

LED BY REVELATION ?

Those of us who grew up in the Mormon Church know the Church teaches that the revelations of Joseph Smith are supposed to be received as if from God's "own mouth" (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 21, verse 5), and that the present-day leader is supposed to be God's mouthpiece on earth. The ward teacher's message for June 1945 contained these statements:

Any latter-day Saints who denounces or **opposes**, whether actively or otherwise, any plan or doctrine advocated by the "prophets, seers, and revelators" of the Church is cultivating the spirit of **apostasy** . . . Lucifer . . . wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to "**do their own thinking**." . . .

When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God's plan. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy. (*Improvement Era*, June 1945, page 354)

In making a study of Mormon Church history we ran across a number of things that have led us to question the wisdom of blindly following the "Prophet, Seer and Revelator" of the Church.

To begin with, David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, makes it clear that Joseph Smith sometimes gave false revelations. He stated:

When the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, more money was needed to finish the printing of it. . . . Brother Hyrum said it had been suggested to him that some of the brethren might go to Toronto, Canada, and sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon for considerable money: and he persuaded Joseph to inquire of the Lord about it. Joseph concluded to do so. He had not yet given up the stone. Joseph looked into the hat in which he placed the stone, and received a revelation that some of the brethren should go to Toronto, Canada, and that they would sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon. Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but they **failed entirely to sell the copy-right**, returning without any money. Joseph was at my father's house when they returned. I was there also, and am an eye witness to these facts. Jacob Whitmer and John Whitmer were also present when Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery returned from Canada. Well, we were all in great trouble; and **we asked Joseph how it was that he had received a revelation from the Lord** for some brethren to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right, and the brethren had **utterly failed** in their undertaking. Joseph did not know how it was, so he enquired of the Lord about it, and behold the following revelation came through the stone: "**Some revelations are of God: some revelations are of man: and some revelations are of the devil.**" So we see that the revelation to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right was not of God, but was of the devil or of the heart of man. . . . I will say here, that I could tell you other **false revelations** that came through Brother Joseph as mouthpiece, (not through the stone) but this will suffice. Many of Brother Joseph's revelations were never printed. The revelation to go to Canada was written down on paper, but was never printed. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, pages 30-31)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts makes these comments concerning this matter:

. . . we have here an alleged revelation received by the Prophet, through the "Seer Stone," directing or allowing men to go on a mission to Canada, which fails of its purpose; . . . Then in explanation of the failure of that revelation, the Prophet's announcement that all revelations are **not of God**; some are of men and some are even from evil sources. . . . The revelation respecting the Toronto journey was not of God, surely; else it would not have failed; but the Prophet, overwrought in his deep anxiety for the progress of the work saw reflected in the "Seer Stone" his own thought, or that suggested to him by his brother Hyrum, rather than the thought of God. . . . in this instance of the Toronto journey, Joseph was evidently **not** directed by the inspiration of the Lord. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 1, page 165)

While David Whitmer felt that some of Joseph Smith's printed revelations were from God, he was skeptical of many of the rest. For instance, he stated that "the revelation on polygamy is not of God" (*An Address to All Believers*



Dr. Nibley "translates" Book of Abraham papyri.
The Book of Abraham is the source of the Negro doctrine.

in *Christ*, page 44). Although the revelation on polygamy is still printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* as Section 132, it is no longer practiced by the Mormon people. At one time, however, polygamy was a burning issue. When Lorenzo Snow, who later became President of the Mormon Church, was on trial for practicing polygamy, Mr. Bierbower, the prosecuting attorney, predicted that if he was convicted, "a new revelation would soon follow, changing the divine law of celestial marriage." To this Lorenzo Snow replied:

Whatever fame Mr. Bierbower may have secured as a lawyer, he certainly will fail as a prophet. The severest prosecutions have never been followed by **revelations changing a divine law**, obedience to which brought imprisonment or martyrdom.

Though I go to prison, **God will not change his law of celestial marriage.** But the man, the people, the nation, that oppose and fight against this doctrine and the Church of God, **will be overthrown.** (*Historical Record*, page 144)

It was not long after Lorenzo Snow made this statement that the Church was forced to give up the practice of polygamy. In 1890 Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Church, issued the Manifesto—i.e., a revelation which was supposed to stop the practice of polygamy.

THE COMING CRISIS

Today the Church is faced with a crisis that is similar to the one it encountered in 1890 over polygamy. This controversy stems from the fact that Mormon leaders teach that the Negroes are cursed by God and therefore ineligible to hold the Priesthood. The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen stated:

If I were to marry a **Negro** woman and have children by her, my children would all be **cursed** as to the **Priesthood**. Do I want my children cursed as to the priesthood? If there is **one drop of Negro blood** in my children, as I have read to you, they **receive the curse**.

This doctrine is derived from Joseph Smith's "translation" of the Book of Abraham. David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Mormon Church made this statement in a letter dated November 3, 1947:

I know of **no scriptural basis** for denying the Priesthood to Negroes other than one verse in the Book of Abraham (1:26); however, I believe, as you suggest, that the real reason dates back to our pre-existent life. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, page 19)

Since the Book of Abraham contains the verse that is used for “denying the Priesthood to Negroes,” it should be examined with a very critical eye. Joseph Smith claimed that this book was a correct translation of a roll of Egyptian papyrus which he obtained in 1935.

While Egyptologists questioned the authenticity of Joseph Smith’s work because of his interpretation of three drawings included in the printed version of the “Book of Abraham,” they were unable to prove that the text of book itself was mistranslated because the original papyrus had become lost. On November 27, 1967, however, the entire picture changed, for the *Deseret News* announced that “A collection of pa[p]yrus manuscripts, long believed to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871, was presented to The Church . . . by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. . . . Included in the papyri is a manuscript identified as the original document from which Joseph Smith had copied the drawing which he called ‘Facsimile No. 1’ and published with the Book of Abraham” (*Deseret News*, November 27, 1967, page 1). While the Church leaders were willing to admit that the drawing which Joseph Smith used for Fac. No. 1 in the Book of Abraham was among the manuscripts they were reluctant to admit that the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith “translated” the text for the Book of Abraham itself was among the collection. In the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, March 1968, we pointed out that the fragment of Papyrus which Dr. Nibley labeled “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ text (unillustrated)” was the fragment Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from. In the Mormon publication, *Improvement Era*, May 1968, Dr. Nibley finally admitted that the papyrus Joseph Smith used “in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham” had been located.

This fragment of papyrus has now been translated by three different Egyptologists, and they have all come to the conclusion that it is in reality an appendage to the Egyptian “Book of Breathings,” and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. Therefore, the Book of Abraham has been proven to be a spurious work.

Dee Jay Nelson, one of the Egyptologists who translated the papyrus, is a member of the Mormon Church. Mr. Nelson’s research has led him to the conclusion that his church must give up the Book of Abraham. In a letter dated July 13, 1968, he stated: “I have been swamped lately by letters and long distance telephone calls from troubled people. Almost every one of them asks if I really believe that the **Book of Abraham is untrue** and each seems almost pleadingly eager for me to defend it. To each I have said that **I do not believe it.**” Mr. Nelson informed us that in one week he “received 33 letters and 19 long distance calls about the Book of Abraham & the papyri.”

Since David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Mormon Church, has stated that he knows of “no scriptural basis for denying the Priesthood to Negroes other than one verse in the Book of Abraham,” and since the Egyptologists have declared the Book of Abraham a spurious work, it appears that there is no real basis for this doctrine.

THE GREAT STALL

The Mormon leaders seem to feel that if they ignore this problem it will eventually go away. They have appointed Dr. Hugh Nibley, of Brigham Young University, to unfold “the meaning of the hieroglyphics.” Although Dr. Nibley knows several languages, he was not qualified to translate the Egyptian papyri. In fact, in a letter to the Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson, Dr. Nibley claimed that he did not even want to “get involved in the P.G.P. business.” (The letters “P.G.P.” are, of course, an abbreviation for *Pearl of Great Price*. The Book of Abraham is printed as part of the *Pearl of Great Price*.) Dr. Nibley stated:

I don’t consider myself an Egyptologist at all, and don’t intend to get involved in the P.G.P. business unless I am forced into it—which will probably be sooner than that . . . I see no reason in the world why you should not be taken into the confidence of the Brethren if this thing ever comes out into the open; in fact, you should be enormously useful to the Church. . . . As you know, there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P.G.P.; if they **have their way** we may have to get together. (Letter from Dr. Hugh Nibley to Dee Jay Nelson, dated June 27, 1967)

Whether Dr. Nibley wanted to or not, he now finds himself deeply involved in the “P.G.P. business,” and the Mormon people are looking to him for answers. After writing almost 400 pages on the papyri, the Mormon writer Jay M. Todd has to admit that he has not discussed “the meaning of the papyri themselves” and refers the readers to Dr. Nibley’s work:

One major remaining issue remains still undiscussed in this background study, and that is the meaning of the papyri themselves. That issue shall **remain undiscussed**. Egyptologists in and out of the Church will address themselves to that area for some years to come. The import and significance of the papyri recently rediscovered will be told Latter-day Saints by Dr. Hugh Nibley, to whom the First Presidency has given the assignment. Surely his mind and hand will be blessed, and his report will be one of immense interest and significance to members of the Church. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, Salt Lake City, 1969, pages 387-388)

Dr. Nibley has written many articles for the *Improvement Era*, but so far he has not translated the papyri or made any attempt to tell the Mormon people “the meaning of the papyri themselves.” He has had photographs of the papyri since “the summer of 1966,” and the original papyri have been at BYU since they were presented to the Church, yet he has failed to produce a translation. In a letter dated February 8, 1968, Dr. Nibley stated that the “papyri are not difficult to translate,” and that he had “made a translation of some of the papyrus.” If Dr. Nibley has made a translation why hasn’t he published it? Dee Jay Nelson completed his “Translation and Preliminary Survey” in less than two months. Hugh Nibley has had photographs of the papyri for about four years, yet he has not published a translation. The picture of Dr. Nibley working with the papyri on the front page of this *Messenger* is taken from the Brigham Young University Alumnus, February, 1970. The caption under the picture contains this statement: “Dr. Hugh Nibley works at **translating** some of the papyri donated recently to the Church. Copies of the writings of Abraham will be shown at the Alumni Reception—College of Religion reception in the Hotel Utah during April General Conference.” While the article goes on to state that “copies of the Book of Abraham papyri” would be displayed, it says nothing about Dr. Nibley completing a translation before April Conference. There is good reason to believe that Dr. Nibley will **never publish** a translation of the papyri, for in an article he wrote in 1968, he stated: “. . . it is doubtful whether any translation could do as much good as harm” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 251).

NAIVE VIEW

Although the Mormon leaders have refused to face the facts concerning the Book of Abraham, there is evidence that some of the Mormon people are beginning to look seriously at the problem. For instance, the Latter-day Saints Student Association publication, *LDSSA Commentary*, has published some interesting information by Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes. While these men still hold to the idea that the Book of Abraham is divinely inspired they admit that it cannot be a literal translation of the papyrus as the church has always taught. In one article they state:

The rediscovery of the Joseph Smith Papyri in 1967 has facilitated further research into the origin and nature of the Book of Abraham and has made it possible to reformulate entirely our concepts about the process by which Joseph Smith produced the Book of Abraham. . . .

Lacking the original papyri or any significant amount of information about the materials which stimulated the writing of the Book of Abraham, the members of the Church have always assumed that book to have been a **literal translation** of a document written by the hand of Abraham himself. Now it is possible to supersede **this naive view** with a deeper understanding of the origins of that book. . . . One of the recently acquired papyri, it seems, is directly related to the Book of Abraham. Critics of the Church have labelled it the source from which the book of Abraham was “translated.”

Upon examination of the original papyrus fragments presented to the Church, we and others discovered that the Egyptian hieratic characters of the “preface” portion of the Small Sensen Fragment were essentially those contained in the left-hand column of Joseph Smith’s notes concerning the Book of Abraham. These Egyptian words were juxtaposed in the order in which they occur on papyrus to verses from the Book of Abraham. It appears therefore, that **Joseph Smith connected the Book of Abraham to the Small Sensen Fragment**. This conclusion is supported by the fact pointed out by Dr. Klaus Baer, a well-known Egyptologist, that the Small Sensen Fragment immediately followed and was originally attached to the left side of the papyrus bearing “Facsimile 1.” . . .

Our own translation and those of several Egyptologists of the Small Sensen Fragment have demonstrated that this papyrus is part of an Egyptian **funerary document**. Its relationship to the Book of Abraham must, then, be **something other** than has long been thought. The possibility of its use

as a mnemonic device in connection with an Abrahamic oral tradition was suggested by our further studies. (*LDSSA Commentary*, March 27, 1969)

INTO THE FIRE

On November 13, 1969, the *Salt Lake Tribune* stated that Stanford University “announced Wednesday it will schedule no new athletic or other competitions with Brigham Young University because of alleged racial discrimination by the Mormon Church.” Obert C. Tanner, professor of philosophy at the University of Utah, called Stanford’s action “easily the sharpest criticism of the Mormon religion in this century” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 7, 1970). After Stanford University made this announcement, it appeared that the Mormon leaders might change the doctrine concerning the Negro. On December 25, 1969, the following appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

San Francisco — The Mormon Church’s denial of its priesthood to Negroes of African lineage “**will change in the not too distant future**,” according to Hugh B. Brown, one of the highest ranking officials of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Lester Kinsolving, religious columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported Wednesday.

Pres. Brown, who is first counselor to Pres. David O. McKay, told Mr. Kinsolving that admission of Negroes to the priesthood will come about “in the **ordinary evolution of things** as we go along, since human rights are basic to the church.” . . .

When asked if he thought that this change would come about during Pres. McKay’s presidency, he replied:

“Well, that’s impossible to predict. He’s ill right now.” . . . Pres. Brown disclosed Wednesday that Willard Wyman [from Stanford University], . . . had contacted him . . . Pres. Brown also disclosed that he had told Wyman that “the church is not prejudiced in any way **but this one, but I think that will change**.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, December 25, 1969)

Shortly after this members of the Mormon Church were surprised to learn that David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church, held some very liberal views with regard to the Negro. This information came from a letter Sterling McMurrin had written to Llewelyn R. McKay (David O. McKay’s son) in 1968. In this letter Dr. McMurrin stated:

I am writing this letter, with copies to your brothers Lawrence, Edward, and Robert, to tell you of a conversation with your father in the Spring of 1954. . . .

At one point in the conversation I introduced the subject of the common belief among the Church membership that **Negroes are under a divine curse**. I told him that I regarded this doctrine as both **false** and **morally abhorrent** and that some weeks earlier, in a class in my own Ward, I had made it clear that I did not accept the doctrine and that I wanted to be known as a dissenter to the class instructor’s statements about “our beliefs” in this matter.

President McKay replied that he was “**glad**” that I had taken this stand, as he also **did not believe this teaching**. He stated his position in the matter very forcefully and clearly and said with considerable feeling that “there is not now, and there never has been, a doctrine in the Church that the Negroes are under a divine curse.” He insisted that there is no doctrine of any kind pertaining to the Negro. “We believe,” he said, “that we have scriptural precedent for with holding the priesthood from the Negro. It is a practice, not a doctrine, and the practice will some day be changed. And that’s all there is to it.” He made it clear what scripture he had in mind by mentioning the well known passage in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Abraham 1:26-27. He made no reference to the Bible or the Cain and Able Story. (Letter by Sterling M. McMurrin to Llewelyn R. McKay, dated August 26, 1968, typed copy)

In an article published in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, David O. McKay’s own son confirmed the fact that his father had made the statements Sterling McMurrin attributed to him:

President David O. McKay of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was quoted Wednesday as saying as early as 1954 that “there is no doctrine in this church and there never was a doctrine in this church to the effect that the Negroes are under any kind of divine curse.”

Dr. Sterling M. McMurrin, former U.S. Commissioner of Education . . . recalled a conversation in which President McKay also said, “As a matter of fact, there is no doctrine in this church whatsoever that pertains to the Negroes.”

. . . on Aug. 26, 1968, he [McMurrin] wrote a three-page letter to President McKay’s son, Dr. Llewelyn R. McKay, . . .

Dr. Llewelyn McKay “told me later that he read the letter to his father, and that his father told him that it was an entirely reliable report of what happened and what he said,” Dr. McMurrin stated.

Letter confirmed

This was confirmed Wednesday by Dr. McKay, who said there is “nothing contrary to what President McKay said” in the letter. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 15, 1970)

Three days after this statement was published President McKay died. He was 96 years old at the time. On January 24, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

President Joseph Fielding Smith, 93-year-old president of the Council of Twelve Apostles, Friday became the tenth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

This was a terrible blow for those in the Church who wanted to solve the problem with the Negro, for Joseph Fielding Smith is the man who has been responsible for much of the anti-Negro feelings in the Church. In his book, *The Way to Perfection*, Joseph Fielding Smith made these statements concerning the Negro:

Not only was Cain called upon to suffer, but because of his wickedness he became the father of an **inferior race**. A **curse** was placed upon him and that curse has been continued through his lineage and must do so **while time endures**. Millions of souls have come into this world **curse**d with a **black skin** and have been **denied** the privilege of **Priesthood** and the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel. These are the descendants of Cain. Moreover, they have been made to feel their **inferiority** and have been **separated** from the rest of mankind from the beginning . . . we will also hope that blessings may eventually be given to our **Negro** brethren, for they are our brethren—children of God—notwithstanding their **black covering emblematical of eternal darkness**. (*The Way to Perfection*, Salt Lake City, 1931, pages 101-102)

Since the Church has run into trouble because of the anti-Negro doctrine, Joseph Fielding Smith has become more guarded in his statements. Notice that in his book, *The Way to Perfection*, page 101, he plainly stated that Negroes are “an inferior race,” yet when the Church was in serious trouble because of George Romney’s political ambitions, Joseph Fielding Smith stated that the Mormons have never described the Negro as “belonging to an ‘inferior race’”:

“The ignorance on the part of writers who do not belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in relation to the view of the ‘Mormons’ on the status religiously or otherwise of the Negro is inexcusable. . . .

“The Latter-day Saints, so commonly called ‘Mormons’ have no animosity towards the Negro. Neither have they described him as belonging to an ‘inferior race.’” (*Deseret News*, Church Section, June 14, 1962, page 3)

Joseph Fielding Smith is the same man who tried to hide the fact that some Negroes were ordained to the Priesthood in the Mormon Church. On June 8, 1960, a woman who was a member of the Mormon Church, wrote a letter to Joseph Fielding Smith asking him if it was true that Negroes had been ordained Elders. The answer she received was postmarked June 10, 1960, and read: “**Negroes were not ordained in the early Church**.” Three years later, Joseph Fielding Smith was forced to admit that at least one Negro, Elijah Abel, had been ordained. In a letter dated April 10, 1963, Joseph Fielding Smith stated: “. . . this statement that Elijah Abel was so ordained has traveled to the end of the earth.” In the same letter Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

It is true that **Elders of the Church laid hands on a Negro and blessed him “apparently” with the Priesthood**, but they could not give that which the Lord had denied. It is **true** that Elijah Abel was so “**ordained**.”

Wallace Turner gives this information concerning Negroes in the Priesthood:

The continual LDS insistence on racial bigotry has another serious defect, too, since it assumes that the prohibition is equal to all Negroes and always has been. This is untrue. All Mormons who have ever studied the matter know that Elijah Abel, the Nauvoo mortician who was a friend of Joseph Smith, was a priesthood member, even becoming a Seventy. . . .

Jerald and Sandra Tanner, in a short book they call *Joseph Smith’s Curse Upon the Negro*, assert that Enoch Abel, a son of Elijah, was ordained as an elder in Logan, Utah, and that his son, Elijah, a grandson of the first Elijah

Abel, was ordained a priest in 1934 and as an elder in Logan in 1935. About the descendants of the pioneer Negro Mormon, the Tanners write:

"At least forty of these live within a radius of 100 miles of Salt Lake City, and, of course, some of them hold the Priesthood and are doing missionary work for the church." (*The Mormon Establishment*, Boston, 1966, pages 241-243)

The Mormon writer Armand L. Mauss stated:

One wonders, for example, why the Lord permitted the ordination of Elijah Abel (and I have even heard it claimed that Church records would show Abel's sons and grandsons to have been ordained too, although I have never seen any such records or their facsimiles). (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, page 24)

In order to verify the fact that Abel's descendants were ordained we have obtained a photograph from the Record of Members of the Logan Tenth Ward for the years 1927-1943. This photograph proves that Elijah Abel (the grandson of the Negro Elijah Abel) was ordained to the Priesthood. Notice that he was ordained a Priest July 5, 1934, and an Elder September 29, 1935.

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|--|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| 84 (Consultation) Name in Full <u>Elijah Ables</u> | | MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME <u>Mary Jones</u> | |
| Father's Name <u>Leasiah Ables</u> | DAY MONTH YEAR <u>21 Dec 1874</u> | Received from <u>Daniel M. Hales</u> | DATE <u>1 Aug 1928</u> |
| Born at <u>Logan, Utah</u> | | Mission to | |
| Blessed by <u>Fred Hilgen Jr.</u> | <u>30 June 1917</u> | Married to | |
| Confirmed by <u>Lorenzo S. Eggeby</u> | <u>20 June 1917</u> | Temple or Civil | |
| Ordained by <u>J. C. Haysman</u> | <u>5 July 1934</u> | Removed to | |
| Ordained by <u>Robert E. Hill</u> | <u>29 Sept 1935</u> | Excommunicated for | |
| Ordained by | | Died of | |
| Ordained by | | Cancelled (see instructions) | |

The Mormon writer John L. Lund seems willing to admit that Abel's descendants have been ordained: "It is also apparently true that several other Negroes, including some of Elijah Abel's descendants, have been ordained to the Priesthood" (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, page 78).

NEGROES IN CHOIR

It is obvious that the situation between Mormons and Negroes is becoming very tense. The following appeared in the *Denver Post* on November 15, 1969:

The Rev. Roy Flournoy . . . called for reform of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in what he alleged is a practice of racism against blacks. . . .

The Church of the Black Cross, . . . is called for:

—**Boycott** of Mormon goods, such as record albums of the **Mormon Tabernacle Choir**.

—Discouraging tourist travel to Utah, home state of the church.

—Taxpayer petitions to the government asking that the Mormon church's tax-exempt status be abolished. . . .

Flournoy added that he believes the average member of the Mormon Church would willingly remove such doctrines from his religion and would welcome outside pressure to do so. . . .

"I believe racism has been forced upon Mormons by its leaders, and isn't the philosophy of the people," Flournoy said.

The reader will notice that the Church of the Black Cross is calling for a boycott "of Mormon goods, such as record albums of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir." Shortly after this article appeared the Mormons decided to bring some Negroes into their choir. Wallace Turner states: "recently the Mormon Tabernacle Choir took in two Negro women as second sopranos, and reportedly, is about to welcome a Negro tenor" (*New York Times*, January 25, 1970).

Almost a month after Wallace Turner published his article in the *New York Times*, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Black faces are among the sea of white ones in the 375-voice Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

The two new members of the 122-year-old choir are Negroes Wynetta Martin and Marilyn Yuille. . . . Mrs. Martin . . . and her two daughters, came to Salt Lake City in 1967 "because my stake president in San Diego said that I had a mission to do here, in his words 'to teach love among all people.' I sold everything I had and flew to Salt Lake," she said.

She first applied for membership in the choir after she arrived but her dream wasn't realized until last month. . . .

Miss Yuille "just happened into the Tabernacle Choir." . . . she came to Utah last summer and the group's conductor, Dr. Jay E. Welch, also assistant Tabernacle Choir director, encouraged her to audition . . .

"I thought he was kidding but when he cornered me at a fireside and I discovered he was serious, I decided to audition," she explained. She auditioned for choir director Richard P. Condie on Dec. 2, and sang at her first performance Dec. 4." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 21, 1970)

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Martin waited two or three years to get into the choir, whereas Miss Yuille was singing in the choir only two days after her audition. This whole matter looks especially strange when we consider the fact that Miss Yuille was put in the choir less than three weeks after the *Denver Post* announced that the Church of the Black Cross was calling for a boycott of "Mormon goods, such as record albums of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir."

A reliable source within the Church reveals that the Church is considering taking two more Negroes into the Tabernacle Choir. There is, of course, opposition to this plan within the Church, so it is impossible to say whether this will actually work out.

BYU TROUBLES

The Church-operated Brigham Young University has received a great deal of criticism from those who are seeking equal rights for the Negro. In rebuttal to these charges, Ernest L. Wilkinson, President of BYU, made this statement:

True, there are **not many black students** on our campus. Just how many there are I do not know . . .

Their decisions may have been based on their belief that their social life would be curtailed. . . . as far as we know there is **not a single Negro family residing in the entire county in which BYU is located**, and this we are told by Negroes is an important factor in the decision black students make in not coming to BYU.

You should be informed that we have had Negro athletes. . . . we welcome black athletes at BYU provided they satisfy our entrance requirements and are willing to abide by our standards.

We shall continue to try to bring them to BYU, . . . (*Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, December 15, 1969)

While it is true that the BYU has had black athletes, the record for recruiting them has not been very impressive. In fact, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 26, 1969, reported that the "BYU has had no varsity black athletes since the late 1950s when two Negroes were on the track team. No Negroes have ever played on the varsity football or basketball teams, school officials have said."

Recently the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that BYU would have a Negro football player this year. Tom Hudspeth, head football coach at BYU, has made some very revealing statements concerning this matter. He admits that in the past Negro athletes have been discouraged from coming to BYU and that one of the "rules" at BYU is that there is to be no "inter-racial dating." The following appeared in the *Daily Herald*, published at Provo, Utah:

Springville — The protests and demonstrations which are being launched against BYU are just an easy entrance into other problems the Negroes feel they have, Tom Hudspeth, head BYU football coach, told the Springville Chamber of Commerce recently at an early morning breakfast meeting.

"The shame of all this is that these young men are victims of circumstances. . . . The only answer is to stand fast, and we are going to do that. **We will not change our policies**," he declared.

Negro Here

Coach Hudspeth pointed out that he has a young Negro man on the campus now, and they feel this is the time to bring him into the athletic program. "In the past we felt **we should discourage the Negroes** because we felt they would not be happy in the social situation here. We have certain rules and regulations which we won't change. They must meet academic standards. We will **not allow inter-racial dating**. We are only 35 minutes from Salt Lake City where there is a Negro community, and we are setting up appointments and introductions there." . . . Coach Hudspeth declared that the young Negro man is from a junior college in Oklahoma . . . "We felt we could work out something to relieve a little of the pressure. This is the only way we have changed our policy," he said. . . .

Coach Hudspeth indicated that "a lot of people are mad at me right now because they feel we are giving in." (*Daily Herald*, Provo, Utah, February 16, 1970)

Brigham Young University athletic teams have been met with “a gathering wave of protest” during the last two years. Finally, on February 5, 1970, the BYU basketball team was met with the “most violent demonstration” it had ever encountered. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Fort Collins, Colo.— The **most violent demonstration yet** against **Brigham Young University** by **black students** protesting the Provo school’s allegedly **racist policies** took place here Thursday night . . .

The real violence, however, erupted at halftime when approximately 100-150 black students shuffled out of the stands and walked out on the court.

The violence occurred as campus police tried to remove the blacks from the floor. . . . a photographer . . . was struck on the head with a metal object and was taken to a Fort Collins hospital. . . . an object described as a Molotov Cocktail, huge and flaming, was tossed on the court. It was quickly brushed off the floor by an alert attendant. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1970)

TRUE REVELATION

While the Mormon leaders claim that the Church is led by revelation, many people are beginning to realize that this claim cannot substantiated. To accept their “revelation” concerning the Negro, it is necessary to reject the Spirit of God which works within us. The Lord plainly reveals to us, as he did to Peter many years ago, that “**God is no respecter of persons**” (Acts 10:34) to accept the anti-Negro doctrine is to deny the spirit of revelation. If we allow others to do our thinking on this vital issue it could lead to violence or bloodshed. Because we felt that it was not right to put our trust in man, we separated ourselves from the Mormon Church. Those who choose to remain in the Church should at least make it clear that they do not support the anti-Negro doctrine. Stewart L. Udall, who served as Secretary of the Interior, has made this statement:

We Mormons cannot escape persistent, painful inquiries into the sources and grounds of this belief. . . . This issue must be resolved . . . It must be resolved because **we are wrong** and it is past the time when we should have seen the **right**. A failure to act here is sure to demean our faith, damage the minds and morals of our youth, and undermine the integrity of our Christian ethic. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1967, pages 5-6)

We have now completed a book of over 70 pages entitled: *Mormons and Negroes*. This book contains the information found in our previous work on this subject plus a great deal more. We cover such subjects as: the protest against BYU and the Mormon Church, racism at BYU, dissatisfaction in the Church, the question of a new revelation, President McKay’s statements to Dr. McMurrin, Negroes who have held the Priesthood, the failure of the Nigerian Mission, slavery and civil rights among the Mormons, and many other important subjects. Also included is the complete text of the Apostle Mark E. Petersen’s speech “Race Problems—As They Affect The Church.” The prices on this book are: \$2.00 each — 2 for \$3.50 — 5 for \$7.00 — 10 for \$12.00.

Help Send Food

In the February 1970 issue of the newsletter published by the World-Wide Missions we find the following:

“My food tastes bitter in my mouth. Every bite I take brings pictures of the horror of my own people in Biafra,” said Dr. Njaka who had just returned from Biafra, his native land. “Here in America we throw away enough every day to keep Biafra from starving.”

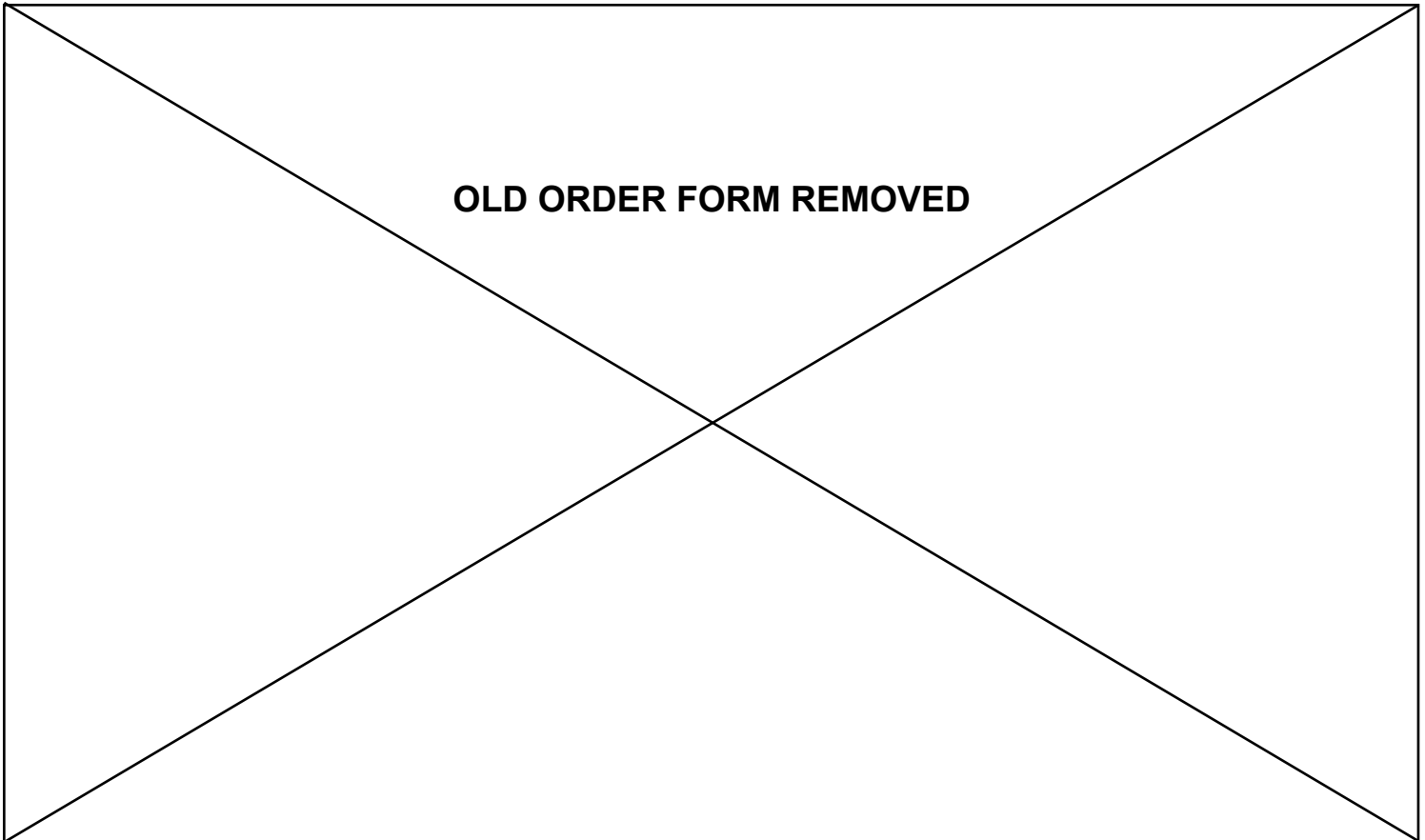
He had come to my office begging for supplies for his people. World-Wide Missions had on hand several tons for shipment and we prayed and discussed what to do about it. He said:

“We need money to ship all of these supplies to my native land. I can get them in. Will you ask your people to help supply the funds for shipment?”

My friend, now as multiplied thousands are starving in Biafra, I ask you, “Will you send a gift to ship the supplies we have on hand?”

All gifts to World-Wide Missions are tax-deductible. Donations should be sent to the following address:

WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS
PO BOX G
PASADENA, CA 91109



CONQUERING PREJUDICE

While the Mormons have not retaliated against the demonstrators, there are extremists on both sides, and this could lead to bloodshed. Perhaps we could all learn a lesson from a Negro who became a Christian. Tom Skinner grew up in Harlem and became the leader of “the Harlem Lords”—a gang of over 100 young men. He had “led the fellows in more than fifteen large scale gang fights.” In his book, *Black and Free*, he states:

Just as the racist convinces himself that his racial prejudice is really good for both races, I had gotten to the place where I could take a bottle, bash it across a fellow’s head and be undisturbed about it. I could take that same bottle, break it in half, and shove the glass in the man’s face and twist it without even batting my eye.

By the time I left the gang I had twenty-two notches on the handle of my knife which meant that my blade had gone into twenty-two different fellows. (*Black and Free*, Michigan, 1969, pages 40-41)

One night Tom Skinner was “preparing strategy for a gang fight.” This was to be “the largest gang rumble ever to take place in the city of New York.” Five gangs “were going to unite together to fight a coalition of gangs from the other side of the city.” Over “3,000 fellows” were to be involved in this fight. While planning this gang war, Tom Skinner was listening to a rock and roll program on the radio. At nine o’clock that night an “unscheduled gospel program came on.” Mr. Skinner states:

I tried to turn to another station. But somehow I found myself compelled to listen to this uncouth preacher.

I went on mapping out the strategy that I planned, trying to ignore what the preacher was saying. Yet, what he was saying got through to me.

This uncouth, uneducated preacher spoke from II Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 17, a passage which says, “Wherefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Old things are passed away and behold all things are become new.”

That night Tom Skinner decided to leave the gang and become a Christian. On pages 68-69 of his book, Mr. Skinner gives this interesting information:

If I had not been reached by Jesus Christ I would either be dead, in prison, or graduated to a higher form of hoodlumism. . . . Jesus Christ is alive in me. My life has new meaning and purpose because of Him.

The tremendous work that the Spirit of God had done in my life in transforming me soon became evident to me. **He took the bigotry, hate and violence out of my life. I had reached the place where I hated white people and blamed them for all the atrocities, immorality and social injustices that were brought against the Negro. Now that hate was gone.**

In a football game several weeks later, my new-found Christian love met another test. . . . I pulled out and blocked the defensive end, knocking him out of play. . . . The kid that I happened to block got up and was furious. He jumped in front of me and slammed me in the stomach. As I bent over from the blow he hacked me across the back. I hit the ground as he kicked me shouting, “**You dirty black nigger!** I’ll teach you a thing or two!”

Under normal circumstances the old Tom Skinner would have jumped up and pulverized this white boy. But instead, I got up from the ground and found myself looking this fellow in the face. A smile broke across my face and I said to him, “You know, **because of Jesus Christ, I love you anyway.**” . . . I was a new person! Here was Tom Skinner who, six weeks before, would have tried to kill this white bigot, barehanded. Now I was able to look into the face I normally would have smashed, and tell him that I loved him in Christ.

The kid threw his helmet down to the ground, ran off the field, and couldn’t play for the rest of the game. When the game was over he met me in the locker room and said to me, “Tom, **you’ve done more to knock prejudice out of me by telling me that you loved me than you would have if you’d socked my jaw in.**”

I became convinced that the only answer to the prejudice, the bigotry, and the hate that exists in our world today is that people allow the love of God through the Person of Jesus Christ to be expressed through them.

Karl Menninger, a noted psychiatrist, once stated that “love is the medicine for the sickness of the world,” and Jesus himself stated: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

✳ SPECIAL OFFER

Offer Ends — April 30, 1970

Case Against Mormonism — Vol. 1, 2 & 3

Reg. \$10.85 — SPECIAL — \$8.95

This special price includes the beautiful vinyl loose-leaf binder which will hold all three volumes. We have completed 78 pages of volume 3 and will mail out the remaining pages as soon as they are printed. All of our readers should have this work.

In a review of the first two volumes of this work, Dr. Kenneth Kantzer, Dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School stated:

These books represent no ordinary polemic against Mormonism. This is **the definitive, fully-documented, utterly-devastating case** against the divine authority and truthfulness of the foundational documents upon which the Mormon religion is based. (*Evangelical Beacon*, October 8, 1968, page 7)

THE MORMON KINGDOM

Vol. 1 & 2 — Special — \$6.95

This special price includes the beautiful vinyl loose-leaf binder which will hold three volumes. We have completed 32 pages of volume 2 and will mail out the remaining pages as soon as they are printed. These volumes deal with such subjects as: the doctrine of Blood Atonement, stealing, the Danites, the Temple ceremony, changes in the Temple garments, the relationship to Masonry, the “Oath of Vengeance,” baptism for the dead, the Council of 50, the Kirtland Bank, Joseph Smith’s secret ordination as King and his candidacy for President of the United States, whipping, emasculation, Hosea Stout, Bill Hickman, Orrin Porter Rockwell, Tom Brown, the Hodges, the murder of Miller and Lieza, the murder of Irvine Hodges, the murder of Col. Davenport, and many other important subjects.

❖ NEW BOOK

MORMONS and NEGROES

By Jerald and Sandra Tanner. This is a book of over 70 pages dealing with such subjects as: the protests against BYU and the Mormon Church, racism at BYU, dissatisfaction in the Church, the question of a new revelation, President McKay’s statements to Dr. McMurrin, Negroes who have held the Priesthood, the failure of the Nigerian Mission, slavery and civil rights among the Mormons, and many other important subjects. Also included is the complete text of the Apostle Mark E. Petersen’s speech “Race Problems—As They Affect the Church.”

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