 9:1; 22:5  
 Apostles' letter to Antioch -- Acts 15:23-29  
 Aratus' *Phainomena* -- Acts 17:28  
 Epimenides' *de Oraculis* -- Acts 17:28  
 Aristotle's *Politics* -- Gal. 5:23  
 Epimenides' *de Oraculis* (may also be Callimachus' hymn to Zeus) -- Titus 1:12  
 Claudius' letter to Felix -- Acts 23:26-30  
 Forged letter to the Thessalonians -- 2 Thess. 2:1-2  
 Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (before 1 Corinthians) -- 1 Cor. 5:9  
 Menander's *Thais* -- 1 Cor. 15:33  
 Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans -- Col. 4:16  
 \*See this website for a great paper on the lost books: <http://www.irr.org/mit/lostbooks.html>

**Lost Books of the Book of Mormon**

The Words of Zenock; The Words of Neum – 1 Nephi 19:10; Alma 33:3 - 17  
 The Words of the Prophet Zenos – 1 Nephi 19:10, 12, 16; Alma 33:3 - 17

**What was Jesus' view of the Bible?**

<b>Divine Inspiration</b>	Matthew 22: 43
<b>Indestructibility</b>	Matthew 5: 17 - 18
<b>Infallibility</b>	John 10: 35
<b>Final Authority</b>	Matthew 4: 4, 7, 10
<b>Historicity</b>	Matthew 12: 40; 24: 37
<b>Scientific Accuracy</b>	Matthew 19: 2 - 5
<b>Factual Inerrancy</b>	John 17: 17
<b>Christ-Centered Unity</b>	Luke 24: 27; John 5: 39
<b>Spiritual Clarity</b>	Luke 24: 25
<b>Faith and Life Sufficiency</b>	Luke 16: 31

**Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods**  
*By what authority do you do these things? – Priests, or Pretenders?*

*"There is no act of a Latter-day Saint – no duty required – no time given, exclusive and independent of the Priesthood. Everything is subject to it, whether preaching, business, or any other act pertaining to the proper conduct of this life." Brigham Young Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 133*

*"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 right to take this honor to himself. Unless he is called of God, **as was Aaron** (see Leviticus 8), 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. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. III, p. 80*

*"The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected to the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness." Doctrine and Covenants 121:36*

Offices of the Mormon Priesthood

**Aaronic Priesthood**

**Melchizedek Priesthood**

**Deacon** – Age 12 – "...who is to watch over the church, and to be a standing minister to the church."

**Elder** – Age 19 – "...who is a standing home minister." (And usually a missionary at the age of 19)

**Teacher** – Age 14 – "...who is to watch over the church always and be with and strengthen them."

**Seventy** – "...who is a traveling minister."

**Priest** – Age 16 – "...who is to preach, teach, expound, exhort and baptize, and administer the sacrament, and visit the house of each member."

**High Priest** – "...who is to administer in spiritual things and to preside as his calling in the Church requires."

**Patriarch** – "...who seals blessings upon the members of the Church."

**Bishop** – (A Melchizedek Priesthood holder) "...who presides over the Aaronic Priesthood and administers in all temporal things."

**Apostle** – "...who is a traveling councilor and a special witness of the name of Christ in all the world."

**Presidency of the High Priesthood** – "...who have the right to officiate in all the offices of the priesthood."

**Background and History**

The LDS Church teaches that the gospel was taken from the earth. By this they mean *in its entirety*. They suggest that Jesus Christ set up the higher priesthood, and His church while here on earth, and that at some later date, it was lost, or taken from the earth, and mankind was forced to struggle along in darkness until Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were given the keys of the Priesthood in May of 1829. It is recorded in **Joseph Smith – History 1: 68 – 69** thus:

*"While we were... 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."*

It is interesting to note however, that Jesus said in Matthew 16: 18 that "...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (His Church – and presumably, His priesthood)." Even the LDS Church teaches us that the priesthood of the Mormons is eternal – without beginning **or end**: *"Which priesthood (Melchizedek) continueth in the church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years. And the Lord confirmed a priesthood (Aaronic or Levitical) also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations, which priesthood also abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God."* D & C 84: 17-18.

It is also interesting to note that no one would ever be allowed to hold the priesthood (either one) without first having been baptized and confirmed a member of the LDS Church. If one were to claim to have any priesthood without being a member of the church, they would be accused of "having no authority." Taking the story a couple verses further on where Joseph and Oliver were ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood, we find two men, who, never having been baptized as members of the Church, suddenly officiate in an ordinance that requires the Aaronic Priesthood to be valid (baptism). Why is this such an important point? Simply put, no man in the LDS Church can officiate in any baptism without first, being a member of the Church, second, being at least an ordained **PRIEST** within the Aaronic Priesthood, and third, having the sanction of the presiding Bishop!

The story in Joseph Smith's history tells us that after having the priesthood confirmed upon them (**confirmed** mind you, not **ordained** to the priesthood), that Joseph **baptized** Oliver, and then Oliver **baptized** Joseph. *(These actions being null and void as neither man had been baptized and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints – nor did they hold the required office within the priesthood!)* Next, they turned around, and **ordained each other** to the **Melchizedek Priesthood** without having the priesthood to do so! *(Doctrines of Salvation Vol. III, Joseph Fielding Smith, Page 95)* TALK ABOUT CONFUSION?! Joseph Fielding Smith explains this rather unusual occurrence away in Doctrines of Salvation by saying that this error proves that Joseph and Oliver weren't lying. If they were they would have thought of this before hand. But it still doesn't make it right.

According to Joseph Fielding Smith, the Melchizedek Priesthood, or Higher Priesthood was "restored" with Jesus Christ, and then lost once more. *"When our Savior came, he restored to the church all that had been taken away, and once again the fullness of the priesthood with all of its blessings was given to men."* *(Doctrines of Salvation Vol. III, page 114.)* While no date is given in LDS literature for the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, we read in the Doctrine and Covenants section 27 that Peter, James, and John ordained them to that priesthood. On April 6, 1830, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery ordained *Elders, High Priests and Seventies* within the church - something that could not be done without holding the Melchizedek Priesthood. But then, in reality, that had never stopped Joseph before.

## Doctrinal comparison and Biblical answers

### LDS Thought

1. **Aaronic (Levitical) Priesthood:** Divided into four offices: **Deacons, Teachers, Priests**, and watched over by the **Bishop**, who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood. Ordained by laying on of hands, and confirmed by a vote in Sacrament Meeting. Need not be a descendent of Aaron, or of the Tribe of Levi. Not allowed in the temple except to get baptized for the dead (except the Bishop – who can).
2. **Deacon:** A young boy, 12 - 14 years old, designated as one who is to watch over the church and a standing minister. Lowest office of the Aaronic Priesthood, normally serves the sacrament and collects Fast Offerings.
3. **Teacher:** A 14 - 16 year old boy, designated as one who is to watch over the church, and be with and strengthen the church. Normally is assigned as a home teacher, and helps to prepare the sacrament.
4. **Priest:** A 16 - 19 year old young man designated as one who is to preach, teach, expound, exhort and baptize, and administer the sacrament, and visit the house of each member.
5. **Bishop:** (A Melchizedek Priesthood holder) a more mature man who presides over the Aaronic Priesthood and administers in all temporal things. Usually compared to a 'Pastor' because they have an entire church body that they are responsible for.
6. **Melchizedek Priesthood:** Called "The Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God". Needed to officiate in all higher-level positions within the Church. It is has the following offices: *Elder, Seventy, High Priest, Patriarch, Apostle, and Presidency of The High Priesthood.* All Melchizedek Priesthood

### Biblical Answers

1. **Aaronic Priesthood:** (See Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8) Needed to **PROVE** they were of the tribe of Levi. Required a blood sacrifice to be ordained, and have the blood placed on the right ear, thumb and big toe. Was reserved for the descendents of Aaron ONLY! See 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy for more definitions.
2. **Deacon:** Mature men, reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, **holding the mystery of the faith** with a pure conscience. They are married, and rule their children and home well. (1Tim 3)
3. **Teacher:** Generally a disciple. Mentioned several times in scripture. **Given by Jesus for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ.**
4. **Priest:** See Exodus 25 - 30 for what a priest does. Meant to serve in the temple and offer sacrifice. Acted as a butcher, baker and collector of temple taxes and offerings.
5. **Bishop:** Blameless, **husband of one wife**, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not violent, not quarrelsome not covetous, and rules his home and children well.
6. **Melchizedek Priesthood:** Genesis 14 mentions Melchizedek as the King of Salem, and as the priest of God Most High. Hebrews 5 & 7 tells us that Jesus Christ is our High Priest, that he will be a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Must be without father

holders also hold the Aaronic Priesthood, and can function in that capacity – **but not the other way around**. This priesthood is a requirement for exaltation (becoming a god).

and mother, neither beginning of days or end of life. That the priesthood changed of necessity, that Melchizedek was a *type* or depiction of Jesus Christ. It also tells us that Jesus is able to “save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” 7:24 -25

### **Who are we? Do we need these priesthoods?**

When considering the LDS versions of their priesthoods, keep the following thoughts in mind:

**Who are we?** “...you are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, a holy nation, **His own special people** that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people, **but are now the people of God** who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” 1 Peter 2: 9-10

**Do we need any other intercessor?** “But as many received Him, to them He gave **the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name**, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1: 12-13

**Do I need a priesthood other than Jesus’ to enter into the presence of God?** “And behold, the veil of the temple **was torn in two from top to bottom**...” Matthew 27:51

**Christ is our High Priest – we have our priesthood through HIM!**  
 “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” Hebrews 4:14; “And being made perfect, He (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek” Hebrews 5: 9 – 10; “But this Man, because he continueth forever, hath an **UNCHANGABLE** 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; “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and **not man**” Hebrews 8: 1 – 2; “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:24

**Where do we gain OUR authority?** “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1: 12 – 13; “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8.

## **The Mormon Temple Rituals Ordinances of Man, Masonry or Misunderstanding?**

**The purpose of the temple of God, as defined in the Bible** – The temple served a twofold purpose for the pious Jews. The blood of the slain animal symbolized **PROPITIATION** and **EXPIATION**. *Propitiation* means appeasement for God’s anger, while *expiation* is the cancellation of sin. Blood sacrifices included burnt, sin, trespass and fellowship offering of several kinds of animals; bloodless sacrifices involved grain offerings and libations, or drink offerings. The bloodless sacrifices were made, however, only if they followed blood sacrifices. Forgiveness was received through the **faith** of those who offered these sacrifices.

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“I think a full, free talk is frequently of great use; we want nothing secret nor underhanded, and I for one want no association with things that cannot be talked about and will not bear investigation.” John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 264.

“It is absolutely necessary that the Saints should receive the further ordinances of the house of God before this short existence shall come to a close, that they may be prepared and fully able to pass all the sentinels leading into the celestial kingdom and into the presence of God.” Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young* p. 395

“The ordinances of the house of God are for the salvation of the human family. We are the only ones on the earth at the present time, that we have any knowledge of, who hold the keys of salvation committed to the children of men from the heavens by the Lord Almighty; and inasmuch as there are those who hold these keys, it is important that they should be acted upon for the salvation of the human family. The building of temples, places in which the ordinances of salvation are administered, is necessary to carry out the plan of redemption, and is a glorious subject upon which to address the Saints.” Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young* p. 397

“Temples are sanctified for the purpose of performing rites for and making covenants with the pure in heart, who have proved themselves by faithful service worthy of the blessings of exaltation.” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation Vol. II*, p. 231

“According to the letter of the commandment, none is entitled to enter the temple and receive these ordinances except those who have prepared themselves for exaltation by the keeping of **all of the commandments and have prepared themselves by faith and faithfulness to be so endowed**. The strictness is not always followed, and many are privileged to receive some of these ordinances on the promise of faithfulness thereafter. The responsibility resting upon the members of the Church in this dispensation is far greater than that given to any other dispensation. This being the last dispensation, it is our responsibility to labor, nor only for ourselves, **but also for all the righteous dead of all other dispensations for whom the work has to be done**.” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation Vol. II*, p. 244.

## Latter-day Temples compared to Biblical Temples

### Mormon Temple Rituals

#### **For the Dead:**

**Baptism For The Dead** – Usually done by the faithful teenagers of the LDS Church. Done for, and in behalf of, the dead found by doing genealogy. Usually done in blocks of 25 or more.

**Confirmation** – *After baptism, the teen is confirmed for all of the dead people, as members of the LDS Church.*

*Ordination to Melchizedek Priesthood – For all males.*

#### **For the Living & Dead:**

**Washing and Anointing** – The washing is meant to cleanse them from the "blood of this generation." The anointing is to prepare them for becoming a "King and Priest of the Most High God, and to rule and reign in the House of Israel forever." For women, they are anointed to be a Queen and a Priestess "unto her husband."

#### **Clothing in the Garment of the Holy Priesthood -**

This is ritual where the special under garments are placed on the person for the first time. They are told that if they are true and faithful to their covenants, "it shall be a shield and a protection to [them] against the power of the destroyer until [they] have finished [their] work here on earth." These garments have the Masonic markings on them - one over each breast, one over the navel, and one over the right knee. You are also given a new name.

**The Endowment** – This is the most important of all the Mormon Temple rituals. Without it, you are unable to reach the Celestial Kingdom – It is also the only possible way a faithful Mormon can reach exaltation, and become a God. During the endowment ceremony, you receive instruction on how the earth was created, are given many 'tokens' that have their origin in Masonry, and take blood oaths to protect the secrecy of those signs and tokens, as well as what happens in the temple. These secret hand-shakes and 'passwords' will be required to get past the angels that guard the way to the Celestial Kingdom

**Temple Marriage and Sealings** – During the Temple Marriage, the Man and the woman are sealed together for all eternity. This is necessary for the woman to gain exaltation... She cannot become a 'goddess' in the Celestial Kingdom without being married and sealed. During a sealing, women and children are sealed to their husband "for time and all eternity." Any children born after the man and wife are sealed are considered to be "born in the covenant."

**Washing of the Feet** – This was initially a ritual for the LDS Prophet – he would wash the feet of the Apostles in imitation of Jesus Christ. It is currently part of the "Second Anointing" but the woman now does it to her husband so she may claim him in the resurrection.

### Jewish / Biblical Rituals

#### **For the Dead: - NONE**

**For the Nation of Israel:** See Exodus, Leviticus, Number and Deuteronomy.

*The Burnt-Offering*

**The Sin-Offering**

**The Trespass-Offering**

**The Peace-Offering**

**The Wave-Offering**

**The Grain-Offering**

**The Drink-Offering**

**The Meat-Offering**

**The Jealousy-Offering**

**The Free-Will-Offering**

**Animals Offered as Sacrifice:** Oxen, cows, sheep, goats, turtledoves and young pigeons.

**All sacrifices were salted.** Salt was, and is an accepted symbol of in corruption.

**The "Second Anointing"** – This is the most secret of all of the LDS rituals, and was designed to ensure a person's exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. The ritual was, and is performed by the Prophet of the Church, or his designated representative, in the Holy of Holies. In it, the husband is anointed with oil and given "the fullness of the priesthood," and blessed to be part of a Godhead. The second part of this ritual is performed in the couple's home, where the wife conducts the Washing of the Feet for her husband.

## ***The Mormon/Masonic Link***

Most Mormons will tell you that there is no link between the Mormon Church's temple ceremony and the Masons. Or if there are, it can be explained by saying that the Masons are imitating what took place in Solomon's temple because the stone masons who constructed it were Masons, and had to be initiated into the temple to be able to work on it. A search with the words "Mormon" and "Mason" yielded the following startling familiarities... These are only a few of the glaringly obvious imitations found in the Mormon Temple.

When did Joseph Smith have intimate access to the Masonic Rites? On March 15, 1842 Joseph Smith became a Mason in his general business office. (History of the Church, vol. 4, pg. 551) On May 4, 1842 Joseph Smith instructed the other LDS Church leaders on the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to the washings, anointing, endowments and communication of keys. (History of the Church, vol. 5, pg. 2) This instruction took place only weeks after Joseph Smith became a Mason and in Joseph Smith's business office, the exact same place where he received the Masonic rites just weeks earlier. In addition, Joseph Smith's business office was the Masonic lodge room. Joseph Smith's temple records even indicate that he received his endowments on May 4, 1842 (Family Group Sheet-Father Temple Index Bureau).

There are numerous articles available on the Internet that denies that the Mormon temple ritual has anything at all to do with the Masonic Lodge. There is even an article put out by S.H.I.E.L.D.S. (Scholarly & Historical Information Exchange for Latter-Day Saints – [www.shields-research.org](http://www.shields-research.org)) written by Eugene Seach contending that Freemasonry actually is derived from Mormonism. Here are but a few examples of how the LDS Church – Joseph Smith particularly – lifted their "sacred" endowment right off the pages of the initiation of Masonic Lodge members.

### Mormon Temple Rituals

1. Compass and Square
2. Washing and anointing
3. New name
4. Language of the Grip
5. Penalty for revealing the first token of the Aaronic Priesthood
6. Grip
7. Penalty for revealing the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood
8. Penalty for revealing the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood
9. Grip
10. Aprons
11. The Five Points of Fellowship
12. Passing through the veil

### Masonic Lodge Rituals

1. Compass and Square
2. Washing and anointing
3. New name
4. Language of the Grip
5. Penalty for revealing the first token of the Entered Apprentice Degree.
6. Grip
7. Penalty for revealing the token of the FellowCraft Degree.
8. Penalty for revealing the token of the Master Mason Degree.
9. Grip
10. Aprons
11. The Five Points of Fellowship
12. Master Mason raises Candidate

## Changes in the endowment

Many Mormons know nothing of the changes that have taken place in the temple rituals. In fact, many of the leaders within the Mormon Church contend that they have not changes, nor can they change – the were delivered by divine inspiration and designed to restore that which was lost. Consider the following:

"...build a house to my name, for the Most High to dwell therein. For there is not a place found on earth that he may come to and **restore again that which was lost** unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fullness of the priesthood.... And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that **I may reveal mine ordinances** therein... For I deign **to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world**, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times. And I will **show unto my servant Joseph** all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood thereof, and the place whereon it shall be built." (*Doctrine and Covenants* 124:27-28, 40-42)

"It [the Nauvoo temple] was finished... and was dedicated unto the Lord. The ordinances of the house of God were administered therein as they had been taught to the leading authorities of the church by the Prophet Joseph Smith himself. The same gospel, the **same ordinances**, the same authority and blessings that were administered by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and taught by him to his associates, are now being enjoyed by and taught to the Latter-Day Saints in the four temples... When you hear anybody say we have **changed the ordinances**, that we have transgressed the laws, or broken the everlasting covenants which were entered into under the personal administration of the Prophet Joseph Smith, tell them for me... and for all those who are living today who received blessings and ordinances under the hands of the Prophet Joseph Smith, that **they are in error**. The same gospel prevails today, and the **same ordinances are administered today**, both for the living and for the dead, as were administered by the prophet himself and delivered by him to the church."

These statements by President Smith were originally printed in the church's newspaper, *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 1, 1900. President Smith's son, Joseph Fielding Smith, who served as the 10th prophet of the church in the early 1970's, printed an affidavit by Bathsheba W. Smith which contained the following: "Near the close of the year 1843, or in the beginning of the year 1844, I received the ordinance of anointing... the same day... I received my endowment... The endowments were given under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith... there has been *no change*, to my certain knowledge, in these ceremonies. They are **the same today** as they were then." (*Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, p. 87)

In an editorial published in the Church Section of the *Deseret News*, June 5, 1965, we find the following: "...God is **unchangeable**, the same yesterday, today and forever... The great mistake made down through the ages by teachers of Christianity, is that they have supposed they could place their own private interpretation upon scriptures, allow their own personal convenience to become a controlling factor, and change the basis of [C]hristian law and practice to suit themselves. This **is apostasy**."

"The Gospel can **not possibly be changed**.... the saving principles must ever be the same. They can **never change**.... the Gospel must always be the same in **all of its parts**.... **no one can change** the Gospel... if they attempt to do so, they only set up a **man-made** system which is not the Gospel, but is merely a reflection of their own views... if we substitute 'any other Gospel,' there is no salvation in it.... the Lord and His Gospel remain **the same--always**."

"As temple work progresses, some members wonder if the **ordinances can be changed or adjusted**. These ordinances have been provided **by revelation**, and are in the

hands of the First Presidency. Thus, the **temple is protected from tampering**." (*Deseret News*, Church Section, January 16, 1982)

"Now the purpose in Himself in the winding up scene of the last dispensation is that all things pertaining to that dispensation should be conducted **precisely in accordance** with the preceding dispensations.... He **set the ordinances to be the same forever and ever** and set Adam to watch over them, to reveal them from heaven to man, or to send angels to reveal them." (*History of the Church*, vol.4, p. 208)

Yet, the temple ceremony *has* been changed so as to be less offensive to the Christian world, to eliminate death-oaths, and be more politically correct. The changes include the **elimination** of the following:

1. The chanting of the words, *PAY LAY ALE*, which temple patrons are told are from the ancient "Adamic language" and mean "Oh God, hear the words of my mouth."
2. A portion of the ceremony in which a Protestant preacher is portrayed as a hireling of Lucifer, who is paid to preach the gospel of salvation by grace and the omnipresence and omnipotence of God the Father to "Adam and his posterity."
3. The penalty signs which portray the temple patron having their throat slit, their heart ripped out, or their belly torn open for revealing the secrets of the temple rite.
4. Women in the temple having to veil their faces in prayer.
5. Women in the temple swearing a covenant to obey their husbands as God.
6. The Masonic "Five Points of Fellowship" embrace with "the Lord" through the veil in order to gain admittance to the Celestial Room and the presence of Heavenly Father.
7. The use of *female* Veil Workers at the veil, representing mother goddesses, to embrace the women temple patrons and bring them through to the Celestial Room.

## Do we, as believing Christians, need the ordinances of the Mormon Temple to save us?

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to **save sinners**..." 1 Timothy 1:15

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together in Christ (by grace you have been saved)...For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, **not of works, lest anyone should boast**." Ephesians 2:4-5, 8

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"For is when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but**

***we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.***” Romans 5:10-11.

*“And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...”*Matthew 27:51

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*John 3:16

Read all of Hebrews... especially **Chapters 4 – 10.**

**Remember:** *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who brought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.”* 2 Peter 2:1 – 2

You are the temple of God. (1 Corinthians 3: 16-17, 6:19) There is no need for temples in this day and age. Jesus is our Lord and Savior, and if you are saved through His Grace, then you do not need a temple to come into His presence...fall on your face and worship the King!

# Resources