

**THE BIBLE
AND
MORMON DOCTRINE**



By Sandra Tanner

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PART 1

ETERNAL PROGRESSION

To help the reader gain a better understanding of the Mormon belief in man's eternal progression we will quote a few passages which show the Mormon concept of a plurality of Gods. Joseph Smith taught:

First, God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is a man like unto one of yourselves, that is the great secret. . . . I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. . . . God himself; the Father of us all dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did, . . . Jesus said, as the Father hath power in himself, even so hath the Son power; to do what? why what the Father did, that answer is obvious; in a manner to lay down his body and take it up again. Jesus what are you going to do? To lay down my life, as my Father did, and take it up again.—. . . You have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves; to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done; by going from a small degree to another, from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, . . . (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, pages 613–614)

In the book *Mormon Doctrine* we are told:

Further, as the Prophet also taught, there is “a God above the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also. Where was there ever a son without a father? . . . Hence if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that he had a Father also?” (*Teachings*, pages 370, 373) In this way both the Father and the Son, as also all exalted beings, are now or in due course will become Gods of Gods. (*Teachings*, pages 343–376) (*Mormon Doctrine*, compiled by Bruce R. McConkie, Salt Lake City, 1966 ed., pages 322–323)

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

Indeed, this doctrine of plurality of Gods is so comprehensive and glorious that it reaches out and embraces every exalted personage. Those who attain exaltation are gods. (*Ibid.*, pages 576–577)

Godhood is not for men only; it is for men and women together. (*Ibid.*, page 844)

Mortal persons who overcome all things and gain an ultimate exaltation will live eternally in the family unit and have spirit children, thus becoming Eternal Fathers and Eternal Mothers. (*Ibid.*, page 517)

God himself, the Father of us all, is a glorified, exalted, immortal, resurrected Man! (*Ibid.*, page 643)

God is omnipotent . . . Omnipotence consists in having unlimited power, and God has all power, and there is no power which he does not have. . . . Those who obtain exaltation will gain all power and thus themselves be omnipotent. (*Ibid.*, page 544)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde made this comment:

Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a child, a mortal like we ourselves, and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 123)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, stated:

He is our Father—the Father of our spirits, and was once a man in mortal flesh as we are, and is now an exalted being. . . . God has once been a finite being; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 333)

But 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 . . . (*Ibid.*, Vol. 6, pages 274–275)

Consequently every earth has its redeemer, and every earth has its tempter; . . . (*Ibid.*, Vol. 14, page 71)

Lorenzo Snow, who was President of the Mormon Church, wrote the following in a poem entitled “Man’s Destiny”:

Still, tis no phantom that we trace
Man’s ultimatum in life’s race;
This royal path has long been trod
By righteous men, each now a God:

As Abra’m, Isaac, Jacob, too,
First babes, then men—to gods they grew.
As man now is, our God once was;
As now God is, so man may be, —
Which doth unfold man’s destiny. . . .

(*The Gospel Through The Ages*, by Milton R. Hunter, 1958, page 113)

Milton R. Hunter tells how God progressed to Godhood:

We accept the fact that God is the Supreme Intelligent Being in the universe. He has the greatest knowledge, the most perfect will, and the most infinite power of any person within the realm of our understanding. . . .

Yet, if we accept the great law of eternal progression, we must accept the fact that there was a time when Deity was much less powerful than He is today. Then how did He become glorified and exalted and attain His present status of Godhood? In the first place, aeons ago God undoubtedly took advantage of every opportunity to learn the laws of truth and as He became acquainted with each new verity He righteously obeyed it. From day to day He exerted His will vigorously, and as a result became thoroughly acquainted with the forces lying about Him. As he gained more knowledge through persistent effort and continuous industry, as well as through absolute obedience, His understanding of the universal laws continued to become more complete, Thus He grew in experience and continued to grow until He attained the status of Godhood. In other words, He became God by absolute obedience to all the eternal laws of the Gospel—by conforming His actions to all truth, and thereby became the author of eternal truth. Therefore, the road that the Eternal Father followed to Godhood was one of living at all times a dynamic, industrious, and completely righteous life. There is no other way to exaltation.

HOW MEN MAY BECOME GODS

Thus all men who ascend to the glorious status of Godhood can do so only by one method—by obedience to all the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . If to obtain eternal life means to enjoy the same type of life that God lives and to experience similar experiences, then those people who receive it to the fullest degree shall actually be Gods. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, pages 114–117)

Writing in 1853, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

The celestial beings who dwell in the Heaven from which we came, having been raised from the grave, in a former world, and having been filled with all the fulness of these eternal attributes, are called Gods, . . .

In the Heaven where our spirits were born, there are many Gods, each one of whom has his own wife or wives which were given to him previous to his redemption, while yet in his mortal state. Each God, through his wife or wives, raises up a numerous family of sons and daughters; . . . As soon as each God has begotten many millions of male and female spirits, . . . he, in connection with his sons, organizes a new world, after a similar order to the one which we now inhabit, where he sends both the male and female spirits to inhabit tabernacles of flesh and bones. . . . The inhabitants of each world are required to reverence, adore, and worship their own personal father who dwells in the Heaven which they formerly inhabited. . . .

The number of the sons and daughters of God, born in Heaven before this earth was formed, is not known by us. They must have been exceedingly numerous, as may be perceived, by taking into consideration the vast numbers which have already come from Heaven, and peopled our planet, during the past six thousand years. . . . Seventy thousand million, therefore, is a rough approximation to the number of inhabitants which the Lord destined to dwell in the flesh on this earth, . . .

It must be remembered, that seventy thousand million, however great the number may appear to us, are but two-thirds of the vast family of spirits who were begotten before the foundation of the world: the other third part of the family did not keep the first estate. Add to seventy thousand million, the third part which fell, namely, thirty-five thousand million, and the sum amounts to one hundred and five thousand million which was the approximate number of the sons and daughters of God in Heaven before the rebellion which broke out among them.

If we admit that one personage was the Father of all this great family, and that they were all born of the same Mother, the period of time intervening between the birth of the oldest and the youngest spirit must have been immense. If we suppose, as an average, that only one year intervened between each birth, then it would have required, over one hundred thousand million of years for the same Mother to have given birth to this vast family. (*The Seer*, by Orson Pratt, pages 37–38)

Now we turn to a few quotes from the Bible which show the impossibility of the Mormon concept of God being true. The Bible tells us:

... I am he: before me there was no God formed neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. (Isaiah 43:10–11)

I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. (Isaiah 44:6)

... there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:21–32)

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; ... (Num. 23:19)

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, ... (Romans 1:22–23)

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. (John 1:16–18)

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:17)

Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: (1 Timothy 6:16)

... his dear Son: ... Who is the image of the invisible God. (Colossians 1:15)

God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. (Jeremiah 23:24)

For I am the Lord, I change not. (Malachi 3:6)

They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. (Psalms 102:26–27)

On the next page is a chart depicting the Mormon plan of eternal progression, followed by an explanation in outline form. Following the outline there is a discussion of certain Mormon beliefs and the teachings of the Bible.

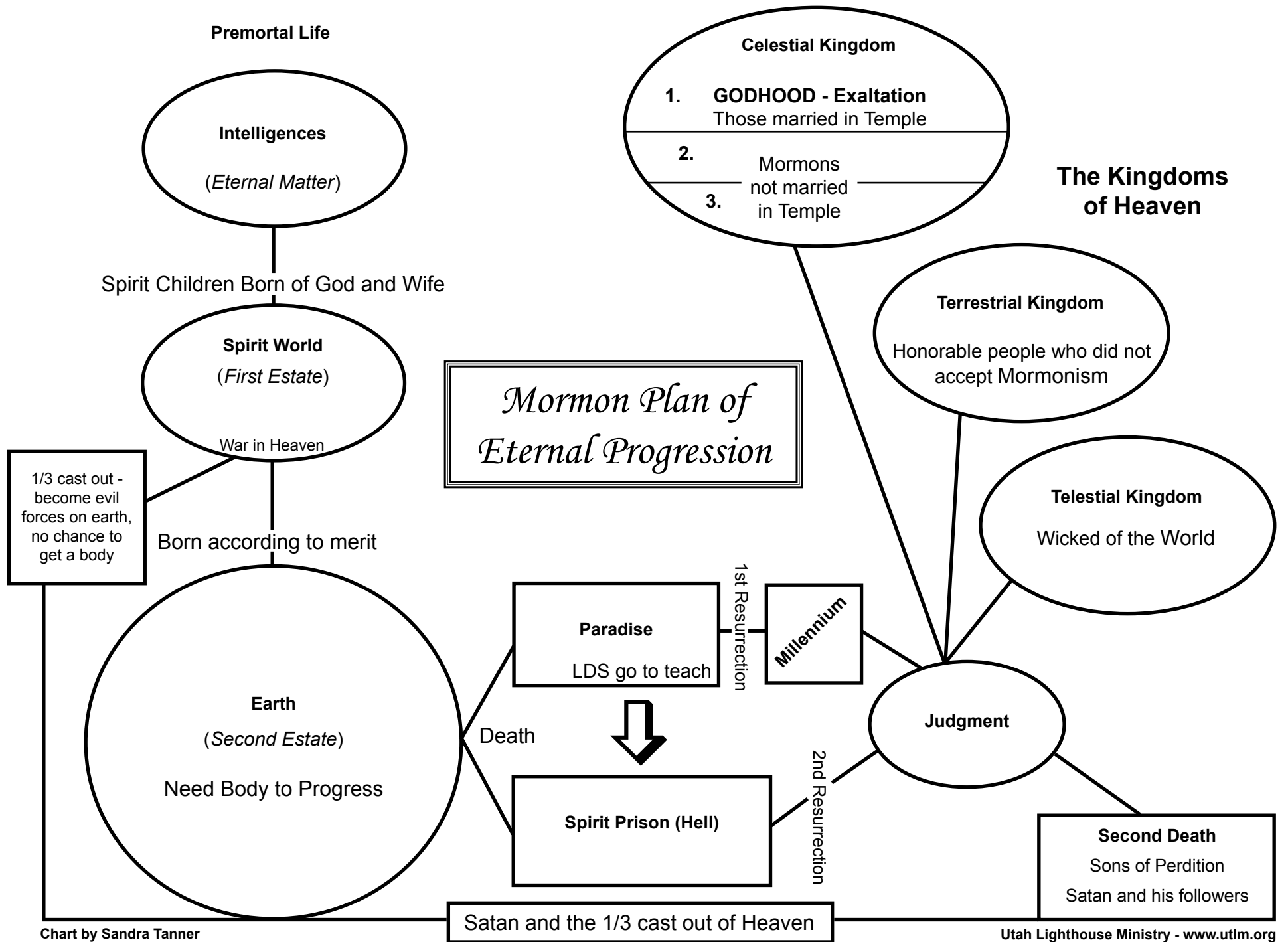


Chart by Sandra Tanner

PRE-EXISTENCE OF MAN

1. INTELLIGENCES. Man existed first as an intelligence. In Mormon scriptures we read:

... I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.

Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 3:21–22)

In the book *Mormon Doctrine*, page 387, we are told:

Use of this name [intelligences] designates both the primal element from which the spirit offspring were created and also their inherited capacity to grow ... until such intelligences ... become like their Father, the Supreme Intelligence.

Joseph Smith stated:

... the soul, the mind of man, the immortal spirit, All men say God created it in the beginning. The very idea lessens man in my estimation; I do not believe the doctrine, I know better. ...

The mind of man is as immortal as God himself. ... their spirits existed co-equal with God, ... take my ring from my finger and liken it unto the mind of man, the immortal spirit, because it has no beginning. ... God never did have power to create the spirit of man at all. God himself could not create himself: intelligence exists upon a self-existent principle, it is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it. ... The first principles of man are self-existent with God ... (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, page 615)

Milton R. Hunter explains:

In the first stage, man was an eternally existent being termed an intelligence. In that sphere of existence each individual was naturally conscious. ... In that realm, as in all other states of immortal existence, natural law, good and evil, love and hate, truth and error, and free agency exist. ...

We do not know how long we lived in this first realm, but it must have been ages and ages. There came a time, however, when we completed our work in that realm and were permitted to go forward in the eternal process of progression. ... The next realm where man dwelt was the spirit world. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, page 127)

2. SPIRIT CHILDREN. All men were literally born as spirit children of God and his wife (who once lived on another earth and are resurrected beings). Bruce R. McConkie explains it as follows:

Pre-existence is the term commonly used to describe the pre-mortal existence of the spirit children of God the Father. Speaking of this prior existence in a spirit sphere, the First Presidency of the Church (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund) said: “All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother, and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity”; as spirits they were the “offspring of celestial parentage.” (*Man: His Origin and Destiny*, pages 351, 355) These spirit beings, the offspring of exalted parents, were men and women, appearing in all respects as mortal persons do, excepting only that their spirit bodies were made of a more pure and refined substance than the elements from which mortal bodies are made. (Ether 3:16; D&C 131:7–8)

To understand the doctrine of pre-existence two great truths must be accepted: 1. That God is a personal Being in whose image man is created, an exalted perfected, and glorified Man of Holiness (Moses 6:57), and not a spirit essence that fills the immensity of space; and 2. That matter or element is self-existent and eternal in nature, creation being merely the organization and reorganization of that substance which “was not created or made, neither indeed can be.” (D&C 93:29) ... if there had been no self-existent spirit element, there would have been no substance from which those spirit bodies could have been organized. (*Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, pages 589–590)

Milton R. Hunter writes:

The stupendous truth of the existence of a Heavenly Mother, as well as a Heavenly Father, became established facts in Mormon theology. A complete realization that we are the offspring of Heavenly Parents—that we were begotten and born into the spirit world and grew to maturity in that realm—became an integral part of Mormon philosophy. Those verities are basic in the Gospel plan of eternal progression.

The prophets of our dispensation have clearly explained the doctrine of heavenly parenthood. ... “Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of Heavenly Parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body ...”

The crowning glory of exaltation received by every man and woman who obeys all of the Gospel principles and ordinances is centered directly in the doctrine of parenthood in the celestial degree of glory. (*The Gospel Through The Ages*, pages 98–99)

... numerous sons and daughters were begotten and born of heavenly parents into that eternal family in the spirit world. In the likeness of God Himself, these spirit children were organized, possessing divine, eternal, and godlike attributes, inherited from their Heavenly Father and Mother. There in the spirit world they were reared to maturity, becoming grown spirit men and women prior to coming upon this earth. (*Ibid.*, page 127)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt explained why Mormons don't pray to their Heavenly Mother:

But if we have a heavenly Mother as well as a heavenly Father, is it not right that we should worship the Mother of our spirits as well as the Father? No; for the Father of our spirits is at the head of His household, and His wives and children are required to yield the most perfect obedience to their great Head. It is lawful for the children to worship the King of Heaven, but not the "Queen of heaven." . . . Jesus prayed to His Father, and taught His disciples to do likewise; but we are nowhere taught that Jesus prayed to His heavenly Mother. . . . (*The Seer*, page 157)

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett, states:

In that existence men and Jesus were the same order of beings, of the same race, nature and essence. Jesus is literally our Elder Brother, the Firstborn of the Father. (*The Restored Church*, by William E. Berrett, Salt Lake City, 1956 ed., page 547)

3. WAR IN HEAVEN. Two of God's sons, Jesus and Lucifer, propose different plans for man's earth experience, When Lucifer's plan is rejected he leads one-third of God's spirit children in open warfare.

There were many meetings, conferences, councils, and schooling sessions held among the Gods and their spirit offspring in pre-existence. . . .

Ordinarily, perhaps, when the saints speak of the council in heaven, they have in mind the solemn session (at which, apparently, all of the pre-existent hosts were present) when the Father made formal announcement of his plan of redemption and salvation. . . . And it was then that the Father sent forth the call which said in substance and effect: Whom shall I send to be my Son in mortality? Who will go down, be born with life in himself, and work out the great atoning sacrifice by which immortality will come to all men and eternal life be assured to the obedient?

Two mighty spirits answered the call and volunteered their services. Christ said, in effect: Here am I, send me; I will be thy Son; I will follow thy plan; and "thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." But Lucifer sought to amend the plan of the Father and to change the proffered terms of salvation. "Behold, here am I, send me," he said, "I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor." (Moses 4:1-4) When the Father said, "I will send the first," then Lucifer was angry, kept not his first estate, rebelled, and he and one-third of the hosts of heaven were cast out down to earth to become the devil and his angels. (Abraham 3:25-28; D&C 29:36-40, *Mormon Doctrine*, pages 163-164)

With the rejection of his offer and the choosing of the Beloved Son to be the Redeemer, Satan made open warfare against the Lord. . . . "A third part of the hosts of heaven" joined the rebellion; . . .

Those thus cast out are denied bodies forever. They are sons of perdition, and with Lucifer, their father, they are in eternal opposition to all righteousness. (*Ibid.*, page 193)

4. MAN REAPS ON EARTH WHAT HE SOWED IN THE PRE-EXISTENCE. Bruce R. McConkie states:

In the pre-existent eternity various degrees of valiance and devotion to the truth were exhibited by different groups of our Father's spirit offspring. One-third of the spirit hosts of heaven came out in open rebellion and were cast out without bodies, . . . The other two-thirds stood affirmatively for Christ; . . .

Of the two-thirds who followed Christ, however, some were more valiant than others. . . . Those who were less valiant in pre-existence and who thereby had certain spiritual restrictions imposed upon them during mortality are known to us as the negroes. Such spirits are sent to earth through the lineage of Cain, the mark put upon him for his rebellion against God and his murder of Abel being a black skin (Moses 5:16-41; 7:8, 12, 22). Noah's son Ham married Egyptus, a descendant of Cain, thus preserving the negro lineage through the flood (Abra. 1:20-27).

Negroes in this life are denied the priesthood; under no circumstances can they hold this delegation of authority from the Almighty (Abra. 1:20-27). The gospel message of salvation is not carried affirmatively to them (Moses 7:8, 12, 22)

The present status of the negro rests purely and simply on the foundation of pre-existence. Along with all races and peoples he is receiving here what he merits as a result of the long pre-mortal probation in the presence of the Lord. . . .

The negroes are not equal with other races where the receipt of certain spiritual blessings are concerned, particularly the priesthood and the temple blessings that flow therefrom, but this inequality is not of man's origin. It is the Lord's doing, is based on his eternal laws of justice, and grows out of the lack of spiritual valiance of those concerned in their first estate. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 527-528)

As part of the testing incident to mortal existence, man for the moment has forgotten the great truths which were commonplace to him in pre-existence. (*Ibid.*, page 195)

*[See note 1 on page 13]

EARTH – MAN'S SECOND ESTATE

1. THE FALL OF ADAM. Bruce R. McConkie explains:

In that first edenic day, Adam was still in the presence of God, . . . As yet the full knowledge of good and evil had not been placed before him; and, what was tremendously important in the eternal scheme of things, he could have no children.

But all these conditions, in the providences of the Almighty, were soon to change. According to the foreordained plan, Adam was to fall; . . . Adam was to introduce mortality and all that attends it, so that the opportunity for eternal progression and perfection might be offered to all the spirit children of the Father.

In conformity with the will of the Lord, Adam fell both spiritually and temporally. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 268)

Sterling W. Sill, a Mormon leader, states:

Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction. He fell toward the goal. . . . Adam fell, but he fell upward. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 31, 1965, page 7)

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, writes:

This was a transgression of the law, but not a sin in the strict sense, for it was something that Adam and Eve had to do! (*Doctrines of Salvation*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, Vol. 1, page 115)

2. CHRIST'S MISSION. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

It was also necessary because of Adam's transgression for the Only Begotten Son of the Father to come to redeem the world from Adam's fall. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 121)

3. CHRIST'S BIRTH. Bruce R. McConkie states:

God the Father is a perfected, glorified, holy Man, an immortal Personage. And Christ was born into the world as the literal Son of this Holy Being; he was born in the same personal, real, and literal sense that any mortal son is born to a mortal father. There is nothing figurative about his paternity; he was begotten, conceived and born in the normal and natural course of events, for he is the Son of God, and that designation means what it says. . . . Christ is the Son of Man, meaning that his Father (the Eternal God!) is a Holy Man. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 742)

Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers. (*Ibid.*, page 547)

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, states:

Christ was begotten of God. He was not born without the aid of Man, and that Man was God! (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 18)

Brigham Young, second president of the Mormon Church, stated:

The man Joseph, the husband of Mary, did not, that we know of, have more than one wife, but Mary the wife of Joseph had another husband. (*Deseret News*, October 10, 1866)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt explained:

The fleshly body of Jesus required a Mother as well as a Father. Therefore, the Father and Mother of Jesus, according to the flesh, must have been associated together in the capacity of Husband and Wife; hence the Virgin Mary must have been, for the time being, the lawful wife of God the Father: we use the term lawful Wife, because it would be blasphemous in the highest degree to say that He overshadowed her or begat the Saviour unlawfully. It would have been unlawful for any man to have interfered with Mary, who was already espoused to Joseph; for such heinous crime would have subjected both the guilty parties to death, according to the law of Moses. But God having created all men and women, had the most perfect right to do with His own creation, according to His holy will and pleasure: He had a lawful right to overshadow the Virgin Mary in the capacity of a husband, and beget a Son, although she was espoused to another; for the law which He gave to govern men and women was not intended to govern Himself, or to prescribe rules for his own conduct. It was also lawful in Him, after having thus dealt with Mary, to give her to Joseph her espoused husband. Whether God the Father gave Mary to Joseph for time only, or for time and eternity, we are not informed. Inasmuch as God was the first husband to her, it may be that He only gave her to be the wife of Joseph while in this mortal state, and that He intended after the resurrection to again take her as one of his own wives to raise up immortal spirits in eternity. (*The Seer*, October, 1853, page 158)

4. THE ATONEMENT. Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, states:

TWOFOLD NATURE OF ATONEMENT. The atonement of Jesus Christ is of a twofold nature. Because of it, all men are redeemed from mortal death and the grave, and will rise in the resurrection to immortality of the soul. Then again, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, man will receive remission of individual sins, through the blood of Christ, and will inherit exaltation in the kingdom of God, which is eternal life. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 123)

FULNESS OF TRUTH GAINED ONLY THROUGH THE CHURCH. A man cannot receive the fulness of truth except in the kingdom of God, in other words, if you please, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . And when I say the kingdom of God, I have reference to the celestial kingdom. (*Ibid.*, page 299)

Bruce R. McConkie explains:

Thus the plan of salvation (of redemption, and of exaltation) comprises all of the laws, ordinances, principles, and doctrines by conformity to which the spirit offspring of God have power to progress to the high state of exaltation enjoyed by the Father. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 575)

William E. Berrett further explains:

All mankind needed just such a service—someone who had the power to lay down his life and the power to take it up again—to break the bonds of death and make resurrection a reality for all men. Christ was chosen, before the world was, to render this service and by conquering death become the Redeemer of all mankind. . . .

But man needs more than redemption from temporal death or the death of the body. He must also be redeemed from his fallen spiritual condition which has arisen as the result of his own sins. . . .

Man cannot be redeemed from this spiritual death by an act of Christ alone. . . . The Savior, however, by His sinless life, by His revelation of the goodness of the Father, by His unparalleled love for mankind, and by His assurance unto man of eternal life, became the greatest factor and incentive for the repentance of all mankind. (*The Restored Church*, pages 562-563)

Bruce R. McConkie defines salvation by grace to be universal resurrection:

Unconditional or general salvation, that which comes by grace alone without obedience to gospel law, consists in the mere fact of being resurrected. In this sense salvation is synonymous with immortality; . . . Conditional or individual salvation, that which comes by grace coupled with gospel obedience, consists in receiving an inheritance in the celestial kingdom of God. . . . Salvation in its true and full meaning is synonymous with exaltation or eternal life and consists in gaining an inheritance in the highest of the three heavens within the celestial kingdom. With few exceptions this is the salvation of which the scriptures speak. . . . This full salvation is obtained in and through the continuation of the family unit in eternity, and those who obtain it are gods. (D&C 131:1-4; 132)

Full salvation is attained by virtue of knowledge, truth, righteousness, and all true principles. . . . Without the atonement, the gospel, the priesthood, and the sealing power, there would be no salvation, . . . If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation outside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

.....

Immortality is a free gift and comes without works or righteousness of any sort; all men will come forth

in the resurrection because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. (1 Cor. 15:22) In and of itself the resurrection is a form of salvation meaning that men are thereby saved from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment. . . . In this sense, the mere fact of resurrection is called salvation by grace alone. . . .

Salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, however, is not salvation by grace alone. Rather, it is salvation by grace coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 669-671)

5. MORMON TEMPLE WORK. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

ENDOWMENT AND SEALING PRECEDE SONSHIP. The Lord has given unto us privileges, and blessings, and the opportunity of entering into covenants, of accepting ordinances that pertain to our salvation beyond what is preached in the world; beyond the principles of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, and baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost; and these principles and covenants are received nowhere else but in the temple of God.

If you would become a son or a daughter of God and an heir of the kingdom, then you must go to the house of the Lord and receive blessings which there can be obtained and which cannot be obtained elsewhere; and you must keep those commandments and those covenants to the end. . . . "In my Father's house are many mansions." Sons and daughters have access to the home where he dwells, and you cannot receive that access until you go to the temple. Why? Because you must receive certain key words as well as make covenants by which you are able to enter. If you try to get into the house, and the door is locked, how are you going to enter, if you haven't your key? You get your key in the temple, which will admit you. . . .

CELESTIAL MARRIAGE ESSENTIAL TO EXALTATION. Another thing that we must not forget in this great plan of redemption and exaltation, is that a man must have a wife, and a woman a husband, to receive the fulness of exaltation. They must be sealed for time and for all eternity in a temple; then their union will last forever, . . .

Parents will have eternal claim upon their posterity and will have the gift of eternal increase, if they obtain the exaltation. This is the crowning glory in the kingdom of God, and they will have no end. . . . No man shall receive the fulness of eternity, of exaltation, alone; no woman shall receive that blessing alone; . . . No man can obtain that exaltation without receiving the covenants that belong to the priesthood. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, pages 40, 43 & 44)

Milton R. Hunter informs us:

The crowning Gospel ordinance requisite for Godhood is celestial marriage. The doctrine of celestial marriage, as taught and practiced in the Church of Jesus Christ today, means temple marriage. . . . Marriage is not only a righteous institution, but obedience to this law is absolutely necessary in order to obtain the highest exaltation in the Kingdom of God. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, pages 118–119)

Bruce R. McConkie claims that Apostle Paul was married:

Paul himself was married. Of this there is no question. He had the sure promise of eternal life; his calling and election had been made sure (*Teachings*, page 151)—which, according to God’s eternal laws, could not have been unless he had first entered into the order of celestial marriage. (D&C 131; 132) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 119)

Since millions of people have died without the chance to accept Mormonism, the Mormons believe these people will be given this chance after they die, in the Spirit Prison, prior to their resurrection. Bruce R. McConkie tells us:

Baptism is the gate to the celestial kingdom, . . . hosts of people live and die without ever entering in at the gate of baptism so as to be on the path leading to eternal life. For them a just God has ordained baptism for the dead, a vicarious-proxy labor. (D&C 124:28–36; 127; 128; 1 Cor. 15:29)

. . . The dispensation of the fulness of times is the great era of vicarious ordinance work, a work which will continue during the millennial era until it has been performed for every living soul entitled to receive it. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 73)

SPIRIT PRISON OR PARADISE

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

DIVISIONS IN THE SPIRIT WORLD. All spirits of men after death return to the spirit world. There as I understand it, the righteous—meaning those who have been baptized and who have been faithful—are gathered in one part and all the others in another part of the spirit world. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 230)

Bruce R. McConkie states:

By spirit world is meant the abiding place of disembodied spirits, . . . This world is divided into two parts: paradise which is the abode of the righteous, and hell which is the abode of the wicked. . . . when

the wicked spirits repent, they leave their prison-hell and join the righteous in paradise. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 762)

. . . the righteous spirits in paradise have been commissioned to carry the message of salvation to the wicked in hell, . . . (Ibid., page 755)

Those who accept Mormonism in the Spirit Prison must have a mortal do their baptism and temple ordinances for them in order to enter the Celestial Kingdom. Thus today we have Mormons doing vicarious work for the dead in their temples. Joseph Smith stated:

The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us, is to seek after our dead. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, page 616)

FIRST RESURRECTION USHERS IN THE MILLENNIUM

Bruce R. McConkie explains as follows:

Two events of transcendent importance make possible the resurrection: 1. The fall of Adam; and 2. The redemptive sacrifice of the Son of God. Adam’s fall brought temporal or natural death into the world; that is, as a result of Adam’s fall mortality was introduced, and mortality is the forerunner of death. Christ’s redeeming sacrifice ransomed men from the effects of Adam’s fall in that mortality is replaced by immortality, or in other words in that the dead come forth in the resurrection. . . .

Two great resurrections await the inhabitants of the earth: one is the first resurrection, the resurrection of life, the resurrection of the just; the other is the second resurrection, the resurrection of damnation, the resurrection of the unjust. . . . Those being resurrected with celestial bodies, whose destiny is to inherit a celestial kingdom, will come forth in the morning of the first resurrection. Their graves shall be opened and they shall be caught up to meet the Lord at his Second Coming. They are Christ’s, the first fruits, and they shall descend with him to reign as kings and priests during the millennial era. . . . “then cometh the redemption of those who are Christ’s at his coming; who have received their part in that prison which is prepared for them, that they might receive the gospel, and be judged according to men in the flesh.” (D&C 88:99) This is the afternoon of the first resurrection; it takes place after our Lord has ushered in the millennium. Those coming forth at that time do so with terrestrial bodies and are thus destined to inherit a terrestrial glory in eternity. (D&C 76:71–80) (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 638, 640)

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

The great work of the millennium will be the salvation of the dead, and those who are on the other side will help us, too, by bringing us information. . . .

GENEALOGICAL RECORDS TO BE REVEALED IN MILLENNIUM. Those who will be living here then will be in daily communication with those who have passed through the resurrection, and they will come with this information, this knowledge that we do not have and will give it to those who are in mortality saying, "Now go into the temples and do this work; when you get this done, we will bring you other names." And in that way every soul who is entitled to a place in the celestial kingdom of God will be ferreted out, and not one soul shall be overlooked.

The Lord has not overlooked these things. He has seen the end from the beginning. Every name is recorded. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, pages 166–167)

PLURAL MARRIAGE RESTORED IN THE MILLENNIUM

Bruce R. McConkie states:

In the early days of this dispensation, as part of the promised restitution of all things, the Lord revealed the principle of plural marriage to the Prophet. Later the Prophet [Joseph Smith] and leading brethren were commanded to enter into the practice, which they did in all virtue and purity of heart despite the consequent animosity and prejudices of worldly people. After Brigham Young led the saints to the Salt Lake Valley, plural marriage was openly taught and practiced until the year 1890. At that time conditions were such that the Lord by revelation withdrew the command to continue the practice, . . . Obviously the holy practice will commence again after the Second Coming of the Son of Man and the ushering in of the millennium. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 578)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states:

The Church has never, and certainly will never, renounce this doctrine. The revelation on plural marriage is still an integral part of LDS scripture, and always will be. If a woman, sealed to her husband for time and eternity, precedes her husband in death, it is his privilege to marry another also for time and eternity, providing that he is worthy of doing so. Consider, for instance, the case of President Joseph Fielding Smith. . . one of the greatest men upon the earth. . . . After the death of his first wife President Joseph Fielding Smith married another, and each of these good women are sealed to him for time and all eternity. And who would have it otherwise? (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, by John J. Stewart, Salt Lake City, 1961, page 14)

Now, briefly, the reason that the Lord, through the Prophet Joseph, introduced the doctrine of plural marriage, and the reason that the Church—though forced by evil circumstances to suspend its practice here upon earth—has never and will never relinquish the doctrine of plural marriage, is simply this: the major purpose of the Church is to help man attain the great eternal destiny suggested in that couplet—to help prepare and qualify men and women to be candidates for the Celestial Kingdom, on the road to eventual godhood and goddesshood, and plural marriage is the patriarchal order of marriage lived by God and others who reign in the Celestial Kingdom. As well might the Church relinquish its claim to the Priesthood as the doctrine of plural marriage. (Ibid., pages 40–41)

The purpose of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, with the restoration of the Church and Gospel of Jesus Christ, is to prepare for the second coming of the Savior, which is nigh at hand; to help usher in His great millennial reign, when the Gospel in its fulness, including plural marriage, will be lived by worthy members of the Church. (Ibid., page 73)

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, is looking forward to living polygamy:

We believe that the family will go on. I get a great deal of comfort out of the thought that if I am faithful and worthy of an exaltation, . . . that my children and my wives will be mine in eternity. I don't know how some other people feel, but that is a glorious thought to me. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 67)

ANIMAL SACRIFICE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Now in the nature of things, the law of sacrifice will have to be restored, or all things which were decreed by the Lord would not be restored. It will be necessary, therefore, for the sons of Levi, who offered the blood sacrifices anciently in Israel, to offer such a sacrifice again to round out and complete this ordinance in this dispensation. Sacrifice by the shedding of blood was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity will have to be restored.

The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, . . . Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 94)

1000 YEARS IN HELL AND SECOND RESURRECTION

In *Mormon Doctrine* we read:

At the end of the millennium, the second resurrection begins. . . . These are the ones who have earned telestial bodies, who were wicked and carnal in mortality, and who have suffered the wrath of God in hell “until the last resurrection, until the Lord, even Christ the Lamb, shall have finished his work.” (D&C 76:85) Their final destiny is to inherit a telestial glory. (D&C 88:102)

Finally, in the latter end of the resurrection of damnation, the sons of perdition, those who “remain filthy still” (D&C 88:102), shall come forth from their graves. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 640)

Joseph Fielding Smith informs us:

Truly he has declared that those who reject his truth shall be damned, but he has not said that when they have paid the penalty of their transgression they shall not come forth from the prison house.

But on the other hand, he has said that after they have paid the penalty of their transgression, they shall come forth, and they shall receive their reward. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, pages 131–132)

JUDGMENT DAY

Bruce R. McConkie states:

After all men have been resurrected the day of the great final judgment will come. Every living soul shall then stand before God, the books will be opened, and the dead will be judged out of those things written in the books, according to their works. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 403)

Bodily perfection will come to all men as a free gift in the resurrection. . . . Except for the free gift of immortality (which comes by grace alone and includes bodily or physical perfection), all rewards gained in the eternal worlds must be earned. (*Ibid.*, page 641)

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Man must be redeemed according to law, and his reward must be based on the law of justice. Because of this, the Lord will not give unto men that which they do not merit, but shall reward all men according to their works.

While all men shall be saved, except the few sons of perdition who wilfully reject the truth, yet our place and station will depend upon our integrity and willingness to obey the commandments of the Lord, Every man will be placed just where he belongs, according to his works. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 27)

CELESTIAL KINGDOM

Bruce R. McConkie states:

Contrary to the views found in the uninspired teachings and creeds of modern Christendom, there are in eternity kingdoms of glory to which all resurrected persons (except the sons of perdition) will eventually go. These are named: celestial, terrestrial, and telestial—the glory of each being beyond mortal comprehension. (D&C 76; 1 Cor. 15:39–42; Rev. 21)

However, only the celestial kingdom is the kingdom of God where the faithful saints will gain their eternal inheritance. All who fall short of the glory of eternal life will in greater or lesser degree be damned (even though they dwell in a kingdom of glory), for their eternal progress will be limited, and they can never go on to an eternal fulness in the Father’s presence. (D&C 132:16–17)

Rewards granted individuals in eternity will vary between and within kingdoms. Only those who are sealed in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage and who thereafter keep the terms and conditions of that covenant will attain the highest of three heavens within the celestial kingdom. (D&C 131:1–4) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 420)

Mr. McConkie explains the concept of having children for all eternity:

Those who gain eternal life (exaltation) also gain eternal lives, meaning that in the resurrection they have eternal “increase,” “a continuation of the seeds,” a “continuation of the lives.” Their spirit progeny will “continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them.” (D&C 131:1–4; 132:19–25, 30, 55)

“Except a man and his wife enter into an everlasting covenant and be married for eternity, while in this probation, by the power and authority of the holy priesthood,” the Prophet says, “they will cease to increase when they die; that is, they will not have any children after the resurrection.” . . .

The opposite of eternal lives is eternal deaths. Those who come up separately and singly in the resurrection and who therefore do not have spirit children eternally are said to inherit “the deaths.” (D&C 132:16–17, 25) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 238)

That exaltation which the saints of all ages have so devoutly sought is godhood itself. Godhood is to have the character, possess the attributes, and enjoy the perfections which the Father has. It is to do what he does, have the powers resident in him, and live as he lives, having eternal increase. . . . They are gods. (Ibid., page 321)

President Joseph Fielding Smith believes that those who attain Godhood will then go on to different worlds and people them with their own spirit children. These children will then go through the same plan of eternal progress and some of these children will eventually become Gods, start their own worlds, and go through the whole process again. Mr. Smith states:

What is eternal life? It is to have “a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 9)

The Father has promised us that through our faithfulness we shall be blessed with the fulness of his kingdom. . . . To become like him we must have all the powers of godhood; thus a man and his wife when glorified will have spirit children who eventually will go on an earth like this one we are on and pass through the same kind of experiences, being subject to mortal conditions, and if faithful, then they also will receive the fulness of exaltation and partake of the same blessings. There is no end to this development; it will go on forever. We will become gods and have jurisdiction over worlds, and these worlds will be peopled by our own offspring. We will have an endless eternity for this. (Ibid., page 48)

Bruce R. McConkie states:

Even those in the celestial kingdom, however, who do not go on to exaltation, will have immortality only and not eternal life. Along with those of the telestial and terrestrial worlds they will be “ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.” They will live “separately and singly” in an unmarried state “without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity.” (D&C 132:16–17) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 670)

TERRESTRIAL KINGDOM

Bruce R. McConkie informs us:

Those attaining a terrestrial kingdom will be inheritors of terrestrial glory which differs from celestial glory “as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.” (D&C 76:71; 1 Cor. 15:41) . . . They “receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father” (D&C 76:77), and to all eternity they remain unmarried and without exaltation. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 784)

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Some of the functions in the celestial body will not appear in the terrestrial body, neither in the telestial body, and the power of procreation will be removed. I take it that men and women will, in these kingdoms, be just what the so-called Christian world expects us all to be—neither man nor woman, merely immortal beings having received the resurrection. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 288)

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* we read:

And again, we saw the terrestrial world, . . . Behold, these are they who died without law; . . . Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it. These are they who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men. . . . These are they who receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father. . . . These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 76:71–79)

TELESTIAL KINGDOM

Bruce R. McConkie informs us:

Most of the adult people who have lived from the day of Adam to the present time will go to the telestial kingdom. . . . They will be the endless hosts of people of all ages who have lived after the manner of the world; who have been carnal, sensual, and devilish; who have chosen the vain philosophies of the world rather than accept the testimony of Jesus; who have been liars and thieves, sorcerers and adulterers, blasphemers and murderers (D&C 76:81–112; Rev. 22:15) . . . “And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.” (D&C 76:112) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 778)

Though they attain a kingdom of glory, yet to all eternity they are damned, cannot go where God and Christ are (D&C 76:112), and are never completely free from the lingering remorse that always follows the loss of opportunity. (Ibid., page 235)

Joseph Fielding Smith tells of salvation for the wicked:

Those who live lives of wickedness may also be heirs of salvation, that is, they too shall be redeemed from death and from hell eventually. These, however, must suffer in hell the torments of the damned until they pay the price of their sinning, for the blood of Christ will not cleanse them. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, pages 133–134)

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* we read:

And again, we saw the glory of the celestial, . . .
These are they who received not the gospel of Christ, neither the testimony of Jesus.
These are they who deny not the Holy Spirit.
These are they who are thrust down to hell.
These are they who shall not be redeemed from the devil until the last resurrection, until the Lord, even Christ the Lamb, shall have finished his work.
These are they who receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the terrestrial;
And the terrestrial through the ministration of the celestial.
And also the celestial receive it of the administering of angels who are appointed to minister for them, or who are appointed to be ministering spirits for them; for they shall be heirs of salvation. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 76, verses 81–88)

NO PROGRESSIONS FROM KINGDOM TO KINGDOM

Joseph F. Smith states:

NO ADVANCEMENT FROM LOWER TO HIGHER. It has been asked if it is possible for one who inherits the celestial glory to advance in time to the celestial glory? The answer to this question is, No! (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 31)

SONS OF PERDITION

Bruce R. McConkie explains the concept of sons of perdition:

Lucifer is Perdition. He became such by open rebellion against the truth, a rebellion in the face of light and knowledge. . . . In rebellion with him were one-third of the spirit hosts of heaven, These all were thus followers (or in other words sons) of perdition. They were denied bodies, were cast out onto the earth, and thus came the devil and his angels—a great host of sons of perdition.

Those in this life who gain a perfect knowledge of the divinity of the gospel cause, a knowledge that comes only by revelation from the Holy Ghost, and who then link themselves with Lucifer and come out in open rebellion, also become sons of perdition. Their destiny, following their resurrection, is to be cast out with the devil and his angels, to inherit the same kingdom in a state where “their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (D&C 76:32–49; 29:27–30) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 746)

Joseph Fielding Smith tells of the few who will be sons of perdition:

A man through denying the truth and leaving the Church does not become a son of perdition, unless he has had enough light to become a son of perdition. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 45)

Before a man can sink to this bitterness of soul, he must first know and understand the truth with a clearness of vision wherein there is no doubt. . . .

How fortunate it is that in the mercy of God there will be comparatively few who will partake of this awful misery and eternal darkness. (Ibid., page 49)

*****ADDED JUNE, 1983

Note 1 – On June 9, 1978, the Mormon Church announced that God had revealed to President Kimball that blacks could now hold the priesthood:

. . . we have pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the upper room of the Temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.

He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple. Accordingly, all worthy male members of the church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color. (*Deseret News*, June 9, 1978, page 1A)

The statement quoted on page 6 of this pamphlet (from the 1966 ed. of *Mormon Doctrine*), relative to blacks, has been rewritten in the 1979 ed.

Note 2 – Evidently to counteract the statement by Joseph F. Smith concerning his lack of revelations (see page 16) the Mormon Church has now canonized a 1918 vision of Mr. Smith’s and added it to the *Doctrine and Covenants* as section 138. Of the 138 sections in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, only two of them were given after Joseph Smith’s death. One was given to Brigham Young in 1847 and the other to Joseph F. Smith in 1918. The *Doctrine and Covenants* also contains 2 official declarations—the one on abandoning plural marriage in 1890 and the one in 1978 granting the priesthood to blacks. One wonders why there are only two revelations and two declarations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* dated after 1844.

PART 2

BELIEFS COMPARED

THE BIBLE

I. *Is the Bible Sufficient?*

The Mormon Church has four books which are accepted as scripture.

Bruce R. McConkie explains:

By the standard works of the Church is meant the following four volumes of scripture: The Bible, Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *Pearl of Great Price*. The Church uses the King James Version of the Bible, but acceptance of the Bible is coupled with a reservation that it is true only insofar as translated correctly. (Eighth Article of Faith.) The other three, having been revealed in modern times in English, are accepted without qualification. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 764)

Mark E. Petersen, a Mormon Apostle, explains why they have reservations about the Bible:

Many insertions were made, some of them “slanted” for selfish purposes, while at times deliberate falsifications and fabrications were perpetrated. (*As Translated Correctly*, by Mark E. Petersen, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 4)

But the Bible as we know it is a different volume from what it was—and would have been—had it not been changed so much by those with selfish interests. (*Ibid.*, page 67)

It is interesting to note that many Mormons are unaware that their own books of scripture have been changed and edited since the first printing. Joseph Smith’s revelations as originally printed in 1833 under the title *Book of Commandments* and the 1835 printing of *The Doctrine and Covenants* differ in many points from the current edition. The Book of Mormon and *Pearl of Great Price* have also been altered.*

Now let us see what the Bible teaches regarding scripture.

A. The Bible was written by inspiration:

... from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:15–17)

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

B. God promised His word would stand forever:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matthew 24:35)

I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

C. The Bible does not contain every word spoken by Christ, but it does contain all we need for salvation:

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:30–31)

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

*An original 1833 *Book of Commandments* is in the Library of the University of Utah, Western Americana section. They also have photos of the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*, an original 1830 Book of Mormon, and photos of the original 1851 *Pearl of Great Price*. Photos of these may also be seen at the Utah State Historical Society. For further information on the changes see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* and *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner.

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 14:37)

D. The Apostles were personally taught by Christ the meaning of scripture:

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And ye are witnesses of these things. (Luke 24:45–48)

E. God no longer speaks to us by Prophets, as in the Old Testament, but now speaks to us by His Son, through the New Testament record:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. (Hebrews 1:1–2)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another . . . (Colossians 3:16)

F. We are to study the scriptures:

. . . they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Therefore many of them believed; . . . (Acts 17:11–12)

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: (1 Peter 2:2)

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. (2 Peter 3:1–2)

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee. (Psalm 119:11)

II. What About Modern Day Revelation?

In the ninth Article of Faith of the Mormon Church we read:

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.

Bruce R. McConkie states:

The presence of revelation in the Church is positive proof that it is the kingdom of God on earth. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 650)

It should be noted that the earliest revelation in the *Doctrine and Covenants* is dated 1823, then starting in 1828 there are one-hundred-and-thirty-six revelations given up to the year 1847. The next section is dated 1890, and is the official declaration stating that Mormons should no longer enter into plural marriage.

There have not been any revelations added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* since the 1890 declaration. One wonders why there has not been any revelation presented to the Mormon Church for addition in the *Doctrine and Covenants* since 1890 if the Mormon Church is indeed led by a “Prophet, Seer, and Revelator”?

Bruce R. McConkie states:

It is true that not many revelations containing doctrinal principles are now being written, because all we are as yet capable and worthy to receive has already been written. But the Spirit is giving direct and daily revelation to the presiding Brethren . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 650)

Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Mormon Church, states:

The remark is sometimes made by thoughtless and unobserving persons that the spirit of revelation is not guiding the Latter-day Saints now as in former times, . . . The Lord blesses this people through the inspiration that comes to his servants, as they direct, and teach, and expound the scriptures. The statement is often made by the enemies of the people, and we hear it upon the streets of this city, from time to time, that there is no revelation in the Church. I say to you that there is revelation in the Church. . . . It is not necessary for the Lord to require that all of his revelations to the Church be published in a book and given to the people. . . . The Lord withholds much that he would otherwise reveal if the members of the Church were prepared to receive it, When they will not live in accordance with the revelations he has given, how are they entitled to receive more? . . .

We have little occasion to clamor for more revelation when we refuse to heed what the Lord has revealed for our salvation. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 281–283)

By using President Smith's argument one could just as easily maintain that the Bible is sufficient and that we don't need any additional revelations since man is still unable to "live in accordance" with the teachings of Christ.

Joseph F. Smith, sixth president of the Mormon Church and father of Joseph Fielding Smith, testified in the Reed Smoot Investigation that he had not received any revelations:

Senator Dubois.—Have you received any revelations from God, which has been submitted by you and the apostles to the body of the church in their semiannual conference, which revelation has been sustained by that conference, through the upholding of their hands?

Mr. Smith.—Since when?

Senator Dubois.—Since you became President of the Church.

Mr. Smith.—No, Sir; none whatever.

Senator Dubois.—Have you received any individual revelations yourself, since you became President of the church under your own definition, even, of a revelation?

Mr. Smith.—I cannot say that I have.

Senator Dubois.—Can you say that you have not?

Mr. Smith.—No; I cannot say that I have not.

Senator Dubois.—Then you do not know whether you have received any such revelations as you have described or whether you have not?

Mr. Smith.— Well, I can say this: That if I live as I should in the line of my duties, I am susceptible, I think, of the impressions of the Spirit of the Lord upon my mind at any time, just as any good Methodist or any other good church member might be. And so far as that is concerned, I say yes; I have had impressions of the Spirit upon my mind very frequently but they are not in the sense of revelations. (Proceedings Before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Protests Against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator from the State of Utah, to Hold His Seat, Vol. 1, pages 483–84; University of Utah Library)

We admonish everyone to read 2 Corinthians 11:13–15:

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

*[See Note 2 on page 13]

THE GOSPEL

I. *The Gospel—An Historical Fact*

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie describes the gospel as

. . . the plan of salvation. It embraces all of the laws, principles, doctrines, rites, ordinances, acts, powers, authorities, and keys necessary to save and exalt men in the highest heaven hereafter. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 331)

The Mormon Church teaches that the gospel was lost at the time of the Apostles and then restored to Joseph Smith. Mr. McConkie states:

This universal apostasy began in the days of the ancient apostles themselves . . .

With the loss of the gospel, the nations of the earth went into a moral eclipse called the Dark Ages. Apostasy was universal. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 43, 44)

. . . The true gospel of Jesus Christ was restored to earth in the last days through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith. It is found only in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (*Ibid.*, page 334)

However, the Bible describes the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4 as follows:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel . . . By which also ye are saved, . . . how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

The gospel is the "good news" about Jesus Christ and His work of redemption. The gospel has never been taken away since the New Testament has contained the gospel for almost 2000 years.

When Peter went to the household of Cornelius to present the gospel to them he did not tell them of "laws, principles, doctrines, rites, ordinances, acts, powers, authorities, and keys." He told them of Jesus and remission of sin:

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: . . . And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; . . . To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. (Acts 10:38–43)

When Paul presented the gospel to the Jews at Antioch he told them:

Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: . . . whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. . . they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre, But God raised him from the dead: . . . Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:23–39)

II. *All of the Gospel Was Revealed to the Early Church*

Christ promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would "guide" them "into all truth . . . and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).

John claimed “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” (1 John 1:3–4)

Peter maintained that God “hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:2–3). Later he wrote “I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:15–16).

Jude wrote “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

Paul stated “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

III. *The Gospel is Always the Same*

Paul gave the following warning:

... there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. . . . the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:7–12)

So here we have a yardstick by which to measure those claiming to teach the Gospel. All those truly preaching Christianity will teach the same message as the Apostles.

IV. *The Gospel Was Hid and Unknown in Old Testament Times*

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, believes that the gospel was taught to Adam. He states:

These principles were taught to Adam after he was driven from the Garden of Eden, who repented and was baptized in water for the remission of his sins, and received the Holy Ghost. . . . Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, continued to preach these saving principles. The gospel was also taught to Abraham, and has always been among men when they were prepared to receive it. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 160)

However, the Bible teaches that the gospel was not understood before the coming of Christ. Paul states:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Corinthians 2:7–8)

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (Colossians 1:26–27)

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: (Romans 16:25–26)

Jesus said: “For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which we hear, and have not heard them” (Matthew 13:17).

SALVATION BY GRACE

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie divides salvation into three types:

1. Unconditional or general salvation, that which comes by grace alone without obedience to gospel law, consists in the mere fact of being resurrected. In this sense salvation is synonymous with immortality; . . . But this is not the salvation of righteousness, the salvation which the saints seek. . . .

2. Conditional or individual salvation, that which comes by grace coupled with gospel obedience, consists in receiving an inheritance in the celestial kingdom of God. . . .

3. Salvation in its true and full meaning is synonymous with exaltation or eternal life and consists in gaining an inheritance in the highest of the three heavens within the celestial kingdom. With a few exceptions this is the salvation of which the scriptures speak, . . . This full salvation is obtained in and through the continuation of the family unit in eternity, and those who obtain it are gods. (*D&C* 131:1–4; 132) (*Mormon Doctrine*, 669–670)

... the mere fact of resurrection is called salvation by grace alone . . .

Salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, however, is not salvation by grace alone. Rather, it is salvation by grace coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. (*Ibid.*, page 671)

However, the Bible tells of only one salvation. Everyone who receives salvation receives eternal life and is spiritually reborn. The Bible tells of man’s need of salvation and God’s provision as follows:

I. *Man Has a Basic Sin Problem*

For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. (Ecclesiastes 7:20)

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (Mark 7:21–23)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

II. *We Cannot Solve Our Sin Problem by Self-Effort*

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. (Isaiah 55:9)

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Proverbs 16:25)

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. (James 2:10)

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)

III. *God Has Provided for Our Salvation*

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:16–17)

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. (Acts 3:19)

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. (1 Thessalonians 5:9–10)

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9)

IV. *We Need a Spiritual Birth*

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (John 3:3)

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. (1 Peter 1:23)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

... put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:22–24)

V. *Believe the Record Which God Has Given to Have Eternal Life*

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (John 6:29)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. (John 5:24)

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:12–13)

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16:15–16)

VI. *We Must Confess Jesus as Lord Before Men*

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 10:32–33)

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. (Luke 9:26)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9–10)

Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, . . . (Mark 5:19)

VII. *Good Works are the Evidence of God's Holy Spirit Indwelling the Christian*

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John 15:12)

I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:5)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22–23)

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13)

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. (Titus 3:8)

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:11–14)

THE TRUE CHURCH

Bruce R. McConkie gives the Mormon view of Christ's Church as follows:

Our Lord's true Church is the formal, official organization of believers who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ by baptism, ... a formal society of converted persons and not the unorganized spiritual vagary termed the Christian Church by sectarianism. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 133)

To his earthly kingdom in the dispensation of the fulness of times the Lord has given the formal name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (*D&C* 115:3–4) This Church is "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth" (*D&C* 1:30), the only organization authorized by the Almighty to preach his gospel and administer the ordinances of salvation, the only Church which has power to save and exalt men in the hereafter. (*Ibid.*, page 136)

Now we turn to the Bible to see what it has to say about Christ's Church.

I. *The True Church Consists of All Believers in Christ, Who Also Make Up the Body of Christ*

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (Romans 12:4-5)

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. (1 Corinthians 12:12–14)

Christ's Church is not any one particular denomination—but all people who have turned to Him for salvation.

II. *Christ is the Head of the Church and Always Will Be*

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:18)

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. (Ephesians 5:23)

III. *Where is the True Church Located?*

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:19–20)

IV. *Has It Ever Ceased?*

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

V. *How Was It To Continue?*

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24–25)

See also Acts 2:42 and Titus 1:5.

VI. *How Do We Become Members of the True Church?*

Let us look at the book of Acts, chapter two. First Peter presented the gospel the death and resurrection of Jesus:

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (verses 32 & 36)

Then came conviction and a desire to follow God:

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (verse 37)

Peter told them to repent and make an open confession of Christ by being baptized. He also promised the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to those who had received remission of sins:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ For the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (verse 38)

Having gladly received the message they were baptized and followed the apostle's doctrine, and prayed and continued in fellowship with Christians, and God added the new believers to the Church:

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. . . . Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (verses 41, 42, & 47)

PRE-EXISTENCE

Joseph Smith taught:

The mind of man is as immortal as God himself. . . . their spirits existed co-equal with God, . . . God never did have power to create the spirit of man at all. . . . intelligence exists upon a self existent principle, it is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it. . . The first principles of man are self existent with God; . . . (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, page 615)

However, the Bible teaches that God alone is immortal:

. . . the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: . . . (1 Timothy 6:15–16)

In Genesis 2:7 we read: "And the Lord God formed

man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The Bible teaches that man had his beginning here on earth. The Bible speaks of Christ's pre-existence (John 1:1–2, 8:58, 17:5; Col. 1:17; Heb. 13:8), but it does not mention a pre-existence of man.

In 1 Corinthians 15, verses 44, 46 and 49, we read:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. . . . Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Here we see that we had no prior spiritual existence. These verses plainly teach we first have natural earthly bodies and afterwards we have spiritual bodies. Notice it says "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural."

Milton R. Hunter, who is a General Authority in the Mormon Church, states:

The stupendous truth of the existence of a Heavenly Mother, as well as a Heavenly Father, became established facts in Mormon theology. . . . we are the offspring of Heavenly Parents . . . we were begotten and born into the spirit world and grew to maturity in that realm . . . (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, page 98)

The Bible, however, never mentions a Mother God or that we are literally spirit children born of an Eternal Mother and Father. We are not naturally "Children of God" but we are adopted into God's family when we put our faith and trust in Christ, thus becoming "sons of God."

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (John 1:12)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Rom. 8:14–16)

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26)

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:17–18)

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1 John 3:10–11)

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

I. *One Kingdom or Many?*

Bruce R. McConkie states:

Contrary to the views found in the uninspired teachings and creeds of modern Christendom, there are in eternity kingdoms of glory to which all resurrected persons (except the sons of perdition) will eventually go. These are named: celestial, terrestrial, and telestial—the glory of each being beyond mortal comprehension. (D&C 76; 1 Cor. 15:39–42; Rev. 21)

However, only the celestial kingdom is the kingdom of God where the faithful saints will gain their eternal inheritance. All who fall short of the glory of eternal life will in greater or lesser degree be damned (even though they dwell in a kingdom of glory), for their eternal progress will be limited, and they can never go on to an eternal fulness in the Father's presence. (D. & C. 132:16–17)

Rewards granted individuals in eternity will vary between and within kingdoms. Only those who are sealed in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage and who thereafter keep the terms and conditions of that covenant will attain the highest of three heavens within the celestial kingdom. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 420)

The Mormons use the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians to prove their doctrine of three kingdoms. Verse 40 mentions: “celestial bodies” and “terrestrial bodies.” Notice, this chapter never mentions “telestial bodies.”

Also notice that this chapter never mentions three kingdoms in heaven. The word “celestial” means “heavenly” and “terrestrial” means “earthly.” This section is explaining the difference between the bodies we now have and the ones we will have in the resurrection, and is not referring to different kingdoms. Notice that verse 35 states: “But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” Verse 40 is the answer. We now have earthly bodies, in the resurrection we will have heavenly bodies. Verse 44 states: “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” Verse 49 further explains: “And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” There is nothing in this chapter that states the terrestrial bodies mentioned in verse 40 have anything to do with a particular division in heaven.

The Bible teaches only two divisions—Heaven and Hell, or eternal life and eternal death. Christ always spoke of just two divisions. In Matthew 7:13–14 we read:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Christ also states:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: . . . Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25:31, 32, 34, 41 and 46)

In John 5:28 and 29 we read:

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

See also Romans 6:23, 2 Thessalonians 1:7–10 and Revelations 21:7–8.

II. *Who Will Be in God's Presence?*

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* it is stated that those entering the Celestial Kingdom “shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:62).

Those entering the Terrestrial Kingdom “receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:77). Those entering the Telestial Kingdom “receive not of his fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:86).

The Bible, however, does not mention these three divisions. If we have placed our faith in Christ and committed our lives to serve Him we have the promise that we shall be with Him in Heaven. If, on the other hand, we have ignored God and His word we shall have part in the “second death” (Revelations 21:8). Christ promised:

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. (John 12:25–26)

Mormons often use John 14:2 (“In my Father's house are many mansions”) when trying to prove that there are three kingdoms in Heaven. However, verse 3 continues the thought and adds that “I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:17:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

John described heaven as follows:

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I john saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men; and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. (Rev. 21:1–3)

If we have received salvation we have God's promise that we shall be with Him.

III. *Is There Remorse in Heaven?*

Bruce R. McConkie explains eternal life and eternal damnation as follows:

... immortality is to live forever in the resurrected state, and by the grace of God all men will gain this unending continuance of life. But only those who obey the fulness of the gospel law will inherit eternal life. ... Thus those who gain eternal life receive exaltation; ... They are gods. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 237)

Eternal damnation is the opposite of eternal life, and all those who do not gain eternal life, or exaltation in the highest heaven within the celestial kingdom, are partakers of eternal damnation. Their eternal condemnation is to have limitations imposed upon them so that they cannot progress to the state of godhood and gain a fulness of all things.

They "remain separately and singly, without exaltation,...but are angels of God forever and ever." (D&C 132:17) ... Though they attain a kingdom of glory, yet to all eternity they are damned, cannot go where God and Christ are (D&C 76:112), and are never completely free from the lingering remorse that always follows the loss of opportunity. (*Ibid.*, pages 234–235)

This is certainly not the Biblical view of heaven. In Revelations 21:4 we read:

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

In the book of Isaiah we read:

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. (Isaiah 25:8–9)

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. (Isaiah 12:2–3)

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. (Isaiah 51:11)

IV. *The Book of Mormon*

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon never mentions a Celestial Kingdom, a Terrestrial Kingdom or a Telestial Kingdom. Also, the Book of Mormon does not make a distinction between salvation and eternal life. In Alma 11:37, 40 and 41 we read:

And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. ... he shall take upon him the transgressions of those who believe on his name; and these are they that shall have eternal life, and salvation cometh to none else, Therefore the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made, ...

TEMPLE WORK

I. *Temples*

Bruce R. McConkie states:

From the days of Adam to the present, whenever the Lord has had a people on earth, temples and temple ordinances have been a crowning feature of their worship. ...

The inspired erection and proper use of temples is one of the great evidences of the divinity of the Lord's work. ... where these are not, the Church and kingdom and the truth of heaven are not. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 780–781)

The Bible, however, teaches that God's temple is a spiritual building made up of all Christians, with Christ as the foundation, This is brought out in Ephesians 2:19–22:

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 3:9–11 we read:

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Also, 2 Corinthians 6:16 states:

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (2 Cor. 6:16)

The foundation only needed to be laid once. We are still built upon the same foundation, “Jesus Christ.” The New Testament is silent about any need for Christians to actually erect temples.

II. *Eternal Marriage*

The Mormon writer Milton R. Hunter states:

The crowning Gospel ordinance requisite for Godhood is celestial marriage. The doctrine of celestial marriage, as taught and practiced in the Church of Jesus Christ today, means temple marriage. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, Salt Lake City, 1958, page 118)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made the following comment on eternal marriage:

This glorious principle of eternal marriage did not come to the Prophet Joseph Smith by reading the Bible, but through the revelations of the Lord to him. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, page 195)

Mr. Richards is certainly right on that point. The only eternal marriage in the Bible is the spiritual marriage of the believer to Christ. Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth:

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:2)

Paul also wrote in Romans 7:4:

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Christ never mentions the need for eternal marriage. In fact, he taught just the opposite. In Luke 20:34–36 Christ said:

And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

From these verses we learn that the union of male and female is not continued in Heaven. Notice verse 36 makes it plain Christ is referring to Christians as they are called “children of God.”

Bruce R. McConkie gives the following reasons for believing Paul was married for eternity:

Paul himself was married. Of this there is no question. He had the sure promise of eternal life; his calling and election had been made sure (*Teachings*, page 151) which, according to God’s eternal laws, could not have been unless he had first entered into the order of celestial marriage. (D&C 131; 132) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 119)

The Bible, however, never states that for one to have “eternal life” and his “calling and election” made sure, one needed to be married for eternity.

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon is also silent regarding any need to be married for eternity.

Those who participate in the Mormon temple ceremonies are sworn to secrecy and are not to reveal the temple ceremonies and covenants. However, the Book of Mormon is quite plain in teaching against “secret signs, and their secret words” (Helaman 6:22 and 26). The Book of Mormon also states “For the Lord worketh not in secret combinations” (Ether 8:19). There is nothing in the New Testament about Christians participating in secret wedding ceremonies.

III. *Genealogy*

Bruce R. McConkie explains the need for genealogical research as follows:

Before vicarious ordinances of salvation and exaltation may be performed for those who have died without a knowledge of the gospel, . . . they must be accurately and properly identified. Hence, genealogical research is required, . . . the Church maintains in Salt Lake City one of the world’s greatest genealogical societies. . . . millions of dollars is being spent; and a reservoir of hundreds of millions of names and other data about people who lived in past generations is available for study. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 308–309)

If Paul understood temple work for the dead it is strange he would write the following instructions to his fellow-workers, Timothy and Titus:

Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (1 Timothy 1:4)

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain. (Titus 3:9)

IV. *Work for the Dead*

Joseph Fielding Smith explains that temple work is to be done for those who died without hearing the gospel:

The endowment and sealing work for the dead is for those who died without having had the opportunity to hear and receive the gospel; . . . The work for the dead is not intended for those who had every opportunity to receive it, who had it taught to them, and who then refused to receive it, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 184)

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* we read that baptism for the dead is for those “who should die without a knowledge of the gospel” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 128:5)

Strange as it may seem, the Book of Mormon teaches just the opposite. According to the Book of Mormon those who die without any knowledge of the gospel do not need baptism. In Moroni 8:22–23 we read:

For behold that all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all them that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing—

But it is mockery before God, denying the mercies of Christ, and the power of his Holy Spirit, and putting trust in dead works.

The Book of Mormon also teaches that those who die “in their ignorance” will have “eternal life,” but those who die “in their sins” that “wilfully rebelled against God,” will not be redeemed for “salvation cometh to none such” (Mosiah 15:24–27; 16:5; Alma 34:32–35).

There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that man will be able to repent after death. The story of Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31 clearly shows this.

Mormons use Corinthians 15:29 when trying to establish the need of baptism for the dead:

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:29)

This is the only verse in the Bible which mentions baptism for the dead. Notice, Paul is not advocating this practice. He merely makes a passing reference to some group that had such a practice. His emphasis is on the fact of resurrection. Had this been a primary function in Christ’s church surely there would be more teaching on it than this casual reference. Joseph Smith taught: “The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us, is to seek after our dead.” If such is the case it is certainly strange that the Bible only has one verse that mentions baptism for the dead.

PRIESTHOOD

I. *Offices of Authority*

Joseph Fielding Smith states: “After our Savior established his Church, he placed in it all the officers as we have them today, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 104). Apostle LeGrand Richards lists the offices as follows:

In the Aaronic Priesthood there are the following divisions: deacons, teachers, and priests. There are

bishops when they are chosen from among the high priests of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

In the Melchizedek Priesthood there are the following divisions and offices: elders, seventies, high priests, evangelists or patriarchs, apostles, and prophets.

All of the above-named officers are mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the primitive Church of Christ. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, page 93)

In the Articles of Faith of the Mormon Church we find:

6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, viz., apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc. (*The Pearl of Great Price*)

Now let us look in the Bible and see how many of the Mormon offices are mentioned as part of Christ’s Church.

1. APOSTLES.

A. Only one person was chosen to fill a vacancy in the original Twelve Apostles. In Acts 1:21–23 we read the qualifications needed to fill the vacancy:

“Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us. Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.”

B. Paul did not claim that he filled a place in the Twelve Apostles or that he was ordained by them. In Galatians 1:1 we read: “Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)” In verses 15–18 we read:

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.”

C. Mormons have more than twelve apostles when you count the three members of the First Presidency. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

“Peter, James, and John Served as First Presidency. In the days of Christ’s ministry he called the first apostles who were ever ordained to that office so far as we have any knowledge. . . . He also appointed three of these Twelve to take the keys of presidency. Peter, James and John, acted as the First Presidency of the Church in their day. . . . All the information we have indicates that they served in this capacity while serving at the same time as three of the Council of the Twelve.

“In this last dispensation we have received the added information, and perhaps the added order of priesthood, and we have in the Church of Jesus Christ today the quorum of the First Presidency, separate from the Council of the Apostles.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 152)

In addition to these fifteen men they have Assistant Apostles. LeGrande Richards states:

“As the Church has grown and developed, . . . the First Presidency of the Church and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have added the following named offices, which we do not find mentioned in the Bible:

- (a) Assistants to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles . . .
- (b) The First Seven Presidents of the Seventy . . .
- (c) The Presiding Bishopric. . . .” (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, pages 160–161)

D. The word “apostle” means “one sent forth.” Used in this sense there are many apostles in the world today. All Christian missionaries could be referred to as apostles.

2. PROPHETS

A. Old Testament Prophets. In Matthew 11:13 we read: “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.”

In Luke 16:16 we read: “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.”

In Hebrews 1:1–2 we read: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”

B. Prophetess. Mormons do not allow women to hold their priesthood or to be ordained prophetesses. However, in the Bible we find several women referred to as prophetesses. In Exodus 15:20 we read of “Miriam the prophetess.” In Judges 4:4 we read: “And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.” 2 Kings 22:14 mentions “Huldah the prophetess.” Luke 2:36–38 tells of “one Anna, a prophetess.”

C. New Testament Prophets. In the book of Acts there are four references to Christian prophets. In Acts 11:27–28 we read: “And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.”

In Acts 13:1 we find: “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.”

Acts 15:32 states: “And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.”

In Acts 21:10–11 we find that Agabus is again used of God to foretell the arrest of Paul.

There is nothing in any of these verses to indicate that these men belonged to any special order of priesthood. The dictionary describes a prophet as “one who speaks for God or a deity, or by divine inspiration.” In 1 Corinthians 14:3 we read: “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and

exhortation, and comfort.” Paul regarded love as far more important than prophecy: “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:2).

Women were not excluded from the gift of prophecy, as seen in Acts 21:9: “And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.” See also Acts 2:16–18.

3. HIGH PRIESTS. Hebrews 5:1 explains the duties of the Jewish High Priest:

“For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.”

In chapter seven we read:

“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, . . . For such a high priest became us, . . . Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” (Hebrews 7:22, 23, 24, 26 and 27).

The High Priest of the Old Testament served as an “example and shadow of heavenly things” (Hebrews 8:5). Christ is the fulfillment of this. He is the only High Priest in the Christian church, The New Testament contains no reference to any Christian holding the office of High Priest. Christ alone holds this office. “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).

4. SEVENTIES. In Luke 10:1 we read:

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.”

The Mormons have taken this one incident and turned it into an office of their priesthood. There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that this was ever repeated, or that there is to be such an office.

5. ELDERS. Acts 14:23 states:

“And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.”

Titus 1:5–6 gives the qualifications of an elder:

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.”

1 Peter 5:1–3 states:

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall he revealed:

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

In James 5:14 we find the following:

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

6. PATRIARCH OR EVANGELIST. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

"The Prophet's explanation in relation to the evangelist is: 'An evangelist is a patriarch, even the oldest man of the blood of Joseph or of the seed of Abraham. Wherever the Church of Christ is established in the earth, there should be a patriarch for the benefit of the posterity of the saints, as it was with Jacob in giving his patriarchal blessings unto his sons.'" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 108)

"The Patriarch to the Church holds the keys of blessing for the members of the Church, He has the authority to seal blessings upon the heads of the members in all parts of the Church, that they may, if they prove faithful, enjoy whatever is pronounced upon their heads and come forth in the resurrection to obtain eternal life. . . .

"A blessing given by a patriarch is intended to point out the path which the recipient should travel. . . . The Patriarch also holds the key by which the lineage of those whom he blesses may be made known." (*Ibid.*, page 170)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

"And the knowledge of the calling and ministry of a patriarch we did not receive through study of the scriptures, but by the revelations of the Lord to his prophets in this our day." (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, page 149)

Bruce R. McConkie believes that the word "evangelist" no longer carries the original meaning. He states:

"2. Having lost the true knowledge of the priesthood and its offices, and knowing nothing of patriarchal blessings as a necessary part of church administration, the false traditions of the sectarian world have applied the designation evangelist to traveling preachers, missionaries, and revivalists. The sectarian theory is that evangelists travel to spread the gospel." (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 242)

There is absolutely nothing in the New Testament about the need of Patriarchs in the church. Also, there is nothing to indicate that an evangelist is a Patriarch.

Paul wrote to Timothy:

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering

and doctrine. . . . But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2, 5)

The work of an evangelist is to "preach the word." There are Christian evangelists throughout the world who are constantly endeavoring to "preach the word."

7. BISHOPS. Paul instructed Titus on the duties of a Bishop as follows:

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." (Titus 1:7-9) (See also 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

8. PRIESTS. The Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

"The New Testament is almost silent on the calling and duties of a priest. . . .

"We will have to turn elsewhere than to the Bible to learn the duties of the priest's office as they were administered under the direction of Christ and his Apostles." (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, pages 156-157)

In the Mormon Church a young man is ordained a priest at the age of sixteen. The New Testament speaks of the Jewish priests, but there is nothing in the New Testament to indicate there was a Christian office of Priest. Christ is referred to as our priest, but the New Testament never lists priests as a part of the church.

9. TEACHERS. Bruce R. McConkie states:

"3. One of the ordained offices in the Aaronic Priesthood is that of a teacher, . . . 'The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, . . . They are . . . to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ.' But they do not 'have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands.' . . .

"There is no Biblical passage which makes it plain that persons in Old or New Testament times were ordained to the office of a teacher in either the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood. References to teachers in the Bible apparently refer to persons who acted as preachers or instructors." (*Mormon Doctrine*, pages 776-777)

In the Mormon Church a boy is ordained a teacher at the age of fourteen.

Teachers are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28:

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Paul wrote the following to Timothy:

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." (2 Timothy 1:11)

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

10. DEACONS. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

“It was the judgment of Paul that a deacon in that day should be a married man. That does not apply to our day. Conditions were different in the days of Paul. In that day a minister was not considered qualified to take part in the ministry until he was 30 years of age. Under those conditions deacons, teachers, and priests were mature men. This is not the requirement today.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, pages 109–110)

In the Mormon Church a boy is ordained a deacon at the age of twelve. The Bible states:

“Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. . . . Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.” (1 Timothy 3:8, 9, 10 and 12)

Notice that in verse 6 Paul had instructed Timothy that a bishop should not be “a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall.” Then in verse 10 Paul states that deacons should “also first be proved.” In other words, both a bishop and a deacon were to be mature, sound men who had proved their faithfulness to Christ.

11. PASTORS. Mormons often use Ephesians 4:11 when trying to prove their system of priesthood. This verse reads:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;”

The Mormons, however, do not have any pastors. Joseph Fielding Smith explains this as follows:

“The term pastor does not refer to an order in the priesthood, like deacon, priest, elder, seventy, and so on, . . . We can say truthfully that a bishop is a pastor; so is an elder who has charge of a branch of the Church, or a president of a stake who has direction of a number of wards and branches.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, pages 108–109)

It is strange that the Mormons insist that apostles, prophets and teachers are offices of the priesthood, but don’t believe that pastors are.

II. *Paid Ministry*

1 Timothy 5:17–18 shows that there was a paid ministry in the church:

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.” (1 Timothy 5:17–18)

In the ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul explains that he had the right to ask for support from the Christian. In verses 5 and 6 Paul states:

Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

In verses 11 and 14 Paul continues:

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? . . . Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

But Paul goes on to state that he had not used this right while laboring with the church at Corinth. In his second letter to the church at Corinth he states:

Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: . . . (2 Corinthians 11:7–9)

In Philippians 4:16–18 Paul acknowledges the financial support of the Christians at Philippi:

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

III. *False Prophets*

Christ warned:

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

John wrote:

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

IV. Aaronic Priesthood

This was a shadow of things to come. In the book of Hebrews we read:

If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. . . . For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. . . . By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. (Hebrews 7:11, 12, 19 and 22)

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (Hebrews 10:1) (See also Hebrews 9:8, 9, 24, 26)

Christ did not hold the Aaronic priesthood since he was not a descendant of Aaron:

For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang One of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. (Hebrews 7:13–14)

For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, . . . (Hebrews 8:4–5)

Christ fulfilled the Aaronic priesthood and is now our only High Priest. In the ninth chapter of Hebrews we read:

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, . . . and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Hebrews 9:6–12)

V. Priesthood Melchizedek

1. Only Melchizedek held this in the Old Testament. Other than in the book of Hebrews Melchizedek is only mentioned in Genesis 14:17–20 and Psalms 110:4.

2. Only Christ held this in the New Testament. Hebrews 7:15–17 states:

And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life, For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Notice that verse 15 only speaks of one priest being after the order of Melchisedec. Christ is the only priest “after the order of Melchisedec” because he has eternal life. Hebrews 7:23–24 states:

And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

VI. What About Being Ordained?

In the LDS Articles of Faith we read:

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.

The Mormons use Hebrews 5:4 to establish their priesthood authority. This verse reads:

And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Man cannot act legally in the name of the Lord unless he is vested with the priesthood, which is divine authority. No man has the power or the right to take this honor to himself. Unless he is called of God, as was Aaron, he has no authority to officiate in any of the ordinances of the gospel; should he do so his act is not valid or recognized in the heavens. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 80)

Aaron and his sons were not called “by the laying on of hands.” The Lord instructed Moses as follows:

And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. (Exodus 28:1)

And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest’s office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, . . . (Exodus 29:1)

Then the Lord instructed Moses to wash Aaron and his sons with water (verse 4) and to place the priest’s robes on Aaron. Moses was then to pour oil on Aaron’s head and anoint him (verse 7).

Verses 10 through 14 tell how Aaron and his sons were to place their hands on a bullock, then it was killed and part of it was burned on the altar. Verses 15 through 22 tell of the sacrifice of two rams and the sprinkling of

blood. Then Aaron and his sons were to eat part of the ram and the unleavened bread (verses 32–33). This was to continue for seven days (verse 35).

The Mormons certainly don't follow the pattern of Aaron's ordination. Therefore, their own priests are not called "as was Aaron."

Mormons often refer to John 15:16 when stressing the need of an official ordination. This verse reads:

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Mormons emphasize the word "ordained." However, this word could just as easily be translated "appointed." There is nothing in the verse to imply an official ordination with the laying on of hands, as Mormons try to make it appear. Notice also what they were appointed to do—"go and bring forth fruit." This verse is not referring to a priesthood ordination. Every Christian has the same appointment from Christ to "go and bring forth fruit."

Paul instructed Timothy as follows:

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

The emphasis is not on an ordination but on a man's faithfulness and ability to teach.

Christ was more concerned with the way a person lived than an official ordination. In Luke 9:49–50 we read:

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

When the seventy men returned, after being sent to the various cities, they were full of joy, "saying Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). However, Christ answered: "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

In 1 Peter 4:11 we read:

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

VII. Was the Priesthood Lost?

The Mormons teach that there was a total apostasy and the priesthood was lost. In the Mormon Missionary Manual we read:

Elder: . . . As the apostles went out to teach, one by one what happened to them also?

Brown: They were killed too.

Elder: And when the foundation was gone from the Church, what happened to the rest of the building? (Use flannel board character with separate foundation.)

Brown: It collapsed.

Elder: Exactly. The Church did collapse; and why was the priesthood lost at that time?

Brown: Because no one was left who had the right to pass it on. (*A Uniform System for Teaching Investigators*, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, August, 1961, page 17)

According to Joseph Smith's revelations, however, four apostles are still alive. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

John was given the privilege of remaining on the earth with a translated body until Christ shall come again. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 151)

Bruce R. McConkie states:

Three of the Nephite disciples, desiring to continue their apostolic ministry of bringing souls unto Christ, received this promise from the Lord: "Ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven." (3 Ne. 28:7) (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 793)

If it were true that Christ left four apostles on earth the priesthood could not have been taken from earth, and there would be no need for a restoration.

The Mormons believe John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Joseph Fielding Smith explains:

1. The reason John the Baptist was sent from the heavens to confer the Priesthood of Aaron is that there was no one among mortals with the keys of that authority. Had there been, then there would have been no necessity for a restoration of this authority, and John would not have been sent. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 88)

As we have just shown, there would have been four apostles on earth.

One wonders why John the Baptist would be sent to restore the Aaronic priesthood to Joseph Smith. According to the Mormons Peter, James and John, as the first presidency of the church, would have held the keys of both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.

Apparently the Apostle Paul did not feel that a baptism by John the Baptist was sufficient in the Christian dispensation. In the book of Acts Paul instructed twelve men, who had been baptized by John the Baptist, to receive a Christian baptism. In Acts 19:3–5 we read:

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should

believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

VII. *Believer's Authority*

1. Each believer has authority to teach the Gospel.

Matthew 28:18–20 states:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Notice, this command leaves no room for prejudice. We are to offer the same blessings and commands to all. In 1 Peter 3:15 we read:

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

2. Each believer is a member of God's priesthood.

1 Peter 2: 5 and 9 states:

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. . . . But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Notice that men are not singled out as the ones holding this priesthood—it includes women, too. Galatians 3:28 states:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(For further information on the Mormon priesthood see: *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner; *Latter-day Saints—Where Did You Get Your Authority*, by Hal Hougey; *Problems in Mormon Text*, by LaMar Petersen; and *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer)

THE GODHEAD

I. *ONE GOD*

The Mormons believe that God the Father has a mother and father, who are Gods, and each of these also have a mother and father who are Gods, etc. Joseph Smith is quoted as saying:

“If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 11)

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Joseph Smith taught a plurality of gods, and that man by obeying the commandments of God and keeping the whole law will eventually reach the power and exaltation by which he also will become a god. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 98)

The Bible, however, teaches there is only one God. Isaiah 43:10–11 reads:

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. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.

(See also Isaiah 44:6, 8; 45:5, 6, 18, 21, 22; 46:9)

In the New Testament we read:

Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. (Galatians 3:20)

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

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (James 2:19)

(See also Mark 12:29–32; 1 Corinthians 8:4–6; Ephesians 4:5–6)

II. *God the Father*

1. Invisible. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

The vision of Joseph Smith made it clear that the Father and the Son are separate personages, having bodies as tangible as the body of man. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 2)

Now let us look in the Bible. 1 Timothy 1:17 reads:

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 John 4:12 states:

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

In 1 Timothy 6:15–16 we read:

Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

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

Paul wrote the following about Christ: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” (Colossians 1:15).

Mormons sometimes try to prove God the Father has a body by referring to Exodus 33:11, which states “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” However, verse nine explains what Moses actually beheld. It states:

And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. (Exodus 33:9)

If verse eleven is to be taken literally, why would God say in verse twenty “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live”?

There are many figures of speech in the Bible, Psalm 91:4 states: “He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: . . .” Obviously, this verse is not to be taken literally.

Joseph Fielding Smith states that Christ is the Jehovah of the Old Testament:

All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all the prophets. He is the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel; the one who led that nation out of Egyptian bondage, and who gave and fulfilled the Law of Moses. The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son. Thus the Inspired Version records that “no man hath seen God at any time, except he hath borne record of the Son.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 27)

So, according to Mr. Smith, the Mormons can not use references to Jehovah when trying to prove that God the Father has a body.

2. A Spirit. In John 4:24 we read:

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

When Christ appeared to his disciples after his resurrection he said:

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. (Luke 24:39)

In Jeremiah 23:23–24 we read:

Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

3. Not a Man. Brigham Young, the second president of the Mormon Church, stated:

He is our Father—the Father of our spirits, and was once a man in mortal flesh as we are, and is now an exalted being. . . . God has once been a finite being; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 333)

In Numbers 23:19 we read: “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: . . .”

Romans 1:22–23 states: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, . . .”

4. Unchangeable. Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy in the Mormon Church, states:

In the first place, aeons ago God undoubtedly took advantage of every opportunity to learn the laws of truth and as He became acquainted with each new verity He righteously obeyed it. From day to day He exerted His will vigorously, and as a result became thoroughly acquainted with the forces lying about Him. As he gained more knowledge through persistent effort and continuous industry, as well as through absolute obedience, His understanding of the universal laws continued to become more complete. Thus He grew in experience and continued to grow until He attained the status of Godhood. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, pages 114–115)

In the Bible we find:

They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. (Psalm 102:26–27)

For I am the Lord, I change not; . . . (Malachi 3:6)

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17)

III. *God the Son*

1. Christ is God. The Bible does not speak of Christ as a god, but as *the* God, 1 Timothy 3:16 reads: “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

Matthew 1:22–23 states: “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

Isaiah 9:6 states:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Paul wrote “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). Paul also said “that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). Christ said “And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me” (John 12:45). Christ also said “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). John recorded the following discussion between Christ and Philip:

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very work’s sake. (John 14:7–11)

After Thomas saw the resurrected Christ he exclaimed: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

2. Eternal. In the New Testament we find:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1–2)

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:58)

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (Hebrews 13:8)

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Colossians 1:17)

3. Creator. The book of Hebrews states that God “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Heb. 1:2). The Bible states:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (Colossians 1:16)

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (1 Corinthians 8:6)

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3)

4. Without Sin. In the New Testament we read:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (1 Peter 2:22)

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15, see also 7:26)

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. (1 John 3:5)

IV. God the Holy Spirit

In the book of Matthew we read: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Mormon Church, states:

The Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit, and has a spirit body only . . .

As a Spirit personage the Holy Ghost has size and dimensions. He does not fill the immensity of space, and cannot be everywhere present in person at the same time. . . . The Holy Ghost is not a personage with a body of flesh and bones, and in this respect differs from the Father and the Son. . . .

I have never troubled myself about the Holy Ghost whether he will sometime have a body or not because it is not in any way essential to my salvation. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 38–39)

The Mormon leaders are unable to explain why God the Father should have a body and yet the Holy Ghost be without one. It is claimed that a body is necessary for eternal progression, yet the Mormon Church teaches that the Holy Ghost became a God without a body.

The Mormons claim that the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit are different. Joseph Fielding Smith explains this as follows:

The Holy Ghost should not be confused with the Spirit which fills the immensity of space and which is everywhere present. This other Spirit is impersonal and has no size, nor dimension; it proceeds forth from the presence of the Father and the Son and is in all things. . . . These terms are used synonymously:

Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Truth, Holy Spirit, Comforter; all having reference to the Holy Ghost. The same terms largely are used in relation to the Spirit of Jesus Christ, also called the Light of Truth, Light of Christ, Spirit of God, and Spirit of the Lord; and yet they are separate and distinct things. We have a great deal of confusion because we have not kept that clearly in our minds. . . . This Light of Christ is not a personage. It has no body. I do not know what it is as far as substance is concerned; but it fills the immensity of space and emanates from God. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 49, 50 and 52)

The Bible does not teach that the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit are separate, The greek work *pneuma* is rendered in the King James Bible as ghost or spirit. John 7:39 reads: “(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” The words “Spirit” and “Ghost” in this verse both read “pneuma” in the greek.

1 Corinthians 3:16 states “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit [*pneuma*] God dwelleth in you?” In chapter 6, verse 19, Paul states “your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [*pneuma*] which is in you.” Matthew said that Mary “was found with child of the Holy Ghost [*pneuma*]” (Matt. 1:20).

Paul states “For as many as are led by the Spirit [*pneuma*] of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. 8:14).

V. The Book of Mormon

Joseph Smith’s first published work, the Book of Mormon, seems to be in harmony with the Bible, for it teaches that there is only one God. In Alma 11:27–29 we read:

And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No.

The Book of Mormon also teaches that God is a Spirit. In Alma 18:26–28 we read:

And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said unto him again: Believest thou that this Great Spirit, who is God, created all things . . .

The Book of Mormon teaches that Christ was God himself manifest in the flesh. Mosiah 15:1, 2 and 5 reads:

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— . . . And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation, but suffereth himself to be mocked, . . .

The three witnesses to the Book of Mormon finished their testimony with the statement: “And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God.” Joseph Smith’s views on God changed over the years. In 1843 he wrote:

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. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 130:22)

VI. Created in God’s Image

Joseph Fielding Smith states:

Joseph Smith beheld the Father and the Son; therefore he could testify with personal knowledge that the scriptures were true wherein we read: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” This was to be understood literally, and not in some mystical or figurative sense. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 3)

God created man in His spiritual image—righteous, holy and endowed with knowledge. Man lost this image because of sin. But God wants to re-create this righteous image in man. In Colossians 3:9–10 we read:

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

Ephesians 4:23–24 states:

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

(For additional information on the Godhead see: *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *New Light on Mormon Origins*, by Wesley Walters.)

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.*

(2 Timothy 2:15)



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